

Summer 2020 Webinar:

Alternatives Assessment and Environmental Justice: Current State of Practice, Challenges and Opportunities

Wednesday, July 29, 2020

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM PT

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM ET

TOPICS IN ALTERNATIVES ASSESSMENT

Free Webinar Series Hosted by the Association
for the Advancement of Alternatives Assessment



WELCOME!

Today's A4 webinar:

Alternatives Assessment and Environmental Justice: Current State of Practice, Challenges and Opportunities

Priority questions for today:

- How do we ensure that the voices of vulnerable and disproportionately impacted populations are adequately heard and addressed in our alternatives assessment methods and practice?
- How do we also ensure that these populations do not bear the impact of trade-offs that are made?
- Where is there opportunity for improvement?

Today's facilitators



Dr. Margaret Whittaker

TOXSERVICES
TOXICOLOGY RISK ASSESSMENT CONSULTING

Co-Chair, A4 Program Committee



Lauren Heine

**CHEM
FORWARD**
know better chemistry

Co-Chair, A4 Program Committee



Today's Speakers



José Bravo
Executive Director
Just Transition
Alliance



Veena Singla
Senior Scientist
Natural Resources
Defense Council

Webinar Logistics

- Due to the number of participants on the webinar, all lines are muted
- If you wish to ask a question, please raise your hand or type a question in the Q&A box located in the drop down control panel at the top of the screen
 - We want to encourage discussion on this webinar and will attempt to unmute lines of those who have their hands raised
- Questions will be answered at the end of the panel discussion
- The webinar is being recorded and will be posted with the slide deck on the A4 website:
www.saferalternatives.org
- At the end of the webinar, we will launch a short evaluation survey to help us with future webinars



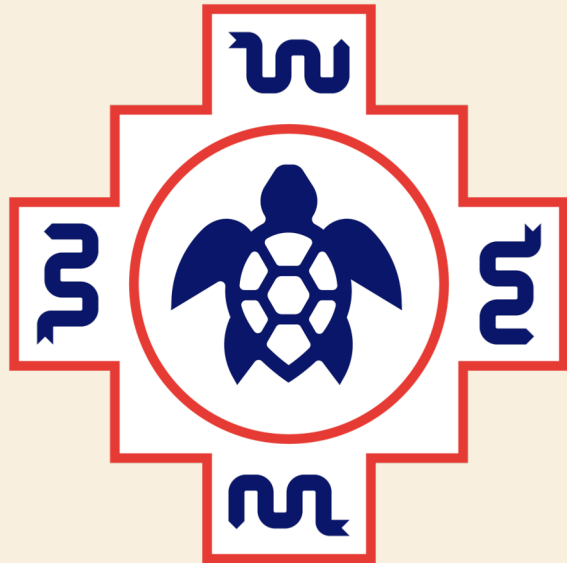
Environmental Justice and Cumulative Impacts

