

# The Interagency Ecological Program's Ability to Provide Science Supporting Adaptive Management of the Delta

## A Report of the Delta Independent Science Board (ISB)

### Process for Review of IEP

- Consideration of prior reviews of IEP
- Experiences of the Delta ISB members in science organizations and IEP
- Review of how science is organized across other large ecosystems
- Review of IEP documents
- Insights reached through 111 responses to a questionnaire and over 400 written comments received
- Interviews with IEP participants and stakeholders



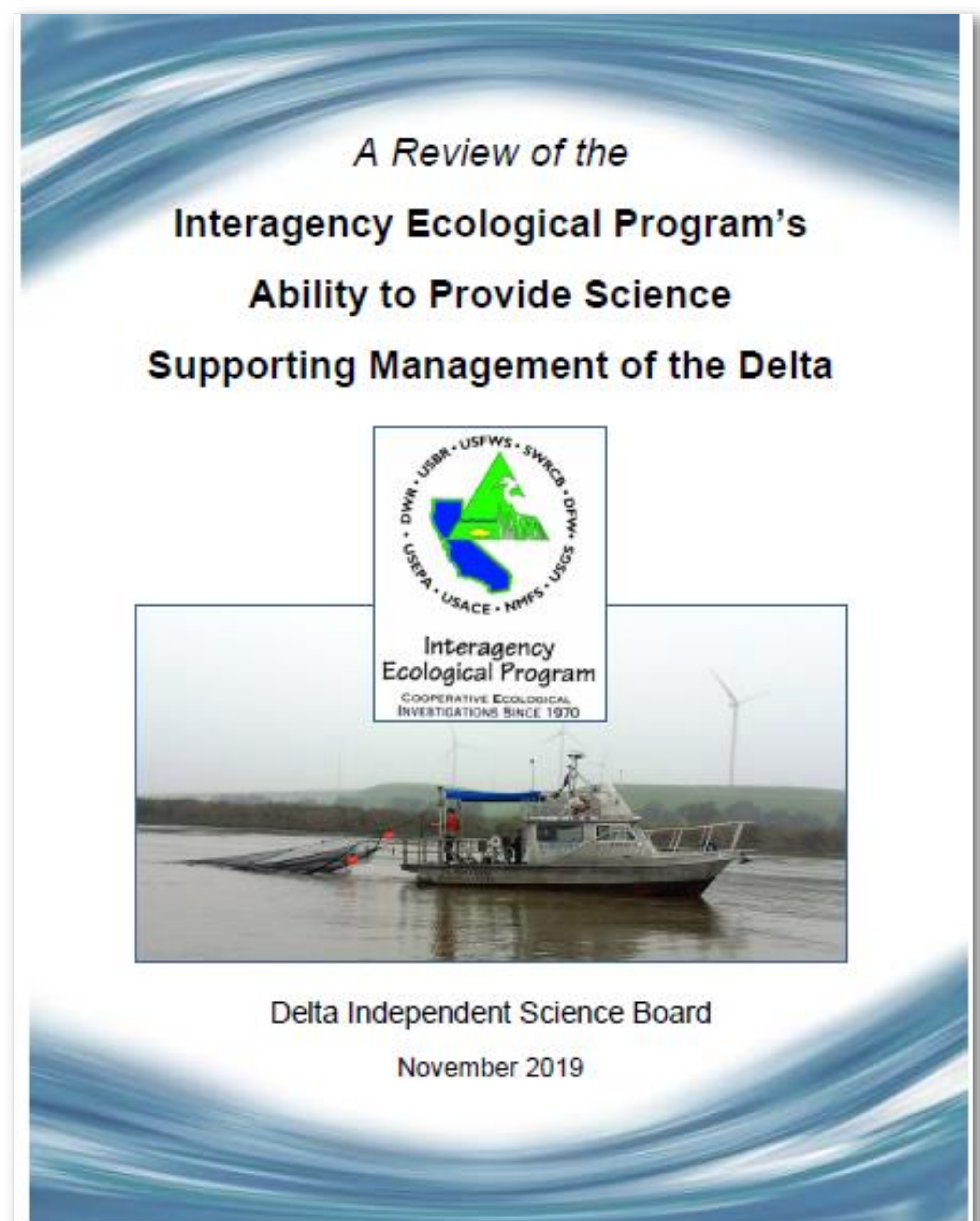
*The Delta ISB provides oversight of the scientific research, monitoring, and assessment programs that support adaptive management of the Delta through periodic reviews*

### Recommendations

1. To support adaptive management of the Delta, the core monitoring and reporting functions of IEP must be continued.
2. The value of long-term data in coping with rapid environmental changes should be promoted through powerful and consistent statements, examples, and analyses.
3. Data management should be improved by enhancing the accessibility of the IEP website and data portals, along with assessing stakeholder needs and uses of information.
4. A standing committee within IEP should continually assess new monitoring methods, phasing out those that are no longer appropriate, and cross-calibrating data from former and revised methods.
5. Mechanistic understanding of problems may be needed to address the Delta's environmental problems; augmenting monitoring with the experimentation and synthesis needed for effective adaptive management is essential.
6. IEP should undertake a formal, transparent assessment to develop a consistent set of goals that define its mission and activities in addressing the diverse management needs of the Delta.
7. IEP directors, staff, funders, and stakeholders should engage in in-depth discussions of IEP's organization and operations, including alternative organizational structures.
8. To be strategic, efficient, and effective, IEP should prioritize its activities to justify additional funding and partnerships and/or reallocate resources among existing activities.

### Conclusions

- IEP continues to be the most important interagency science program in the Delta.
- Funding constraints, structural issues, and lack of permanent positions hinder IEP's effectiveness.
- IEP must continue to evolve, adapt, and prepare for future issues and changes.
- Involvement of expertise outside of current IEP framework to review methods, quality control, and strategic directions is needed.
- Changes to structure and operations should concentrate on maintaining what IEP does well, including:
  - Reconsideration and recommitment to a set of shared goals and mission;
  - Providing transparent direction and open participation in achieving these goals;
  - Consideration and realignment of IEP's activities in light of these goals; and
  - Working towards a commitment to steady funding, transparency, and more effective leadership.



Link to the final IEP report:

<https://deltacouncil.ca.gov/pdf/isb/products/2019-11-13-final-isb-iep-review.pdf>

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