Role of EPIC in the Power Sector

Ari Eisenstadt (he/him)
Energy Equity Manager
California Environmental Justice Alliance

CALIFORNIA
ENVIRONMENTAL
JUSTICE ALLIANCE

Central Questions

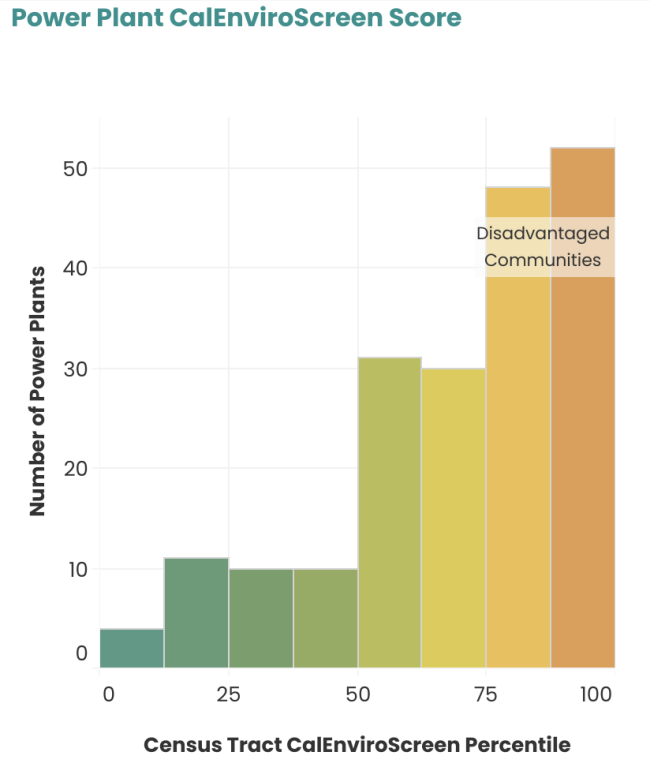
- How do we keep the lights on and provide firm, clean power **without relying on technologies that will continue to harm** environmental justice communities?

- How do we ensure that we **do not compromise on** meeting statutory and moral obligations to **retire gas-fired power plants**, particularly in low-income communities of color?

- How can we reorient ourselves away from simple decarbonization, towards **enacting the human right to breathe clean air**?

CALIFORNIA
ENVIRONMENTAL
JUSTICE ALLIANCE

Energy in Context

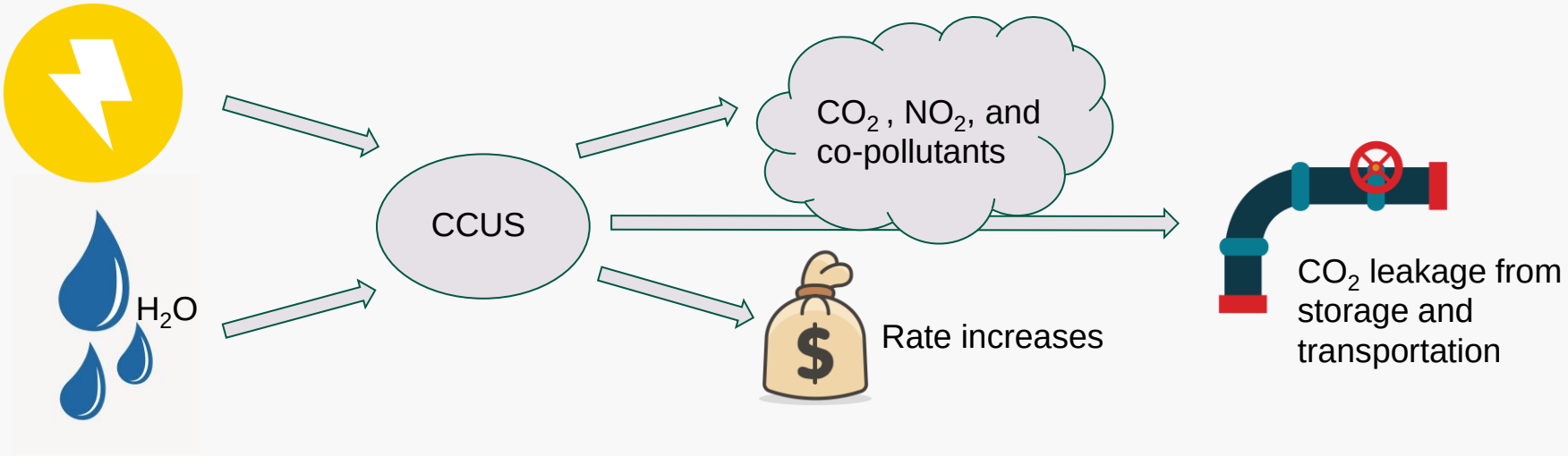


The majority of gas-fired power plants are located in low-income communities of color, otherwise known as Disadvantaged Communities (DACs).

