

Duties of the Delta Mercury Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

A Technical Advisory Committee has been recruited to advise the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Board) regarding the scientific rigor, validity, and robustness of Methylmercury Control Studies workplans and study results submitted to the Board by responsible parties. The TAC is expected to provide the Board with advice regarding scientific and technical issues related to these studies and evaluate information gathered and conclusions drawn from the studies conducted by those parties. As part of the Final Report review, Board staff may ask the TAC to make recommendations regarding implementation alternatives.

Process

Entities required to participate in Methylmercury Control Studies will submit their workplans and results to the Central Valley Water Board. These documents will then be given to all TAC members. Individual TAC members are expected to review control study workplans and reports prior to each TAC meeting. The TAC will discuss all workplans or study results and present their recommendations to the Board staff following each of their meetings. The TAC was created at the request of the stakeholder groups, so stakeholders will be invited to attend and ask questions of the TAC during the public portions of its meetings.

Timeline

The Basin Plan describes the points of Phase 1 when the TAC would be utilized, specifically in review of the draft Study Guidance, the Control Study Workplans, the 4-year Progress Review, and the Control Study Final Reports. In addition to the specified review points, the TAC will participate in a study planning workshop early in Phase 1 that is open to all stakeholders. For each set of documents to be reviewed, the Regional Board will provide questions to the TAC. Questions to be answered by the TAC in its review of the Workplans are below.

Control Study Workplan Review

The TAC will provide the Central Valley Water Board and responsible entities with their assessment of the proposed study plans and suggestions for improvement. Within their review, the TAC will be asked to respond to the following questions:

- Do the studies meet a basic level of scientific robustness and quality assurance?
- For each study, are the data and evaluations proposed sufficient to test the study's hypothesis?
- Are there other study priorities, studies, or resources that you would recommend?
- Are there efficiencies that could be achieved by better coordination between studies?
- Taken as a whole, do the studies sufficiently evaluate potential methylmercury management practices and control actions for the full range of point and nonpoint sources of methylmercury to the Delta and Yolo Bypass?