

Maryland Commission on Climate Change

Education Communications & Outreach Workgroup

DRAFT 2019 Work Plan Update

Modified 3/14/2019

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 the Secretary of the Maryland Department of the Environment, and consists of 26 members representing diverse interests in the State.

The Education, Communications, and Outreach (ECO) Working Group is one of four working groups that support the objectives of the Commission. The Commission is responsible for prioritizing working group activities, including the following activities noted in the governing legislation that are especially relevant to the ECO Working Group:

- Developing broad public and private partnerships with local, State, and federal agencies;
- Communicating with and educating citizens about the urgency of acting to reduce the impacts of climate change; and
- Addressing any disproportionate impacts of climate change on low-income and vulnerable communities.

To support education, communication, and outreach among diverse stakeholders on the causes of climate change, its potential impacts to Marylanders, and mitigation and adaptation strategies, the ECO Working Group has the following core strategies:

- Advising on effective communications strategies and best practices for education, communication and outreach to diverse stakeholders;
- Identifying and advising on opportunities for stakeholder engagement in Commission and State activities, or for State and Commission support of existing community activities;
- Engaging the network of Commission members (inclusive of working groups) to coordinate and provide capacity for such initiatives, as feasible; and
- Leveraging the interests and initiatives of public and private sector organizations outside of the Commission, to advance the Commission's objectives.

Membership

The ECO working group members are appointed by the Chair of the Commission, and represent both public and private interests in climate change. Members include a diverse array of stakeholder groups, and currently include representatives of academic institutions, environmental organizations, government agencies, and business interests, as identified in the governing legislation. A complete membership roster is included in *Appendix A* of this document, and will be maintained as changes may occur during the 2019 year, on the Commission's website.

Process

The ECO Working Group has access to a wide variety of internal and external assets, including the expertise and resources of ECO members, various State agencies, and the three other working groups of the Commission. This last portion is especially important to ECO as it works to coordinate Commission efforts

on education, communication, and outreach. In 2018, ECO began to send a representative to each of the Adaptation and Response, Scientific and Technical, and Mitigation Working Group meetings to identify opportunities for collaboration and support. To enhance this effort in 2019, liaisons will make special efforts to reach out to working group staff and facilitate collaborations. ECO members continue to work within their networks to contribute to the public facing “Environment, Public Health and Climate Change in Maryland” calendar of events maintained by the Maryland Department of Health; as well as to enhance the visibility of this and other similar platforms.

ECO manages and promotes the use of seven fact sheets used by the Commission, the State, and other entities to connect climate change impacts in Maryland across the sectors and workgroups. The original topics for the fact sheets include The Commission, The Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act, Resiliency to Climate Change, Sea-Level Rise and Flooding, and the Health Impacts of Climate Change. In 2018, additional fact sheets were developed, including a fact sheet on buying local and climate change. ECO will continue to increase the utilization of these fact sheets in appropriate platforms.

ECO will continue to track efforts on outreach in order to quantify its efforts and use this information to inform future work. Commissioners and stakeholders can add their own outreach on climate and the Commission, and use of the fact sheets, at: <https://goo.gl/forms/Yc6HWs5ZbsjVmEzh2>

2019 Priorities

Each working group is charged to establish a comprehensive and accountable annual plan that sets goals and performance benchmarks for the year; prioritizing new and existing climate change actions and initiatives. The following items represent those actions and initiatives which ECO has determined to be a priority in the 2019 year, and those members that have been assigned to take the lead on each are indicated. This work plan may be adjusted as is appropriate to maintain the group’s purpose as new events and opportunities arise during the 2019 year, and furthermore is subject to the approval and will of the Commission.

Increase external awareness of State climate change work & GGRA

Lead?

ECO consistently aims to increase external awareness of the Commission and the State’s work on climate change. In 2019, ECO will concentrate on increasing stakeholder engagement with in the 40 by 30 Draft Plan and the 2019 Commission Report which will also address the Draft Plan’s release.

ECO will also consider materials that may support the State’s outreach efforts around the 40 by 30 Draft plan, which may include (1) information on appropriate educational usage and application of the Report; (2) FAQs about the Report; (3) ways to keep up-to-date on the State’s climate change efforts; and/or (4) a timeline of upcoming events related to the State’s climate change efforts, including expected opportunities for public engagement.

Finally, ECO will work to identify new communities to work with in increasing awareness of State climate change work. It will be a priority of ECO to ensure underserved communities are included in outreach efforts throughout the year.

Implementation of the 2018 Annual Recommendation Related to ECO

Lead?

“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 and state facilities, 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.” - 2018 MCCC Annual Report Recommendation

ECO will gather a packet of information on what the Commission is doing including fact sheets, posters, and encouragement to reach out to ECO for more information in order to engage state government on this recommendation. This will be a useful tool for other stakeholders as well.

Climate Action leads to a Climate Economy

John Kumm & ?

