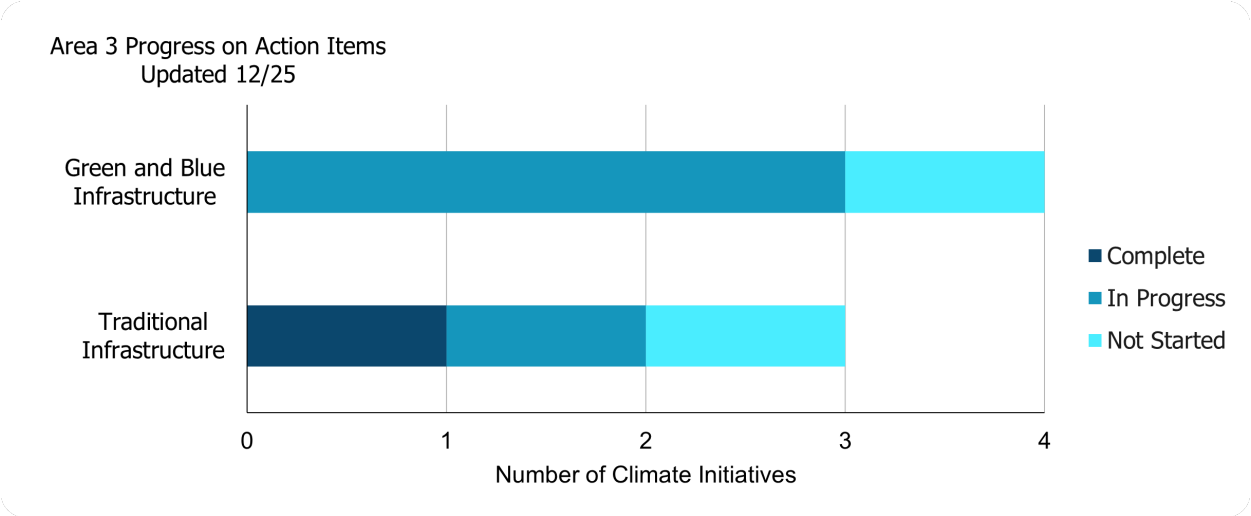
Maryland Department of the Environment

Water and Science Administration

Climate Priority Area 3: Green, Blue, and Traditional Infrastructure

Accelerate the scale and pace of implementing green, blue, and traditional infrastructure. This will build resilience to climate change stresses, mitigate pollution, and enhance natural habitats.

Overall Progress



Green and Blue Infrastructure

Blue and green infrastructure refers to nature-based practices, like aquatic grasses, wetlands, upland vegetation, and trees. This natural infrastructure can lessen the impact of climate change by reducing flooding, damping tidal storm surges, trapping pollutants, including greenhouse gases, serving as a windbreak, and moderating local temperatures.

1. **Nontidal Wetland Mitigation Regulation (In Progress)**: Update the nontidal wetlands regulations to improve the success of Maryland's wetland compensatory mitigation program. Planned adjustments will require equivalent standards for all types of mitigation (banks, permittee-responsible, and in-lieu fee), thereby increasing the quantity, quality, and targeting of wetlands projects, which will improve climate change resilience.
2. **Living Shoreline Implementation Plan (In Progress):** Develop a strategy for reducing the installation of hardened shoreline stabilization structures relative to living shorelines.
3. **Living Shoreline Implementation Goal (In Progress):** Reduce the installation of hardened shoreline stabilization structures authorized on undeveloped shorelines statewide annually.

4. **Green & Blue Flood Mitigation Project Identification (Not Started):** Identify and prioritize green and blue infrastructure flood mitigation projects via watershed and coastal flood studies.

Traditional Infrastructure

Traditional infrastructure, sometimes called "gray infrastructure" due to its common use of gray colored materials, like concrete, stone, or metal, plays a critical role in our communities. In the environmental sector this includes water supply systems, often involving dams for water storage, stormwater drainage systems that can mitigate flooding, wastewater treatment systems, and more. Depending on the situation, traditional infrastructure can be at risk of climate impact, and can play a role in lessening the impacts.

1. **Dam Maintenance and Repair Fund Legislation (Complete):** Develop and introduce legislation to establish a private dam repair fund, means of capitalizing it, and a program to implement it. Doing so will reduce the risk of dam failure, which is increased by extreme amounts of rain due to the changing climate in our region.
2. **Dam Repair and Maintenance Fund Program (In Progress):** If legislation authorizing and capitalizing a Private Dam Repair Fund is adopted, work with the Water Infrastructure Finance Administration to develop a program to implement the new statute.
3. **Traditional Infrastructure Flood Mitigation Project Identification (Not Started):** Identify and prioritize traditional infrastructure flood mitigation projects via watershed flood studies.