

Maryland Commission on Climate Change

Mitigation Working Group

2017 Work Plan Draft

Purpose

During its 2015 session, the Maryland General Assembly codified the Maryland Commission on Climate Change (MCCC) into law, and charged the Commission with advising the Governor and General Assembly on ways to mitigate the causes of, prepare for, and adapt to the consequences of climate change. The MCCC is chaired by MDE Secretary Ben Grumbles and consists of 26 members representing diverse interests in the State.

The Mitigation Working Group (MWG) is one of four working groups that support the objectives of the Commission. The purpose of the MWG is to recommend regulatory, market-based and voluntary programs to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. These strategies are to be designed in support of a strong economy and job creation in Maryland.

Membership

The MWG is balanced group co-chaired by three commission members (state agency, business representative, and environmental advocate), with administrative support provided by Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) staff. A complete membership roster is located in Appendix A of this document.

2017 Priorities

The MWG is partially driven by the schedule set by the 2016 Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act (GGRA) legislation, which requires MDE to present a draft plan to the Governor and General Assembly in October 2018 outlining strategies to achieve the new benchmark GHG emission reduction goal (40 percent reduction from 2006 levels by 2030). Due to the significance of this plan, the MWG intends to provide robust recommendations and assistance to MDE both during the development process and after the draft plan is released, prior to finalization in 2019. In addition to this more comprehensive objective, the MWG contributes yearly updates and recommendations to the annual Commission Report released each November. This upcoming year will be similar to 2016 in that MWG will continue to work towards building strong recommendations for the 2018 Report to help Maryland meet its 40 by 30 goals. At the same time, the MWG recognizes that any action which can be taken earlier will provide a greater benefit over time. With this in mind, the working group will strive to provide recommendations for early action within the annual Commission reports, as well as in open communication with MDE regarding the 2018 draft plan. The MCCC 2016 Report included MWG priorities for 2017 (Appendix B of this document). These have been refined as follows:

1. Support MDE's efforts to enhance the GHG emissions inventory; collaborating with the Scientific and Technical Working Group to develop best practices for incorporating methane, black carbon, and other sources or sinks as determined appropriate
2. Continue partnership with the CEJSC and ECO Working Group to define and identify environmental justice and underserved communities in the state, and to conduct outreach meetings/listening sessions to engage these groups

3. Research and provide appropriate support for potential efforts by the State and the business community to bring additional clean energy businesses and manufacturing jobs to Maryland, and to sustain those already in existence
4. Engage in efforts to identify fossil-fuel dependent workers and communities in Maryland; and work to identify the existing and prospective GHG reduction programs and policies that may or do have impacts on these groups
5. In collaboration with the Adaptation and Response Working Group, enhance effort and research on climate friendly agricultural practices, including but not limited to carbon sequestration and the healthy soils initiative
6. Continue efforts to research the role of the transportation sector and potential programs and initiatives for emission reduction, including electric vehicles, mass transit and other travel demand strategies
7. Engage in efforts to investigate and potentially develop and implement innovative financing programs which support a transition to proven new technologies (especially those in energy and transportation) that can not only reduce GHG emissions and energy use, but also save consumers money

Process

The MWG has access to a wide variety of internal and external assets, including the expertise and resources of MWG members, various State agencies, and the three other working groups of the Commission. In 2016 the MWG regularly sourced subject matter experts in topics of study to inform analyses and discussion of the working group, and plans to continue to do so in 2017. The MWG also plans to coordinate with the Science and Technology Working Group (STWG), the Adaptation and Response Working Group (ARWG) and the Education, Communication and Outreach Working Group (ECO) on many cross-cutting issues. More specific opportunities for collaboration are laid out in the Proposed Meeting Schedule (Appendix B).

Schedule of Meetings

Appendix C of this document provides a summary of MWG meetings scheduled for 2017, as well as tentative topics and action items.

Appendix A

Mitigation Working Group Membership

Co-Chairs	
George “Tad” Aburn (Working Group Lead)	Maryland Department of the Environment
Michael Powell	Business Community Representative
Mike Tidwell	Chesapeake Climate Action Network
Private Sector Representatives	
Anne Lindner	Exelon
Mike Remsberg	Trinity Consultants
R. Daniel Wallace	Bith Energy
John Quinn	BGE
Drew Cobbs	American Petroleum Institute
Tom Ballentine	NAIOP – Real Estate Development
Tom Dennison	Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative
Tom Weissinger	Raven Power
Public Sector Representatives	
Jana Davis	Chesapeake Bay Trust
Gerrit Knaap	National Center for Smart Growth Research and Education, UMCP
Arjun Makhijani	Institute for Energy and Environmental Research
Joe Uehlein	Labor Network for Sustainability
Anya Schoolman	Community Power Network
Rebecca Ruggles	Maryland Environmental Health Network
Other Representatives	
Colby Ferguson	Maryland Farm Bureau
Ben Hobbs	Johns Hopkins University
Jim Strong	United Steelworkers
Les Knapp	Maryland Association of Counties
Alice Kennedy	Maryland Municipal League
Government Members	
Colleen Turner	Maryland Department of Transportation
Chris Rice	Maryland Energy Administration
Christine Conn	Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Susan Payne	Maryland Department of Agriculture

Mitigation Working Group Steering Committee	
George “Tad” Aburn (Working Group Lead)	Maryland Department of the Environment
Michael Powell	Business Community Representative
Mike Tidwell	Chesapeake Climate Action Network
Colleen Turner	Maryland Department of Transportation
John Fiastro	Maryland Energy Administration
Christine Conn	Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Susan Payne	Maryland Department of Agriculture

Mitigation Working Group Recommendations from the MCCC 2016 Report

25 by 20 Update

- The 25% by 2020 plan is being implemented, and when combined with external trends such as vehicle miles travelled and increased natural gas use in electricity generation, GHG emission reduction estimates appear to show that the State is on the path to the 2020 goal

40 by 30 Status Report

- MDE is currently working on a draft of the 40 by 30 plan, which is due as a draft in 2018 (final in 2019)
- Preliminary expectations are that many existing programs will continue to generate deeper GHG reductions through 2030; additional programs will also be necessary. Updates to the Commission will continue through 2017 and will have a specific focus on this new reduction progress that may be needed.