ECO is interested in exploring the connection between climate action and the economy, and how we can better support business efforts to communicate and adapt to climate change. In 2019 ECO will gather case studies and success stories, and consider materials, such as fact sheets, that we may develop on this issue.

Recognition & promotion of Climate Change Action outside of State Government (Climate Champions & Climate Ambassadors)

John Kumm & ?

Over the past two years, ECO members facilitated the development of a pilot Climate Ambassador Program which partners MDE and Bon Secours in Baltimore. This program utilizes a train-the-trainer approach, and incorporates materials on climate change into an existing framework. ECO will attempt to identify additional opportunities to use this strategy in 2019 and beyond, as capacity exists. At a minimum, ECO would like to compile materials to support climate change education in a train-the-trainer manner, to share with organizations for education and training purposes.

Over the past year and a half, ECO worked with MDE to incorporate recognition of climate change action taken by businesses, as part of the existing Maryland Green Registry program. In 2018, ECO engaged with the Chamber of Commerce about ideas to recognize business' efforts to save energy or reduce GHG emissions. ECO has also engaged with MSDE to develop a program which recognizes schools engaged in efforts to reduce their GHG emissions, educate on climate change, or otherwise contribute to the State's climate goals. We will continue this effort.

MEA's Smart Energy Community Grant and MDH's Community Ambassadors Program will be followed as well.

Schedule of Meetings

The ECO Working Group meets monthly to further the priorities laid out in the previous section. Appendix C of this document provides a summary of ECO Working Group meetings scheduled for 2019, as well as tentative topics and action items.

Education, Communication and Outreach Working Group Membership
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3/11/19

Leadership

vacant	Co-Chair	
John Kumm	Co-Chair	EA Engineering, Science and Technology
Lori Arguelles	Commission Liaison	Alice Ferguson Foundation

Public Sector Representatives

Laura Bankey	National Aquarium
Ashley Pennington	Johns Hopkins Office of Sustainability
Dannielle Lipinski	Maryland League of Conservation Voters
Denise Robbins	Chesapeake Climate Action Network
Grant Samms	Washington College Center for Environment and Society
Isaac Hametz	Mahan Rykiel Associates
Joelle Novey	Interfaith Power and Light

Private Sector Representatives

Michele Peterson	Honeywell
James W. McKittrick	Maryland Chamber of Commerce
Stephan Levitsky	Purdue, Inc.

State Government Representatives

Allison Gost	Department of Health
Lizelle Espinoza	Department of Transportation
Donna Balado	Maryland State Department of Education
Julie Oberg	Department of Agriculture
Kaymie Owen	Maryland Energy Administration
Mark Shaffer	Department of the Environment
Sara Luell	Department of Housing and Community Development
Cindy Etgen	Department of Natural Resources

Technical Advisors

George (Tad) Aburn	Department of the Environment
John Coleman	Department of Planning

ECO Working Group Recommendations from the MCCC 2018 Report

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 strategies similar to the recommendations 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 climate change impacts alongside 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 2018 Draft GGRA 40x30 Plan order to facilitate collaboration and coordination on outreach efforts. This includes, but is not limited to, existing and new programs being implemented by MDH, MDNR, MEA, MDOT, MSDE, and MDP.**
- 2. The State should provide outreach and information to local governments (municipal and county) to support their efforts to respond to and educate about climate change via the Climate Leadership Academy and other agency efforts.**
- 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. This includes efforts such as training the trainer and the Maryland Green Registry's Climate Champion Contest.**
- 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 and state facilities, 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 that is due at the end of 2019. The State should collaborate with state and industry partners in developing this outreach plan.**

Proposed ECO Working Group Meeting Schedule for 2018

Updated 02/01/17

Date/Time	Topic	Deliverables
Wednesday January 16 10:30am – 12:00pm	Work plan and Priorities	
Wednesday February 20 10:30am – 12:00pm	Preparation for priorities; finalize work plan	Work plan due to Steering Committee early March
Wednesday March 20 10:30am – 12:00pm	Preparation for priorities	
Wednesday April 17 10:30am – 12:00pm	Preparation for April MCCC Meeting	
April 18th	Commission Meeting	
Wednesday May 15 10:30am – 12:00pm		
June 20th	Commission Meeting	
Wednesday June 19 10:30am – 12:00pm		
Wednesday July 17 10:30am – 12:00pm	Annual Report Recs	
Wednesday August 15 10:30am – 12:00pm	Annual Report Recs	Draft Annual Report Recs due to Steering Committee early Sept
September 18th	Commission Meeting	
Wednesday September 21 10:30am – 12:00pm	Annual Report Recs	Final Annual Report Recs will be reviewed at MCCC Meeting
October 16th	Commission Meeting	
Wednesday October 16 10:30am – 12:00pm		
November 6th	Commission Meeting	
Wednesday November 20 10:30am – 12:00pm		
Wednesday December 18 10:30am – 12:00pm		