TOPICS IN ALTERNATIVES ASSESSMENT

José Bravo
Executive Director
Just Transition Alliance



Environmental Justice and Cumulative Impacts



Just Transition Alliance

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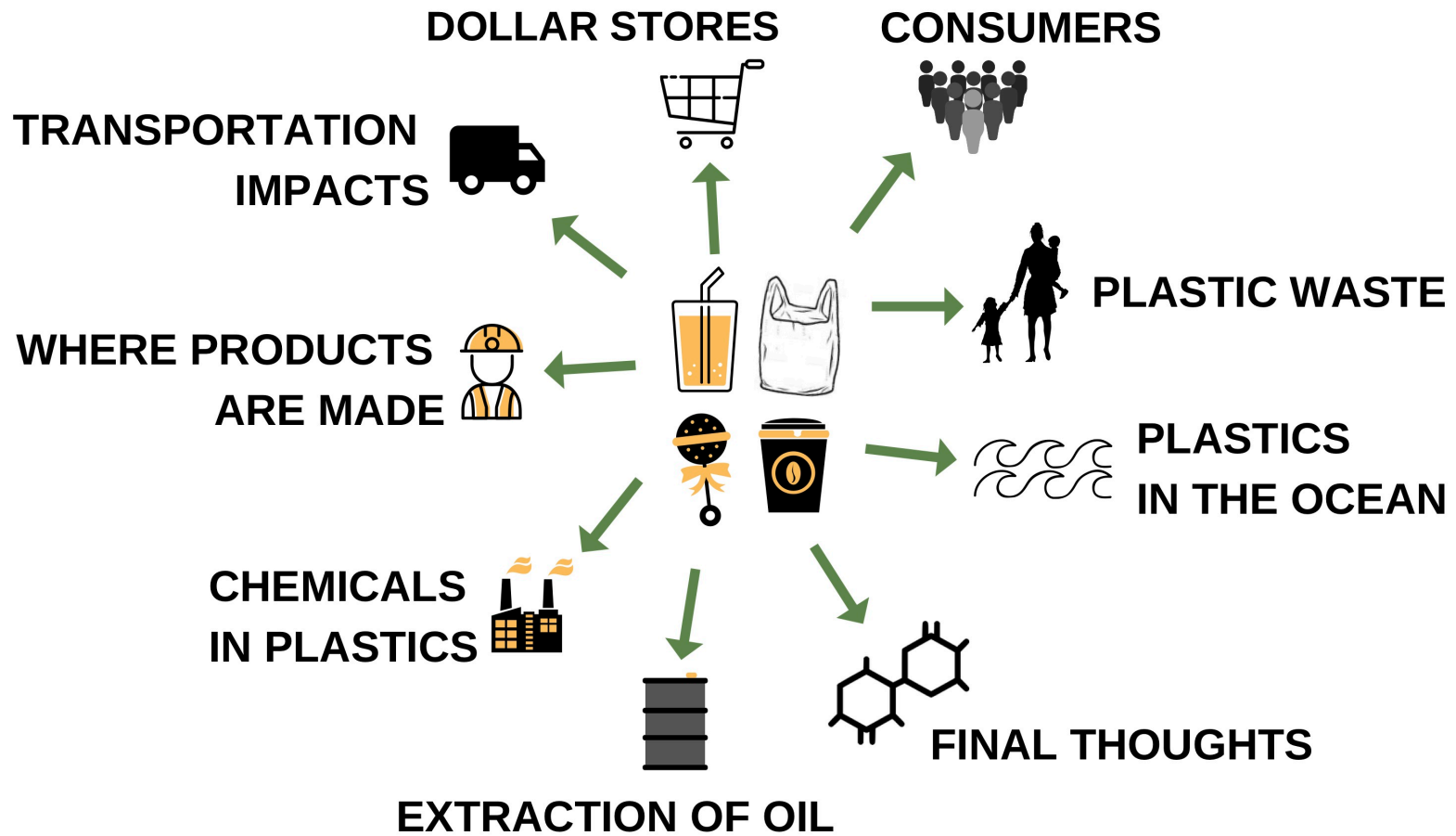
Environmental Justice

- Environmental Justice (EJ) communities are those that have been disproportionately impacted from the “legacy contamination” of polluting energy
- EJ communities lack access to affordable healthcare and healthy food, and are in neighborhoods with a lack of zoning laws that place them at the fenceline to hazardous facilities.

