

Adaptation and Response Work Group Annual Report: Recommendations Excerpt

The Adaptation and Response Work Group (ARWG) is chaired by the Secretary of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources with administrative support provided by Department staff. The ARWG advances its work through the active involvement of and leadership from other work group members, agencies and stakeholders. The work group has relied upon and recommends the continued collaboration and conversations with stakeholders to determine when, how and if implementation of adaptation measures move forward. The recommendations set forth in the ARWG 2016 annual report will continue to be guided and informed in this manner as they move forward.

Adaptation efforts are also closely tied to the other work groups. For instance, the Scientific and Technical Working Group (STWG) issues sea level rise projections and updates that are used in a wide variety of ARWG-related vulnerability assessments and future planning activities. Additional engagement with the Mitigation Work Group is being pursued to better understand possible connections between adaptation/resilience and mitigation efforts and also with the Education, Communication and Outreach Work Group to ensure that adaptation efforts are communicated clearly to a wide variety of audiences.

The ARWG outlines the following priorities and recommendations for 2017:

1. Supporting Local Partners – in order to continue to address the four adaptation challenge areas, it will require work not only among state partners and at the state level, but also across local towns, municipalities and counties to ensure that our people, economies and resources are positioned to thrive into the future in a changing climate. The ARWG has made it a priority to strengthen efforts in 2017 to place greater emphasis on supporting adaptation at the local level. This will be done by working or continuing to understand capacity needs, delivering assistance to communities, and highlighting local progress to foster advances across the State.
2. Focus and Accelerate Adaptation Progress on Non-Coastal Impacts - at the same time progress continues on coastal climate impacts such as sea level rise and coastal flooding, the work of the ARWG and its members' - as well as the challenges of different climate impacts - continue to evolve. Following its 2016 quarterly meetings, the ARWG identified an increasing need to focus on adaptation in non-coastal jurisdictions and the wider set of climate impacts outlined in both Phase I and II adaptation strategies. The work group recommends that increasing emphasis be placed on accelerating adaptation progress on non-coastal issues and communicating ongoing progress in these areas in a more tangible way.
3. Expand Partnerships – climate adaptation requires work across sectors and stakeholder groups. The ARWG has identified the need to expand public and private partnerships and work group participation to include business, organized labor and industry representatives and local, state and federal partners.