

CEQA-Shift

EcoShift's Climate Impact Assessment and Mitigation Services



CEQA and Climate Change

Starting in 2010, projects undertaken in California that are required to complete an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) are also required to include greenhouse gas (GHG) impact and mitigation information. Currently, regional Air Quality Districts have different standards for designating significant impacts, but overall thresholds for stationary sources have been set at 10,000 metric tons CO₂e, and for other projects at 1,100 mtCO₂e or 4.6 MT CO₂e/yr/SP. In cases where a project's impact is above thresholds, the EIR must include a Climate Action Plan.

Climate Action Planning

EcoShift uses a comprehensive approach to examine multiple GHG emission mitigation options according to a set of financial and environmental criteria. The first step is to create an accurate inventory of GHG emissions. With a completed inventory, it is possible to assess how to cost-effectively achieve meaningful reductions. Because emissions result from a diverse set of activities, it is necessary to assess all avenues to achieve reductions and use a meaningful set of metrics to aid in decision-making.

Some actions will save money by reducing operating costs, while others will have important environmental or community co-benefits. EcoShift Consulting uses its extensive expertise in Climate Action Planning to identify mitigation strategies with clear GHG reductions while achieving cost savings, increasing energy conservation, and maximizing potential co-benefits. In the cases where on-site mitigation is not possible (preferred alternative under CEQA), we will help select credible, permanent, and verifiable offsets, as well as help our clients work with communities to mitigate locally, creating important social and environmental co-benefits in the process.

EcoShift's CEQA-Shift Process

1. Initial Assessment. EcoShift consultants will examine the proposed project to determine whether its GHG emissions meet or exceed initial screening criteria (Steps 1 and 2 of the process diagram on the opposite page). With this information it is possible to determine whether a complete inventory is needed. If screening criteria are met, documentation will be prepared for inclusion in the EIR.

2. Inventory. In the cases where a complete inventory is required, we will conduct a GHG inventory. Although not required by CEQA, we can include transportation and other Scope 3 impacts (Step 3), and compare inventory results to established thresholds of significance (Step 4). If thresholds are not exceeded, a declaration of emissions will be prepared for inclusion in the EIR.

3. Climate Action Planning. In cases where project impacts exceed thresholds of significance, a full Climate Action Plan will be prepared. Using the GHG inventory, reduction targets will be set and plans for mitigation will be developed. EcoShift will prioritize on-site reductions in GHG emissions that have cost and efficiency co-benefits for the project. The plan will include a long term strategy for reducing GHG emissions from stationary and transportation sources, while increasing overall sustainability in the project (Step 5). If such mitigation measures are not practical, we will identify off-site mitigation measures to reduce overall GHG impacts below the threshold.

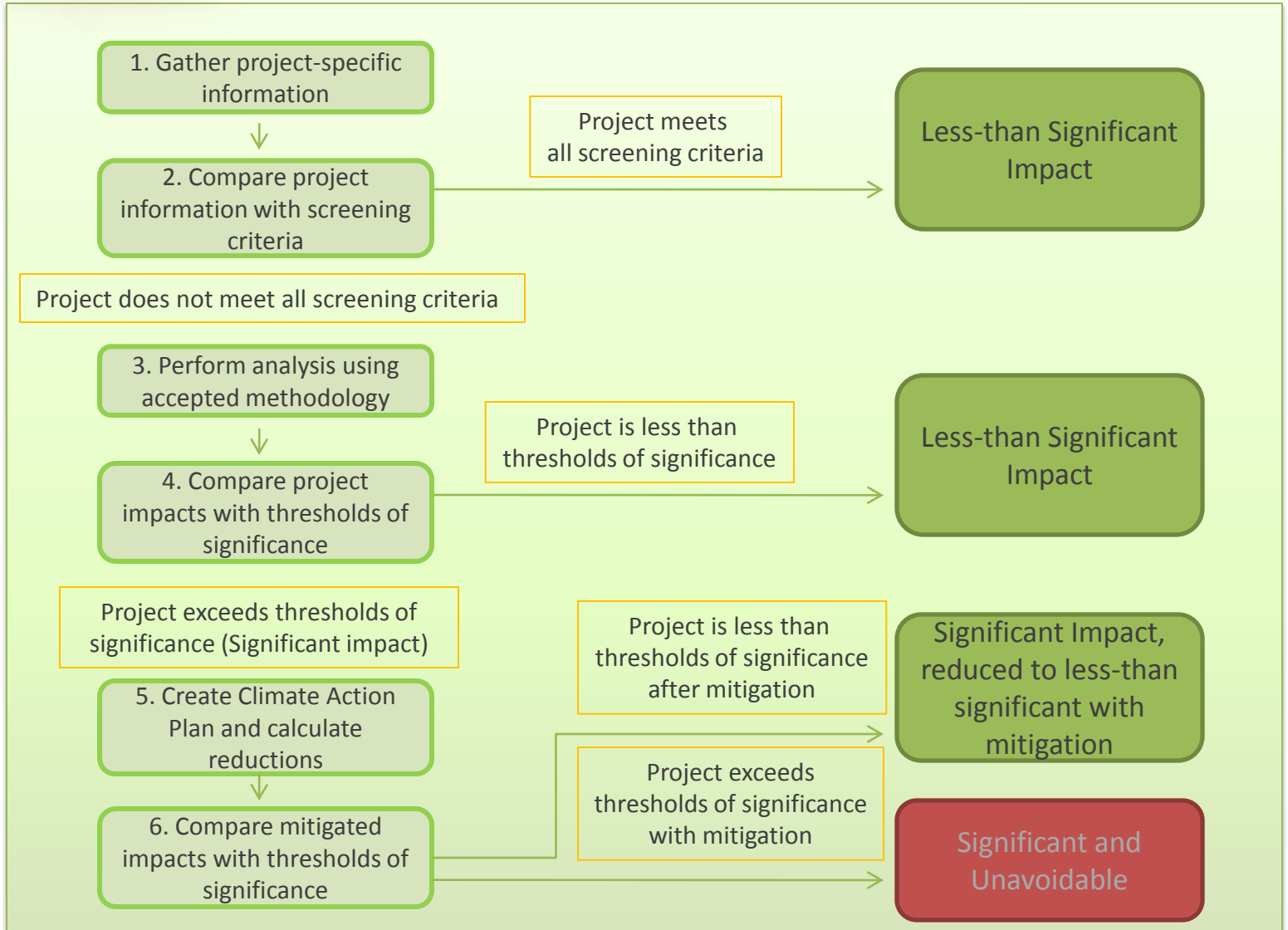
4. Continued Monitoring. Continuous monitoring after the completion of the project is essential in order to ensure that the GHG reduction measures are maintained and that the project continues to enjoy the co-benefits of energy savings and community recognition that were included in the planning phase. EcoShift will include mechanisms for this type of monitoring in the Climate Action Plan.

Draft EIR

Public Notice

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EcoShift's CEQA Process

EcoShift consultants follow the newly issued BAAQMD guidelines outlined above in order to document impacts of your proposed. As more guidelines are developed for different Air Quality Management Districts, we will incorporate those into our procedures. We examine stationary source impacts, as well as land use change, transportation, and other potential GHG sources. We use the URBEMIS model, as well as specialized modeling tools developed by EcoShift to estimate the magnitude of proposed impacts. Results of such modeling exercises

are used to create a Climate Action Plan that details emission reduction and mitigation efforts. We are also monitoring the evolving standards, and adapt our techniques to reflect the current state-of-the-art procedures, ensuring a transparent and defensible final assessment.

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