Cumulative Impacts

- People of color and low income communities are impacted by environmental harms from many different areas
- EJ community members are often affected from air pollution, workplace hazards, poor water quality, toxic chemicals in essential products and more
- The lifecycle that plastics go through is just one example of the environmental hazards EJ communities face

LIFECYCLE OF PLASTICS WITH AN ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE LENS



For more information visit the Just Transition Alliance at www.JTAlliance.org



Bring EJ Voices to the Table

- Because EJ communities are underrepresented and disproportionately impacted by environmental harms, it is time to bring EJ leaders to the decision making table
- EJ leaders and communities need to be included in not only environmental decision making, but also when it comes to the economy and health, and all aspects of our well being

Local Economies

- We need move to local and regional economies, reducing transportation pollution and costs
- Create renewable energy sources out of nontoxic, sustainable materials
- Bring workers and EJ communities together as natural allies

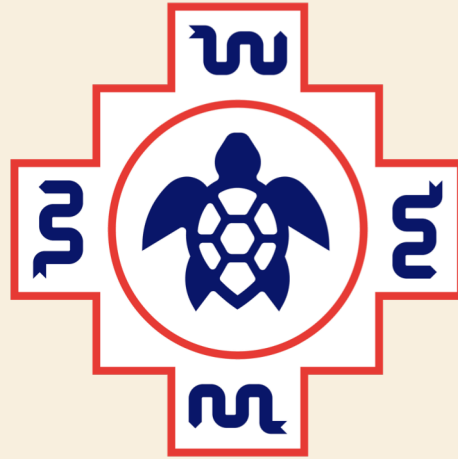


Legacy Chemicals

- Lead, cr6+, PFAS, PCBs, benzene, flame retardants, BPA



Thank
You



Just Transition Alliance

For more info, visit
www.JTAlliance.org

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Incorporating health equity into
alternatives assessment frameworks:
Perspective from pilot interviews

TOPICS IN
ALTERNATIVES ASSESSMENT

Veena Singla
Senior Scientist
Natural Resources Defense Council



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Incorporating health equity into alternatives assessment frameworks

Perspectives from pilot interviews



Natural Resources Defense Council



MISSION STATEMENT

To safeguard the Earth: its people, its plants and animals and the natural systems on which all life depends.

June 2017 discussion draft: starting the conversation



- Fact sheet
- Executive summary
- Full discussion draft

<https://www.nrdc.org/resources/selecting-safer-alternatives-toxic-chemicals-and-ensuring-protection-most-vulnerable>

