

## commentletters

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**From:** EcoMedia Compass <ecomediacompass@gmail.com>  
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**To:** commentletters  
**Subject:** 8/16/16 BOARD MEETING – ITEM #10

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Dear California Water Board Members,

As a concerned citizen, activist, biologist and resident of the Salton Sea, I challenge you to answer this question: What do YOU want to see happen to the Salton Sea? Answer it with the utmost honesty and don't be afraid to think outside the box or dream big. Because the conversations you have, the actions you support and the decisions you make based on your answer will affect millions of lives.

For over 40 years, our state and federal government have been unable to provide a clear and helpful answer to this question. Anyone who discovers and learns about the problems at the Salton Sea immediately understands that the answer to this question starts and ends with water. We cannot begin to rebuild the health of our largest lake without water. And the question, "Where are we going to get the water?" is the first mistake perpetuating the problem and preventing us from truly realizing the region's potential.

Where did we initially get the water to build great cities, create a multibillion dollar ag industry and provide water to our neighbors in Mexico? We diverted and imported fresh water from the Colorado River because we believed in the possibilities and promises of a better future for our communities. The Salton Sea depends more than ever on the same courage and ingenuity that created the thriving and diverse communities around it.

Communities half way around the world in Israel will soon benefit from a sea to sea solution to restore their Dead Sea. Their region, much like ours, is in dire need of economic investment, environmental restoration and water. Israel, Jordan and Palestinian territories are setting aside political, financial and territorial differences to solve their environmental and public health crises by importing water from the Red Sea. Our government is supporting Israel's sea to sea project by contributing \$100 million to the project; \$20 million more than what is currently being offered to help the Salton Sea.

In 2007, our state issued a \$8 BILLION plan to save the Salton Sea before the financial crisis of 2008 ultimately shelved the plan. We now have a better economy, better technologies, better public support and better understandings with Mexico to get the job done but we can't do it without the same aggressive funding

from our state and federal governments. All of the pieces for water exist, it is now up to us to put them together and solve the problem we started studying decades ago.

We urge you to look at the examples around us (Owens Lake, Dead Sea) in order to help better answer the question: What do YOU want to see happen to the Salton Sea? WE want to see the Salton Sea become the nation's success story and shining example of what we can achieve when we work together to do the right thing.

Sincerely,

Giovanni Arechavaleta

Campaign Director - "Save Our Sea!" Campaign

The EcoMedia Compass

Salton Sea, CA

