

# 2022-2026 Science Action Agenda

## Frequently Asked Questions

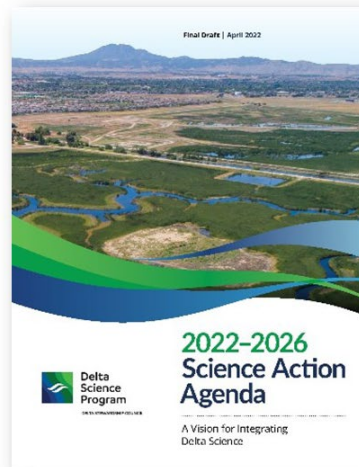
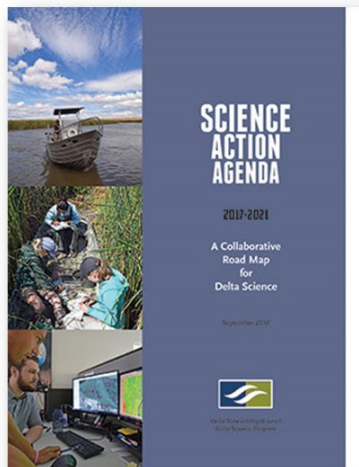


**Delta  
Science  
Program**

DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

### What is the Science Action Agenda?

- The [SAA](#) is a science guide that prioritizes and aligns science actions in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta to inform management decisions. It seeks to identify and fill knowledge gaps, promote collaborative science, inform science investments, and fulfill [Delta Science Plan](#) objectives.
- The SAA is updated every four to five years. The 2017-2021 SAA was the first iteration and the 2022-2026 SAA is the second iteration. The planning process for the 2022-2026 update began in early 2020 and was coordinated by the Delta Stewardship Council's Delta Science Program.



## Who uses the SAA?

The SAA is developed by and for the Delta science community.

- Scientists use the SAA to determine what science activities are critical to informing management, and in turn, what actions may be eligible for science funding.
- Managers use the SAA to identify what science and management priorities are of shared interest across the Delta and to help shape organizational priorities.
- Policymakers use the SAA to ensure that science for informing decision-making is prioritized and implemented.

## How was the 2022-2026 SAA developed?

- The Delta Science Program facilitated a multi-phase, two-year process to co-produce the 2022-2026 SAA with scientists, managers, and stakeholders, ensuring that Science Actions were responsive to [management needs](#) and [management questions](#).
- The process began in early 2020 with extensive outreach to members of the Delta science and management community. Delta Science Program staff canvassed networks, created an online survey, searched scientific literature, and engaged with nearly 30 Delta-relevant collaborative venues to craft an initial set of Management Questions.
- The Delta Science Program used a modified content analysis approach to organize the 65 Top Management Questions into six Management Needs. The Management Needs, together with the gaps identified in a collaboratively developed and publicly reviewed summary of progress on the 2017–2021 SAA, were used to guide the creation of Science Actions, which were drafted, discussed, and refined at a July 2021 workshop.

## What new features are included in the 2022-2026 SAA?

- Developing the 2022–2026 SAA began with crowdsourcing an unprioritized list of Management Questions, a new feature to the 2022-2026 SAA. The addition of Management Questions was suggested by the Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee’s 2019 [Delta Science Funding and](#)

[Governance Initiative](#), so that the SAA would enhance coordination across the Delta science enterprise and more directly inform policy and management. The Delta Science Program also evaluated progress on the Science Actions in the 2017–2021 SAA to inform the 2022–2026 SAA.

### What did the 2017-2021 SAA accomplish?

- The 2017-2021 SAA guided over \$35 million in management-relevant science funding from the Council and its partners and advanced our state of knowledge on key management challenges ranging from water quality to habitat restoration.
- A [progress summary](#) of the [2017-2021 SAA](#) showed that the Delta science community has made significant progress in enhancing its capacity for synthesis, integrating previously disparate datasets, and improving its understanding of the interactions between environmental stressors and managed species.

### How did the 2017-2021 SAA inform the new SAA?

- In 2021, the Delta Science Program evaluated progress on the 2017–2021 SAA to inform the development of the 2022–2026 SAA. To prepare the [progress summary](#), Delta Science Program staff compiled relevant activities (e.g., funded projects and research) that addressed at least one of the 25 2017-2021 Science Actions, assigned a progress status to each of them, and solicited input from the Delta science community. The progress made and outstanding gaps were considered when crafting Science Actions for the 2022-2026 SAA.

### How should the SAA be used?

- Specific uses of the SAA include guiding [competitive science solicitations](#) (e.g., 2021 Proposal Solicitation Notice, 2022 Delta Science Fellowship); justifying agency priorities, activities, investments and budgeting; coordinating multi-agency efforts; and informing strategic planning efforts for individual science programs.

## What does the theme of “integration” mean for the SAA?

- The 2022-2026 SAA is built upon a vision of integration, recognizing that addressing complex management needs in the Delta requires integration across social and biophysical disciplines, geographic and institutional boundaries, and topics.

## How is the 2022-2026 SAA coordinated with other initiatives?

- The science catalyzed through the SAA is intended to inform regulations, legislative mandates, guide science investments and to promote collaboration and transparency (e.g., [Delta Science Fellowship](#)). The SAA is also driven by or contextualized within existing regulations and management plans and programs (e.g., [Delta Plan](#)).
- One goal of the SAA is to highlight questions that reflect the priorities of interagency groups (e.g., Collaborative Science Adaptive Management Program, Delta Interagency Invasive Species Coordination Team), thereby benefitting multiple institutions’ mandates and priorities. By their nature, the Needs, Questions, and Actions in the SAA require collective action.

## What is the planning horizon for the SAA?

- The SAA is a collaboratively developed approach to prioritizing Science Actions that reduce uncertainties in the short-term (i.e., the next four to five years). Within this timeframe, the Delta Science Program facilitates the assessment and refocusing of priority Science Actions for each new SAA. Progress is measured on Science Actions during this period, recognizing that some Science Actions require continued attention beyond the four- to five-year timeframe. This is particularly true for Science Actions, which provide a foundation for addressing longer-term science and management needs.