Project collaborators



**Kathryn
Alcantar**
CHANGE



Ann Blake
Environmental
& Public Health
Consulting



Sally Edwards
U Mass Lowell

Regrettable substitutions have harmed vulnerable populations



Butter flavoring: diacetyl → 2,3-pentanedione
WORKERS

Microwave bag: C8 PFAS → other PFAS
COMMUNITIES

Regrettable substitutions have harmed vulnerable populations



Butter flavoring: diacetyl → 2,3-pentanedione
WORKERS

Microwave bag: C8 PFAS → other PFAS
COMMUNITIES

2018 study found PFAS in 100% of microwave popcorn bags tested



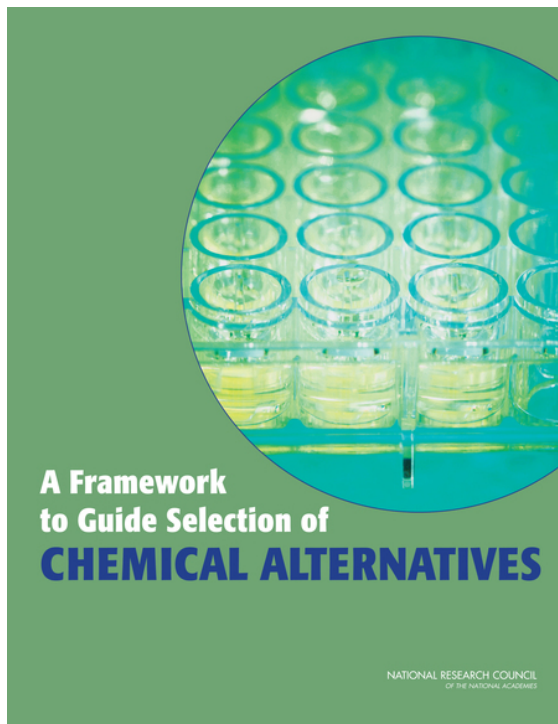
CAMPAIGN FOR
**Healthier
Solutions**



DOLLAR GENERAL



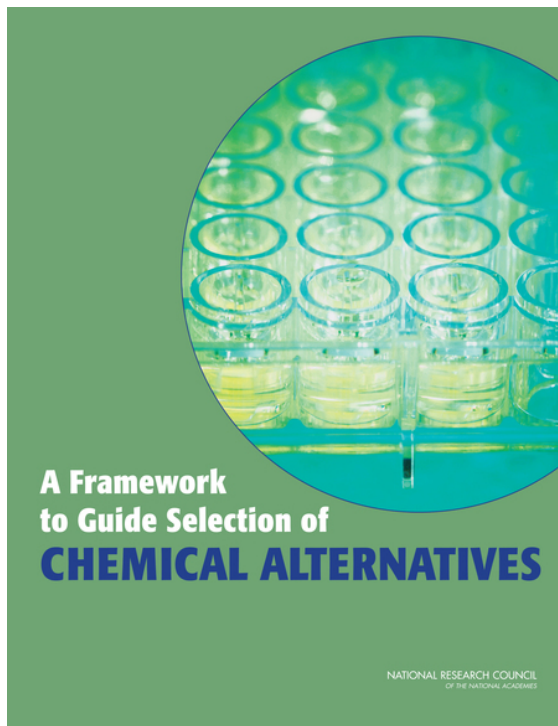
Two types of elements influence AA process and decisions



- **Data driven**
 - Data on hazard endpoints
- **Based on value judgements**
 - Degree of disclosure/ transparency
 - Process of stakeholder engagement
 - How to consider data gaps
 - How to consider trade-offs

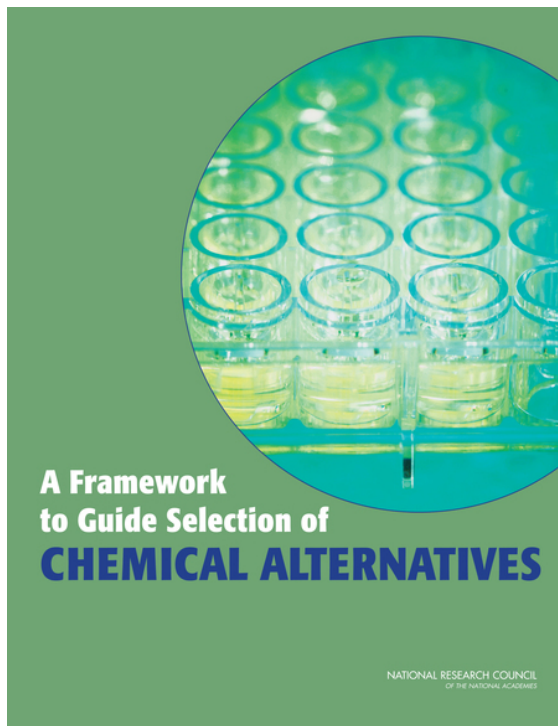
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Values heavily influence final decisions....



“What is deemed safer...ultimately reflects a set of **personal, corporate, legislative, or other values.**”

...but values not explicated in AA frameworks



“What is deemed safer...ultimately reflects a set of **personal, corporate, legislative, or other values.**”

“Many frameworks also do not consider the decision-making process or decisions rules used for resolving trade-offs...or the **values** that underlie such trade-offs.”

How can values from **environmental justice** and **public health** inform AA decisions?