Methane Emissions

- The MWG supports MDE's efforts to reduce methane emissions from landfills, natural gas infrastructure (e.g. compressor stations and underground storage), and waste water treatment plants, and recommends further research into additional sources such as agriculture and fuel production/transport
- The MWG recommends that the Commission and the State strongly support the need for robust Federal regulations and strong regulations in other states to minimize out-of-state methane emissions
- The MWG recommends that the upcoming GHG emission inventory incorporate a more extensive accounting of methane emissions; including analysis by MDE to calculate out-of-state emissions due to in-state consumption, as well as emissions from existing natural gas infrastructure within the State
- The MWG does not have a consensus either supporting or opposing hydraulic fracturing in Maryland, however it is agreed that *should* hydraulic fracturing commence in Maryland, methane emissions must be minimized to the maximum extent possible

Enhanced Economic Analysis/Social Equity Issues

- The MWG supports MDE's efforts to develop and implement enhanced and spatially explicit tools for economic analysis and analysis of social equity issues as part of the planning process to research, analyze and develop new and enhanced greenhouse gas emission reduction programs to support the draft 40 by 30 plan due in 2018
- The MWG supports the MDE efforts to hold public outreach meetings and listening sessions, which started in late 2016 and will continue into 2017, to specifically seek input from underserved communities that will be significantly impacted by climate change
- MWG should continue to consult with CEJSC and the ECO Working Group to inform the equity considerations of future actions and recommendations
- MWG should continue to engage a range of stakeholders to ensure that robust economic and employment analyses are included in considerations for all future actions and recommendations

Appendix B

Electric and Other Zero Emission Vehicle Initiatives

- The MWG supports the efforts of MEA and the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Council (EVIC) on potential 2017 legislation, and recommends that incentives be provided for the purchase of EVs, EV equipment, and EV infrastructure
- The MWG supports the efforts of MDOT, MDE, MEA and EVIC to expand electric vehicle infrastructure and usage within Maryland. Local government should be consulted as part of this process.
- The MWG proposes that a significant amount of the Volkswagen settlement be utilized for EV infrastructure; for leveraging EV-related manufacturing in Maryland; and for demonstrations and evaluation of electric transportation in other aspects such as transit, fleet utilization, port and airport support vehicle applications, and others.

Additional Recommendations for 2017

The MWG also supports the following:

- MDE efforts to enhance the GHG emissions inventory to include methane, black carbon, and two radiative forcing estimates (20-year and 100-year)
- A continued partnership with the CEJSC to identify and conduct outreach meetings/listening sessions with environmental justice and underserved communities
- An enhanced effort by the State and the business community to bring additional clean energy businesses and manufacturing jobs to Maryland, and to sustain those already in existence
- Efforts by the MWG to identify fossil-fuel dependent workers and communities in Maryland; and to identify, as specifically and quantitatively as possible, the existing and prospective GHG reduction programs and policies that may or do have negative or positive impacts on these groups
- In collaboration with the Adaptation and Response Workgroup, an enhanced effort and research on climate friendly agricultural practices, including carbon sequestration and the healthy soils initiative.
- Additional research and emphasis into the role of the transportation sector and potential programs for emission reductions, including mass transit and other travel demand management strategies as well as federal regulations
- An effort to develop and implement innovative financing programs to support a transition to proven new technologies that can not only reduce GHG emissions (and energy use), but also save consumers money. This effort should focus on both energy and transportation technologies.

Appendix C

Proposed MWG Meeting Schedule for 2017

Date/Time	Topic	Collaboration Partners/Presenters	Deliverables
January 11 12pm – 2pm	Clean Energy Businesses and Manufacturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labor Network for Sustainability • United Steelworkers 	Finalize the 2017 Work Plan
February 8 10am-12pm	Efforts for an Enhanced GHG Emissions Inventory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STWG • MDE • MEA 	
April 12 10am-12pm	Agricultural Practices: Healthy Soils and Carbon Sequestration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dept of Agriculture • Healthy Soils Coalition • ARWG • UMD Geography (DNR contact) 	
May 10 10am-12pm	Environmental Justice and Underserved Communities Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECO Working Group • CEJSC • MDE 	Create a (working) definition for EJ and underserved communities
June 14 10am-12pm	Innovative Financing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maryland Clean Energy Center • UMD Environmental Finance Center 	
July 12 10am-12pm	Identification of Fossil-Fuel Dependant Workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IEER • ECO Working Group 	
August 9 10am-12pm	Transportation: Enhanced Public Transit and other Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Center for Smart Growth • Maryland Transit Authority • EVIC 	Consider recommendations for the Annual Report
September 13 10am-12pm			Draft recommendations for the Annual Report
October 11 10am-12pm			Final recommendations for the Annual Report
November 8 10am-12pm			Draft 2018 Work Plan
December 13 10am-12pm			Final 2018 Work Plan