Reliability is #1 reason for state authorizing continued gas plant operations.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ALLIANCE

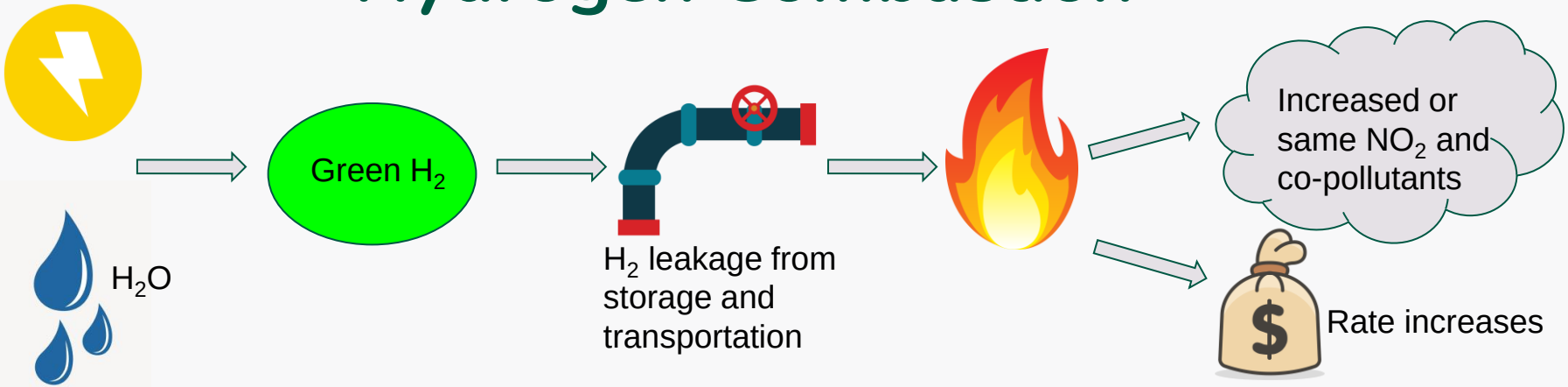
CCUS on Gas-Fired Power Plants



Research should **not focus on trying to improve CCUS capture rates**, but rather on finding the appropriate metrics to illustrate its true cost to society, and **finding ways to ensure that CCS isn't necessary**.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ALLIANCE

Hydrogen Combustion



Research should **not focus on developing new technologies for hydrogen** combustion, but on modeling the accurate health impacts on EJ communities of hydrogen combustion, storage, transportation, and the full life cycle of infrastructure. Research should **focus on developing other forms of energy reliability**.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ALLIANCE

Prioritize Clean Energy Investments in order to Retire Gas in EJ Communities

"The bill would require the Energy Commission to allocate at least *an additional* 10% of the moneys in the fund for technology demonstration and deployment at sites located in,*and* benefiting, low-income communities, as defined. The bill would require the Energy Commission to give preference for funding to clean energy projects under the EPIC program that benefit residents of low-income or disadvantaged communities." AB 523

- **Hydrogen and CCS have potential to harm** given existing location of gas plants; funding from EPIC is inappropriate
- Over $3 billion of investment can meaningfully advance locationally targeted, clean, distributed solutions to meet reliability, while ***benefiting*** DACs

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ALLIANCE

Develop Use of Filter for Inappropriate/Harmful Projects

- EPIC continues to fund combustion projects in EJ communities
  - Of $43 million allocated to combustion projects, $41 million funded projects in EJ communities
  - **Primarily focused on dairy digester gas**
- Harmful projects can be avoided by using appropriate filter
  - Example: White House EJAC Justice 40 Guide
  - CPUC ESJ Action Plan is insufficient
  - **Defer to DACAG for guidance**
- Filter, paired with strong social cost/benefit accounting, can help **identify beneficial projects**

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ALLIANCE

Conclusion

In summary, we suggest investing EPIC funding into:

- Studying most effective ways to **develop access** to community solar and storage, resilience centers, demand flexibility and energy efficiency, and other **distributed resources (DERs)** for DACs
- Filtering out harmful project proposals through a justice-based lens
- **Non-combustion projects only**, particularly for DACs
- Measuring the full spectrum of impacts of new technologies like hydrogen and CCS to quantify harms
- Modeling improvements and repairs to distribution grid to maintain reliability

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ALLIANCE