

Maryland Commission on Climate Change

Mitigation Working Group

Potential Recommendations for the 2017 Report

Updated 08/10/2017

The 40 Percent by 2030 Plan:

- The MWG acknowledges the importance of early collaboration on the 40 by 30 Plan, due at the end of 2018, and is continuing to seek input on any recommendations for additional programs or considerations, to be presented to the State in sufficient time for incorporation into the drafting process.

Enhanced GHG Emissions Inventory:

- The State should continue to pursue the most locally relevant and complete methods for calculating its GHG Emissions Inventory, including but not limited to consideration of (1) an expanded accounting for out-of-state extraction and processing of fossil fuels based on in-state consumption; (2) utilizing site-specific estimates for sequestration in forest cover such as provided by LiDAR technology; and (3) advanced methods to generate a more accurate accounting of agricultural soil management practices generating sequestration benefits.

EJ and Underserved Communities:

- The MWG plans to continue to incorporate considerations for environmental justice and underserved communities (both urban and rural) in its recommendations for the 40 by 30 Plan, and encourages the State to also use this lens, particularly when examining the results of the Health Impacts Study to be performed.
- To further inform this perspective, the MWG encourages MDE to work with DNR in developing a personal query within the Coastal Resiliency Tool that would allow for spatially explicit demographic analysis of those that may be most heavily impacted by sea-level rise.

Clean Energy Businesses and Manufacturing Jobs, and Fossil Fuel Dependant Workers:

- The MWG supports the local labor and procurement language within the recent Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) agreement for offshore wind farms to be constructed in Ocean City, and encourages the General Assembly and PSC to consider the following items (or similar measures) within legislation and rules for future utility-scale renewable electricity generation projects: (1) a labor agreement that protects Maryland workers and benefits the local economy (e.g. prevailing wage); and (2) a procurement requirement to ensure that all purchases, when possible, are from within Maryland first (within the U.S. second) in order to stimulate the local economy and generate manufacturing and supply chain jobs in-state.
- The MWG supports the promotion of green-energy manufacturing in-state, which will directly provide sustainable, high quality jobs and generate additional jobs along the supply chain. This has the potential to not only put Maryland at the forefront of an emerging market but also reduce life-cycle emissions for renewable energy projects both in-state and in the surrounding area by decreasing miles traveled and ensuring best practices during manufacturing.
- The State could consider incorporating climate goals within its procurement policies, requiring minimum qualifications for bidders related to attributes which will help meet the 40% by 2030 emissions reduction goals.

- The manufacturing study due in 2020 under the 2016 GGRA should explore the costs and benefits (both economic and environmental) of: (1) potential modifications or enhancements to the current “buy local” provisions in the GGRA Plan, such as agreements in contracting for “Buy Maryland/Buy USA” and “Hire Maryland”; and (2) the development of an in-state supply chain to create lasting manufacturing and other jobs related to renewable infrastructure.
- If possible more analysis could be done related to jobs and the economy, especially regarding the following topics: (1) small modular reactors (nuclear) and the workforce which would be involved in this type of plant; (2) numbers for actual expected displacement of workers, and geographic location; (3) how the future climate may impact worker productivity and construction seasons; (4) considerations for the quality of jobs that may replace fossil fuel industry work (i.e. union benefits, wages, sustainability), rather than just the quantity of jobs created; and (5) the potential impacts of combined heat and power (CHP) on industrial operational costs and job retention.

Healthy Soils and Carbon Sequestration:

- Additional analysis to determine (1) what practices are already being undertaken to meet Bay goals that can be amended to have additional climate benefits; and (2) what other best management practices are already being undertaken by Maryland farmers that have carbon sequestration benefits, and how they might get ‘credit’ for these practices.
- The MWG supports incentivizing Best Management Practices which also have climate benefits, including but not limited to no till farming, common-sense pasture management, and diversified grasses and grasses/cover crops with deeper roots. In addition, these parties should consider climate benefits when allocating funding for the Cover Crop Program and other similar programs which improve soil health and increase carbon sequestration.
- The MWG and ECO Working Groups should work within their respective roles and charges to support the efforts of education campaigns similar to those run by the Healthy Soil Consortium, informing Maryland farmers regarding the benefits of improved soil health to both agricultural yield and climate goals, as well as programs and incentives they may access to support adoption of such practices.

Innovative Financing:

- The MWG sub-group lead by MEA should continue discussion on actionable recommendations for changes to legislation that would help make PACE loans more attractive to lenders and banks, and increase usage in Maryland.
- The MWG sub-group lead by MEA should continue to work with MACo and other appropriate parties to move forward with a decision regarding whether the counties wish to make use of the available QECBs, or if they will waive their allocations to be aggregated and distributed at the state level (in a manner to be discussed by the sub-group), to increase utilization of these funds.

Transportation:

- **Pending September’s meeting**