

Maryland Commission on Climate Change
Education, Communications, and Outreach Workgroup
Recommendations for MCCC 2016 / 2017 Report

1. Public Outreach to Support Education on Annual Report

- The Commission should identify a suite of approaches to develop tools, resources, or meeting models to both provide education on climate change for and to receive input from diverse stakeholders and communities in Maryland.

These approaches should increase the Commission's capacity for communications and outreach—by leveraging existing models across the Commission's sectors and in Maryland and beyond. Successful models on climate change education, communication, and outreach should be shared through presentations to the ECO Work Group.

- Education, Communications, and Outreach should prioritize climate change and methods to increase equity and inclusion in Commission work.
- The Commission should implement a pilot to formalize methods for responding to engagement needs and to respond to issues identified by communities vulnerable to climate change. Enhanced outreach location considerations should include issues faced by environmental justice communities.
- Digital and web capacity to share resources should be increased.
- Existing Maryland educational resources on climate change should be compiled and made available online with an emphasis on diverse: geographic areas, literacy levels, and content topics to support Maryland's Environmental Literacy mandate.
- ECO efforts should incorporate and respond to emerging research and best practices for communications on climate change.
- Support efforts to design a Climate Ambassadors program.
- ECO should support assessment of emerging content areas or gaps to focus MCCC topics for future consideration.
- Formalize partnerships with key stakeholders from government, private, and nonprofit sectors to support distribution of report and to identify emerging stakeholders and to assess requests for information in Maryland communities facing the impacts of climate change.

- Increase work group members in private and government sectors and with unique expertise education and communication with communities vulnerable to climate change.

Outreach should be informed by input from both the Commission on Environmental Justice and Sustainable Communities (CEJSC) and the Children’s Environmental Health & Protection Advisory Council (CEHPAC) to best identify communities vulnerable to climate change and communities overburdened by pollution.

- The ECO Working Group should work with the above mentioned organizations to select locations on Maryland to hold targeted enhanced outreach (a letter from these groups is pending regarding some initial thoughts on specific locations)
- Locations should meet the needs of both the Maryland Commission on Climate Change and the needs of the environmental justice / health community with a focus on vulnerability to climate change
- Vulnerability can be defined by exposure to increased flooding and sea level rise and other climate factors) and/or by ability to respond to these events based on socioeconomic status
- Environmental justice and equity should be key factors in determining tools and geographic areas for the Commission’s outreach efforts to educate and communicate on climate change.

MCCC outreach must be guided by the 2015 Maryland law which requires MCCC to:

- Develop broader non-profit/for-profit community and state, federal and local government partnerships;
- Communicate with and educate Maryland residents about the urgency of acting to reduce the impacts of climate change (ECO working group);
- **Address any disproportionate impacts of climate change on low-income and vulnerable communities**

ECO recommends Commission reports to include:

- Executive Summary should be translated into Spanish. Translations of this and future reports to various languages should occur when a need is identified or requested.
- Design summary of key findings for audiences including: Policy Makers, general public, communities overburdened by impacts of climate change and energy development, and educators
- Produce resource appendix to report to educate public on ways to contact state offices working on climate change and to compile research and resources for the public that inform the findings of the 2016 report on climate change
- A formalized partnership with key stakeholders from government, private, and nonprofit sectors to support distribution
- A communications toolkit to support distribution through media platforms maintained by members of / engaged stakeholders on MCCC including tools for ongoing education of residents