



NEWS

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Air District develops consumption-based greenhouse gas inventory

Effort measures the climate impacts of Bay Area consumption

SAN FRANCISCO – The Bay Area Air Quality Management District, in collaboration with the UC Berkeley Cool Climate Network, has developed a greenhouse gas inventory for the Bay Area to tell a more complete story of how the region contributes to global climate change.

The measurements tally the impacts of consuming or purchasing goods by the Bay Area's 7 million residents.

"The development of a consumption-based greenhouse gas inventory is an important step toward protecting the climate," said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Air District. "It provides the bigger picture of how goods and services consumed by each of us in the Bay Area contribute to climate change and, by extension, highlights opportunities to reduce those emissions."

This new approach supplements the Air District's existing emissions-based inventory, which measures the amount of air pollutants discharged into the Bay Area atmosphere from conventional sources such as industry and transportation. The new consumption-based GHG inventory measures the total GHG emissions imbedded in the full range of goods and services consumed by Bay Area residents, regardless of where the product was manufactured or created.

"A large number of sessions at the Paris Climate Conference were dedicated to actions by cities and local governments," said Daniel Kammen, a co-author, professor of energy and resources and of public policy and director of UC Berkeley's Renewable and Appropriate Energy Laboratory, where the work was conducted. "Cities really crave this information and we want to make it easier for them to get it."

The inventory is based on a full life-cycle analysis of the emissions generated in the production, use, and disposal of each type of product or service. For example, in the case of motor vehicles, the inventory considers the greenhouse gases emitted in the production of all the individual parts that go into the vehicle, vehicle assembly, transporting the vehicle to the dealer, maintenance of the vehicle during its useful life, plus the emissions from refining and burning the fuel used to propel the vehicle.

Some potential uses of the consumption-based inventory will be used to provide information for the development of a Bay Area regional climate protection strategy, identify potential GHG reduction policies, assist climate planning activities of local cities, and help residents to reduce their individual GHG footprint.

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (www.baaqmd.gov) is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality in the nine-county Bay Area.

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