- Overarching principle and goal: Health equity
 - Racial equity is central
- **Vulnerable populations:** disproportionately impacted by toxic chemicals and excluded from decisions that affect them



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Key informants for interviews

Ogonnaya Dotson-Newman
JPB Foundation



Jose Bravo
Just Transition Alliance



Ernie Pacheco
Communication Workers of America



Catherine Porter
Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative



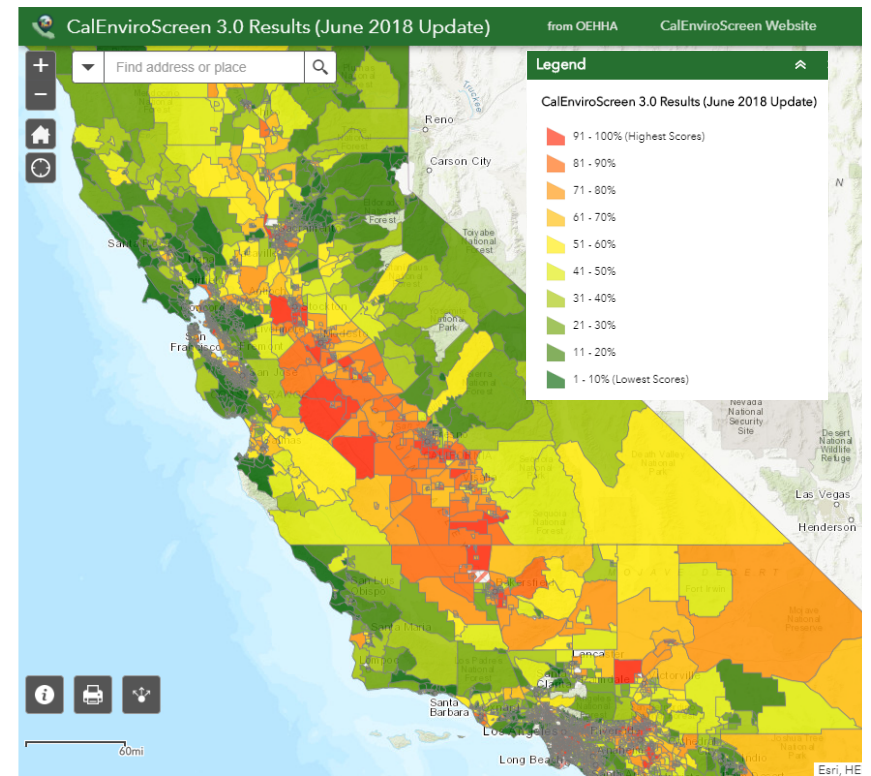
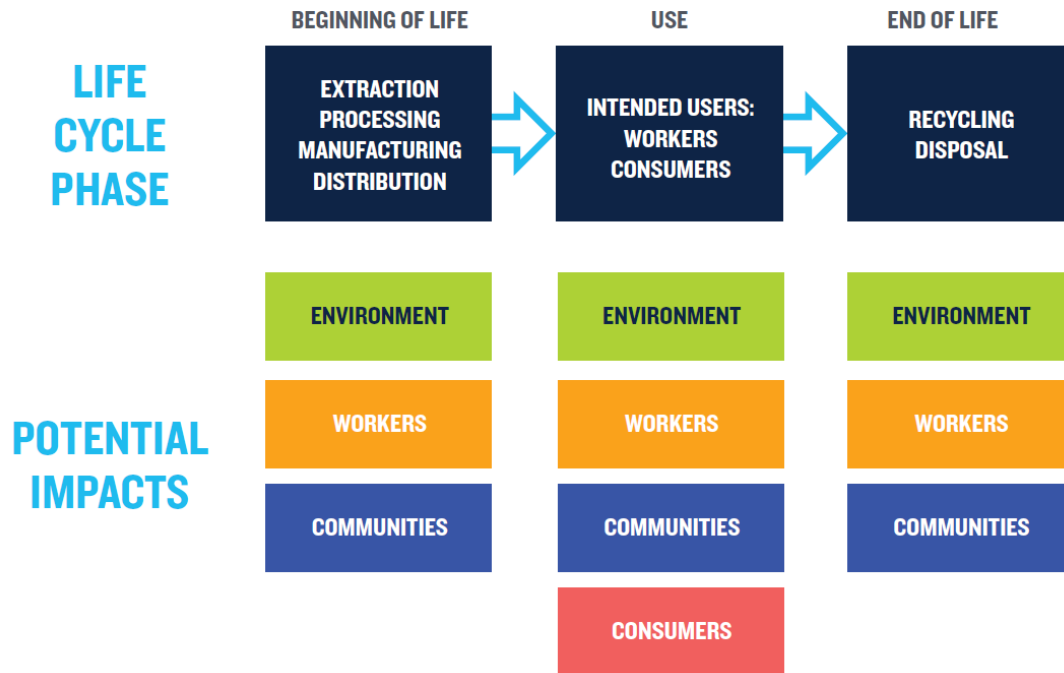
Vi Waghiyi
Alaska Community Action on Toxics

