

# Maryland Commission on Climate Change Scientific and Technical Working Group

## Work Plan 2017

**Action Goals.** The Scientific and Technical Working Group (STWG) will address five goals pursuant to the responsibilities assigned under the Maryland Commission on Climate Change Act (MCCCA). Each addresses one of the priorities for working group actions, (1) through (14), that are specified § 2-1303 (D) of the Act.

- 1. Update Climate Impacts Report [Actions (6) and (8)].** Since the STWG's 2008 Climate Impacts report, scientific understanding of the pace, nature and consequences have advanced. In particular, the Fifth Assessment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the U.S. National Climate Assessment (NCA) were completed in 2014. In 2016 the STWG prepared an update of projections of sea level rise for Maryland that were included in the MCCC Annual Report. The STWG will produce an update or series of updates, as appropriate, of its 2008 Climate Impacts report based on the emerging science and these recent global, national and regional assessments. The STWG will increase the emphasis on economy, revenues, and investment decisions in these updates.
- 2. Provide scientific and technical support for adaptation strategies [Actions (9) and (10)].** Based on the aforementioned climate impacts updates, the STWG will provide support for the Adaptation and Response Working Group (ARWG) in producing community scale climate vulnerability assessments to inform adaptation strategies.
- 3. Contribute information and analysis in support of the Commission's Comprehensive Action Plan to achieve science-based reductions in Maryland's Greenhouse Gas Emissions [Action (12)].** The STWG contributed information and analysis that informed the Commission's 2015 recommendation for reducing Maryland's emissions by 40 percent by 2030, likely to be codified in the Maryland Greenhouse Gas Reductions Act of 2016. During 2016, the STWG provided an assessment of methane emissions from Maryland sources that was integrated with the Mitigation Working Group's (MWG) methane emission strategies included in the MCC Annual Report. During 2017, the STWG will continue to assist the MWG in development of plans to achieve the reductions based on 5-year benchmarks.
- 4. Improve technical effectiveness of inventory of GHG emission sources and sinks [Action (4)].** The STWG will continue to provide technical advice to assist the MWG in improving the inventory of Maryland's emissions sources and sinks, by identifying opportunities to more directly measure or otherwise improve estimates of Maryland's emissions, particularly for those emissions typically estimated by generic formulas and assumptions.

5. **Ensure a sound scientific basis for communication and education [Action (3)].** It is critical that the Commission's communication and education efforts are scientifically accurate and credible. The STWG will work with the Education, Communication and Outreach (ECO) Working Group as well as the other work groups to ensure this.

**2017 Tasks.** During 2017 the following tasks will be emphasized.

- 1) **Vetting team for communication and education (May).** A small team was identified in 2016 to review materials for scientific and technical accuracy and credibility; however, the team has not yet been much engaged. The STWG will make the services of the vetting team better known to the ECO-WG, MWG and ARWG and the network of participating networks will be expanded.
- 2) **Climate Impacts Report Update.**
  - a) The STWG will seek to update its assessment of climate change impacts in Maryland selectively as needed by sectors identified by the ARWG. It will extend insights developed by recent climate impacts assessments for Delaware and the District of Columbia. (As needed throughout the year, with a summary for inclusion in the MCC Annual Report).
  - b) A more in-depth assessment of the impacts on agriculture in the state is specifically indicated in the MCCA. The scope and content of this assessment will be provided for inclusion in the MCCC annual report, with the assessment being completed by the end of 2017 (April-December)
- 3) **Strategically improve the technical effectiveness of the inventory of GHG emission sources and sinks (February-December).** The STWG will work with the MWG to provide analysis, advice and review to improve the accuracy of Maryland's emissions of greenhouse gases in order to improve the state's inventory. It will assist in interpreting recent direct estimates of methane emissions to help target the MCCC's methane emission reductions. The STWG will also specifically evaluate projections of emissions related to transportation, growth and development and sources and sinks related to forests and soils.

**Meeting Schedule:** Tentative meeting dates:

April 26, 2017	10 am	University System of Maryland Office, Adelphi
June 20, 2017	TBD	University System of Maryland Office, Adelphi
September 13, 2017	TBD	University System of Maryland Office, Adelphi
November 16, 2017	TBD	University System of Maryland Office, Adelphi

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