

Mitigation Working Group Work Plan

Governor Martin O'Malley issued an Executive Order (01.01.2014.14) on November 19, 2014 that expands the membership, mission and work of the Maryland Commission on Climate Change (MCCC). As one of four working groups organized under the MCCC, the Mitigation Working Group (MWG) has developed a work plan that outlines both immediate and annual goals of the MWG. The efforts of the MWG in conjunction with the efforts of the other working groups under the MCCC will ultimately achieve the goals for which the MCCC has been tasked.

With the MWG membership established, recurring meetings are required to provide status reports and discuss ongoing activities. Meetings will be held monthly at the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and be open to both MCCC members and stakeholders. Meeting logistics including time, conference room location, and meeting materials will be announced and available on the MDE website (<http://www.mde.state.md.us/Pages/Home.aspx>)

The Executive Order contains various requirements of the MCCC that will be achieved through the specific work performed by the MWG. First, the Executive Order requires the establishment of comprehensive and accountable annual working group work plans that set annual goals and performance benchmarks while prioritizing new and existing climate change mitigation actions and initiatives. Additionally, an assessment must be made of the impacts that climate change will likely have on the State's economy, revenue, and investment decisions. This information will be used to strengthen and maintain existing State action plans and maintain a comprehensive action plan with five year benchmarks designed to achieve reductions in Maryland's GHG emissions of 80 percent of 2006 levels by the year 2050. Annual reporting by Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Act of 2009 (GGRA) 2012 Plan-associated agencies will assist in achieving this goal. Further, education and communication efforts with citizens designed to better mitigate climate change will be achieved through the development of broader public/private and federal/State/Local partnerships.

In addition to the requirements under the Executive Order, the GGRA requires the MWG to submit a report to the Governor and General Assembly by October 1, 2015 that contains a summary of the State's progress toward achieving the 2020 emissions reduction goal set forth by the GGRA. This includes an update on emerging technologies to reduce GHG emissions, a review of best available science regarding the level and pace of GHG emissions reductions and sequestration needed, and the status of any federal programs designed to reduce GHG emissions. The MWG must make recommendations on the need for adjustments to the requirement to reduce statewide GHG emissions by at least 25 percent from 2006 levels by 2020 and also summarize any additional revised regulations/control programs/incentives necessary to achieve that goal. An updated economic analysis of the overall economic costs and benefits to the State's economy, environment, and public health must be published and will be used to assess the continuation or modification of the requirements to achieve the 2020 goal. Finally, the MWG must publish a study analyzing the impacts of the GGRA 2012 Plan on the manufacturing sector.

To achieve the requirements of the Executive Order and GGRA and to effectively communicate MWG actions, the MWG must develop and implement a tracking process for the measures in the 2012 GGRA Plan and develop the format and structure required for annual reporting to the MCCC. This can be accomplished through annual reports that include (but are not limited to) program descriptions and objectives, implementation milestones, enhancement opportunities, identification of funding and other challenges, estimated emission reductions for prior calendar years, explanations of methodology or surrogate data or metrics, and any other data the reporting agency considers relevant.

Executive Order Plan:

- Strengthen and maintain existing State action plans (continue to track progress of actions in process/ new actions)
- Assess the impacts that climate change will likely have on the State's economy, revenue, and investment decisions (revise the economic analysis to ensure all pending actions are calculated).
- Establish comprehensive and accountable annual working group work plans that set annual goals and performance benchmarks, while prioritizing new and existing climate change mitigation actions and initiatives (.)
- Develop a reporting matrix/ format to ensure progress reporting by all state agencies to examine all climate programs
- All agencies are required to report on progress on actions no later than May of 2015.
- Absent sufficient progress for actions assigned to each state agency the responsible agency must examine new potential programs to make up any emissions reduction shortfall.

GGRA Requirements Plan:

By October 1, 2015 the Department shall submit a report to the Governor and General Assembly that includes:

- A summary of the State's progress toward achieving the 2020 emissions reduction goal.
- An update on emerging technologies to reduce GHG emissions.
- A review of best available science regarding the level and pace of GHG emissions reductions and sequestration needed.
- Recommendations on the need for adjustments to the requirement to reduce statewide GHG emissions by 25 percent by 2020.
- A summary of additional revised regulations/control programs/incentives necessary to achieve the 25 percent reduction goal.
- The state of any federal program to reduce GHG emissions.
- An analysis of the overall economic costs and benefits to the State's economy, environment, and public health of a continuation or modification of the requirements to achieve a 25 percent reduction.
- Manufacturing study.
- Updated economic analysis.