Three key themes

- Information quality and access/ transparency
- Accounting for trade-offs
 - Consideration of life cycle and cumulative impacts
 - Who decides?
- Genuine stakeholder engagement

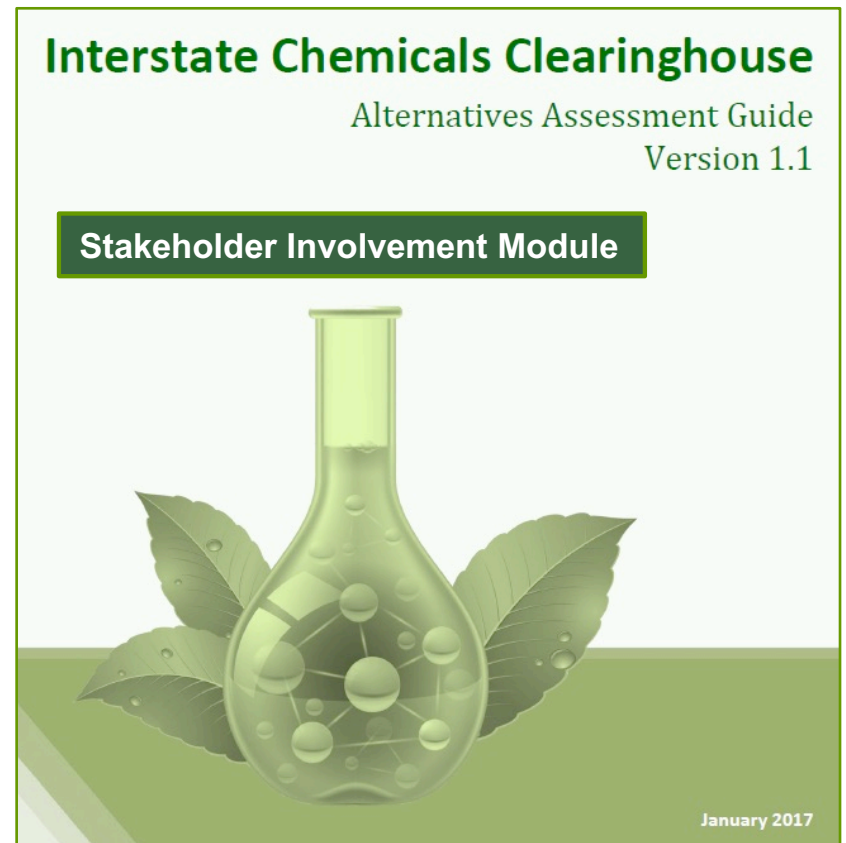


Life cycle and cumulative impacts



Genuine stakeholder engagement

- Over the life cycle, who is most impacted by the toxic chemical and potential alternatives?
- Engage in AA from scoping > post-implementation
- Decision making on trade-offs
- Source of information: chemical uses and exposures; social and economic impacts

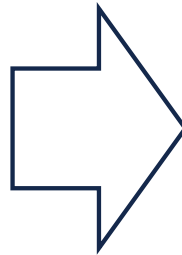


What does success look like?



