

ECO supports the education, communication and outreach goals of the Commission by providing expertise on best practices around outreach and education to stakeholders on climate change and state actions to address its causes and impacts. In 2018, ECO has worked to strategically reach out to stakeholder groups on their specific interests and via existing channels of communication. ECO has developed several recommendations and urges the state to use similar strategies for outreach.

In general, ECO's work is related to three specific charges in the MCCC law: (1) communicating with and educating citizens about the urgency of acting to reduce the impacts of climate change; (2) addressing any disproportionate impacts of climate change on low-income and vulnerable communities; and (3) developing broad public and private partnerships with local, State, and Federal agencies.

ECO is committed to considering the impacts of climate change on vulnerable communities such as those who may experience increased flooding, sea level rise and other climate-driven effects, as well as those with less ability to respond to these events based on socioeconomic status. ECO, the Commission, and the State should continue work to give full consideration to these impacts to address community concerns. Likewise, it is important to identify and collaborate with existing trusted messengers in communities vulnerable to climate change to implement these efforts.

Recommendations

- 1. MDE and other State agencies should include activities and plans around climate change outreach in the GGRA in order to facilitate collaboration on outreach efforts. This includes, but is not limited to, existing programs being implemented by MDH, DNR, MEA, MDOT, MSDE, and MDP.**
- 2. The State should provide outreach to local governments to support their efforts to respond to and educate about climate change.**
- 3. The State should continue to support efforts to train individuals and organizations to educate on climate change; and recognize and leverage efforts by private organizations to address climate change.**
- 4. The State should seek ways to provide materials to the public to inform and educate on climate change through common points of entry to state and local government, in order to leverage existing contact between the State and the public. To the extent possible, the State should look for similar opportunities with private organizations that have widespread interaction with the public.**
- 5. The State should develop an outreach plan around the 2018 GGRA draft plan that incorporates best practices for communication, education and outreach. The plan should reach various stakeholders throughout the state in order to seek diverse opinions about the final plan is due at the end of 2019. The state should collaborate with partners to develop the outreach plan.**