



July 7, 2016

The Honorable Richard Corey, Executive Officer
California Air Resources Board
1001 I Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Comments on the 2030 Scoping Plan

Dear Mr. Corey:

The Bioenergy Association of California strongly supports the Governor's greenhouse gas reduction goals for 2030 and appreciates the opportunity to comment on the 2030 Scoping Plan Concept Paper. BAC supports integrating the Governor's 5 Pillars into the Scoping Plan. At the same time, BAC urges the Air Board to increase the focus on the most cost-effective measures to reduce climate pollutants, including bioenergy production from diverted organic waste, dairy waste and forest waste. BAC also urges the Air Board to increase the focus on near zero emission vehicles that run on biogas, which can provide the most significant reductions in climate change and criteria pollutants and provide the most immediate benefits to disadvantaged communities.

The Bioenergy Association of California (BAC) represents about 60 public agencies, private companies and local governments working to convert organic waste to energy. BAC's public sector members include air quality, environmental, wastewater, solid waste and other local agencies. Its private sector members include energy and waste companies, technology and service providers, investors and others.

BAC's specific recommendations for the 2030 Scoping Plan are below.

1. "Time Matters"

The Concept Paper states that "[a]s we develop this Draft Scoping Plan, time matters. The policies that are included must rapidly lead to real

results to avoid the most catastrophic impacts of climate change.”¹ (emphasis added) The *Proposed Short-Lived Climate Pollutant Strategy* also makes this point very strongly. Yet neither the Concept Paper nor the state’s allocation of Greenhouse Gas Reduction funds prioritize measures such as reduction in SLCP’s that can provide immediate benefits to the climate or immediate reductions in the largest source of pollution in disadvantaged communities, which is from diesel powered heavy duty trucks.

BAC urges the Air Board to develop more of a hierarchy of climate emission reduction measures that places the greatest emphasis – and the most resources – on the measures that are most urgent. Those measures include the reduction of SLCPs, restoring carbon sequestration and other measures that provide immediate and ongoing benefits to the climate.

2. Need to Increase Focus on Most Cost-Effective, Win-Win Solutions.

The 2030 Scoping Plan Concept Paper states that the Scoping Plan should identify the policy choices that will minimize costs and optimize “win-win” solutions.² According to the Legislative Analyst’s Office (LAO), the most cost-effective GGRF investments have been in the solid waste, forestry and dairy sectors³ – all sectors that produce bioenergy from organic waste. BAC urges the Air Board to be much more transparent about the cost-effectiveness of emissions reduction measures, to quantify their expected and actual emissions reductions and to state explicitly what co-benefits they provide. Where quantification or full lifecycle comparisons are not yet possible – such as the lifecycle emissions of compost compared to bioenergy production – the state should prioritize research that quantifies lifecycle emissions so that policies and incentive programs can in fact focus on the greatest and most cost-effective emissions reductions.

3. Need to Be Performance Based and Transparent about Performance Standards and Benefits.

Meeting our climate change goals is going to require agencies to set clear performance goals, based on transparent and accurate definitions, rather than picking technology winners and losers. This is particularly important in the transportation sector, which is California’s largest source of climate (and air) pollution. Terms like “zero emission” that were developed in the air pollution context and fail to account for lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions, are misleading and misguided in the climate change context. First, they fail to account for upstream emissions from electricity and hydrogen production.

¹ Concept Paper at page 12.

² Concept Paper at page 6.

³ Legislative Analyst’s Office, “*Administration’s Cap-and-Trade Report Provides New Information, Raises Issues for Consideration*,” Presented to Assembly Budget Subcommittee 3 on April 20, 2016, at page 3.

Second, they fail to account for the different global warming potentials of different climate pollutants and the greater urgency in reducing Short-Lived Climate Pollutants. Finally, setting arbitrary goals for “zero emission” vehicles while placing relatively little emphasis on near-zero emissions heavy duty vehicles misses the single biggest opportunity to provide immediate and significant climate change reductions and air pollution reductions in disadvantaged communities.

We urge the Air Board to set performance standards, rather than choosing technology winners and losers, for the transportation sector and the Low Carbon Transportation Fund. Funding ultra low-NOx vehicles that run on biogas made from organic waste can reduce SLCP and NOx emissions far more – and more cost effectively – than investments in electric vehicles. Replacing heavy duty diesel trucks with ultra-low NOx trucks would also provide the most significant and immediate benefits to disadvantaged communities by dramatically reducing NOx emissions. Despite these unparalleled benefits, the Concept Paper sets several numeric goals for zero emission vehicles and no specific goals for near zero emission vehicles that provide much greater emissions reductions.⁴ In addition, only a small fraction of the Low Carbon Transportation fund is proposed for ultra-low NOx trucks or production of biogas to fuel those trucks.

Unfortunately, several GGRF funding programs pick specific technologies rather than setting performance criteria that would result in much greater emissions reductions and other benefits. For example, both CalRecycle and the California Department of Food and Agriculture have limited their GGRF programs to anaerobic digestion of diverted organic waste and dairy waste, respectively. Yet other non-combustion conversion technologies are available in both sectors and are critical to meet the goal of diverting virtually all organic waste from landfills since much of the waste that is currently landfilled is not suitable for anaerobic digestion. State agencies should set transparent performance criteria that maximize cost-effective greenhouse gas reductions and other co-benefits, and then let the market compete.

4. Need to Include Specific Measures to Reduce Black Carbon from Wildfire and to Increase Carbon Sequestration.

The Concept Paper correctly notes that natural and working lands are integral to the state’s climate strategy, that the 2030 Scoping Plan must address the increasing severity of wildfires due to climate change, and that we need to better understand how to increase carbon sequestration in natural and working lands.⁵ These issues are particularly important given that the AB 32 Scoping Plan relies heavily on carbon sequestration in California’s forests and that carbon is increasingly being released as black carbon due to wildfires. According to the *Proposed Short-Lived Pollutant Strategy*, black carbon from wildfire now causes

⁴ Concept Paper at page 21.

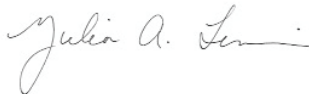
⁵ Concept Paper at page 9.

10 percent of California's total climate emissions.⁶ The Concept Paper also correctly points out that we need to move forward on these issues even in the face of scientific and methodological uncertainty.⁷

A critical first step is to set goals for reducing black carbon from wildfire and the burning of agricultural waste, and for restoring carbon sequestration to natural and working lands. As the Concept Paper notes, we cannot wait for perfect scientific or methodological certainty. Not having goals for carbon sequestration – and for the reduction of black carbon emissions – makes it difficult, however, to gage progress, allocate funding appropriately, or ensure that the state is on track to meet its climate change goals.

We urge the Air Board to include these important additions and changes in the 2030 Scoping Plan and we look forward to working with the state to meet California's climate goals for 2030 and beyond.

Sincerely,



Julia A. Levin
Executive Director

⁶ According to the Proposed SLCP Strategy, wildfire causes 67% of California's black carbon emissions, and black carbon causes 15% of California's total climate pollution. Therefore, black carbon emissions from wildfire constitute 10% of California's total climate emissions.

⁷ Concept Paper at p. 9.