Butter flavoring: diacetyl → 2,3-pentanedione
WORKERS

Microwave bag: C8 PFAS → other PFAS
COMMUNITIES



+



Alternative removes hazards by removing need for butter flavor and grease-proofing in product

CAMPAIGN FOR
**Healthier
Solutions**



Initial guidance for AA practice

NRDC/ CHANGE Discussion Draft

THE COMMONS PRINCIPLES FOR ALTERNATIVES ASSESSMENT

Addressing Chemicals of Concern to Human Health or the Environment

In October 2012, a group of 26 environmental health scientists, advocates, funders and policy makers met in Boston, Massachusetts for two days of meetings entitled **Building a Chemical Commons: Data Sharing, Alternatives Assessment and Communities of Practice**. One of the key outcomes of this meeting was an agreement regarding the need for a common definition and set of principles for chemicals alternatives assessment. Following this meeting, a subcommittee met over four months in 2013 to refine a consensus set of principles. These principles were based on earlier foundational work by the Lowell Center for Sustainable Production, the Massachusetts Toxics Use Reduction Institute, the Environmental Defense Fund, and the BizNGO Working Group. These principles are now available to be shared and used in framing discussions about alternatives assessment and to guide decision making about safer chemical use.

Alternatives Assessment is a process for identifying, comparing and evaluating materials, products or technologies on the basis of their hazards, persistence, and economic viability. A primary goal of Alternatives Assessment is to reduce risk to humans and the environment by identifying safer choices.

These Principles for Alternatives Assessment are designed to guide a process well informed by science that supports successful phase out of hazardous products and the substitution and elimination of hazardous chemical where possible.

REDUCE HAZARD Reduce hazard by replacing a chemical of concern with a less hazardous alternative. This approach provides an effective means to reduce risk associated with a chemical of concern if the potential for exposure remains the same or is reduced. Reformulation to avoid use of the chemical of concern is preferred.

MINIMIZE EXPOSURE Assess use patterns and exposure pathways to limit exposure to alternatives that may also present risks.

USE BEST AVAILABLE INFORMATION Obtain access to and use information that assists in distinguishing between possible choices. Before selecting preferred options, characterize the product and process sufficiently to avoid choosing alternatives that may result in unintended adverse consequences.

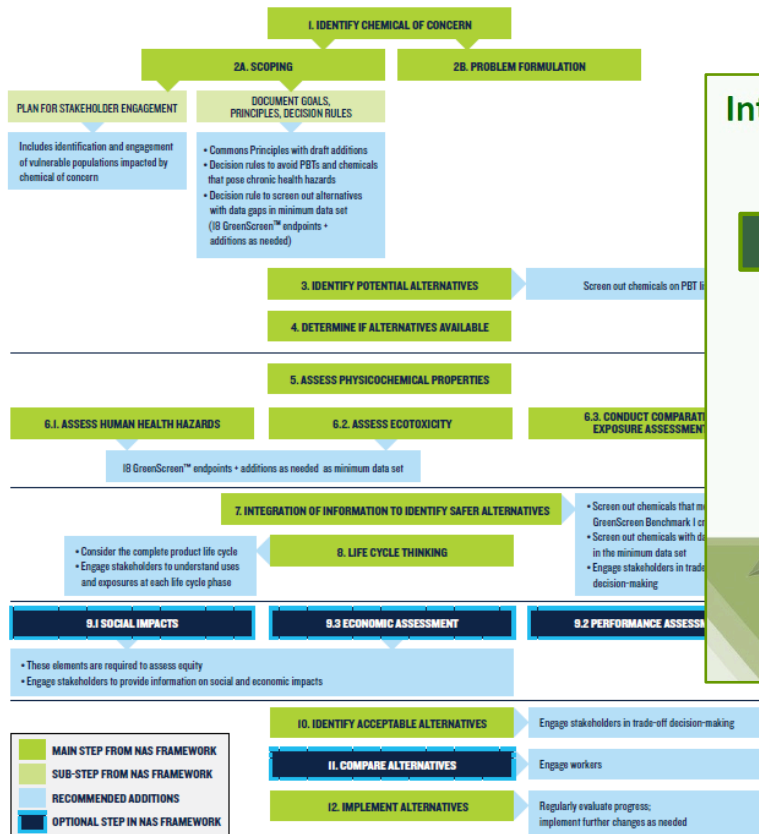
REQUIRE DISCLOSURE AND TRANSPARENCY Require disclosure across the supply chain regarding key chemical and technical information. Engage stakeholders throughout the assessment process to promote transparency in regard to alternatives assessment methodologies employed, data used to characterize alternatives, assumptions made and decision making rules applied.

RESOLVE TRADE-OFFS Use information about the product's life cycle to better understand potential benefits, impacts, and mitigation options associated with different alternatives. When substitution options do not provide a clearly preferable solution, consider organizational goals and values to determine appropriate weighting of decision criteria and identify acceptable trade-offs.

TAKE ACTION Take action to eliminate or substitute potentially hazardous chemicals. Choose safer alternatives that are commercially available, technically and economically feasible, and satisfy the performance requirements of the process/product. Collaborate with supply chain partners to drive innovation in the development and adoption of safer substitutes. Review new information to ensure that the option selected remains a safer choice.

EQUITY

FIGURE 5: SUMMARY OF OUR KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALTERNATIVES ASSESSMENT PRACTICE WITHIN THE STEPS OF THE NAS FRAMEWORK



Interstate Chemicals Clearinghouse

Alternatives Assessment Guide
Version 1.1

Stakeholder Involvement Module

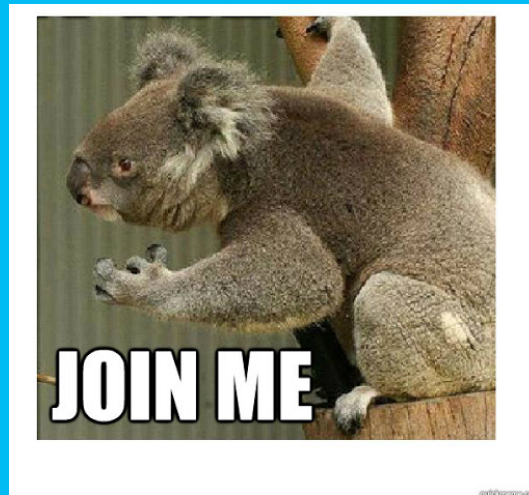


January 2017



Thank you!

And an invitation to continue the discussion



Poll # 1

Questions?
Comments?

Poll # 2

Resources

Just Transition Alliance's infographics: www.JTAlliance.org/materials

The Louisville Charter for Safer Chemicals:
<https://comingcleaninc.org/louisville-charter/about-the-louisville-charter-for-safer-chemicals>

NRDC/CHANGE Report: <https://www.nrdc.org/sites/default/files/toxic-chemicals-vulnerable-populations-report.pdf>

Commons Principles:
<https://www.bizngo.org/resources/entry/commons-principles-for-alternatives-assessment>

PBS Documentary – Mossville: When Great Trees Fall:
<https://www.pbs.org/video/mossville-when-great-trees-fall-se2q8k/>

Announcements

Mark your Calendar!



ASSOCIATION FOR
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ASSESSMENT

Current Practices and Future Prospects

Virtual Symposium – October 27-29, 2020

For program information visit: <http://saferalternatives.org/2020-virtual-symposium/>



ASSOCIATION FOR
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OF ALTERNATIVES
ASSESSMENT

A new professional association
solely dedicated to advancing
the science, practice, and policy of
alternatives assessment and
informed substitution

JOIN THE A4!

Working
collaboratively to accelerate
the use of safer chemicals,
materials, processes, and
products.

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