

**§577. Climate action plan; update**

By July 1, 2004, the department, with input from stakeholders, shall adopt a state climate action plan to meet reduction goals for greenhouse gas emissions. The action plan must address reduction in each sector in cost-effective ways and must allow sustainably managed forestry, agricultural and other natural resource activities to be used to sequester greenhouse gas emissions. The department shall submit the action plan to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over natural resources matters. [PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (AMD).]

**1. Update plan.** By December 1, 2020, and every 4 years thereafter, the Maine Climate Council, as established in section 577-A and referred to in this section as "the council," with input from stakeholders, shall update the state climate action plan under this section and shall include in the plan strategies to meet the greenhouse gas emissions reduction levels specified in section 576-A. [PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (NEW).]

**2. Mitigation strategies.** In updating the climate action plan under subsection 1, the council shall evaluate mitigation strategies to reduce gross annual greenhouse gas emissions and net annual greenhouse gas emissions consistent with the reduction levels in section 576-A. The council shall quantitatively analyze and report on the technical feasibility and cost-effectiveness of each mitigation strategy. The updated climate action plan must include climate change mitigation strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the State and, as applicable, must include updates to the mitigation strategies included in the plan and identification of new strategies through the application of the latest scientific and technological information available related to climate change. [PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (NEW).]

**3. Adaptation and resilience strategies.** The updated climate action plan under subsection 1 must address the impacts of climate change upon the State and provide strategies and actions for climate adaptation and resiliency. These strategies must include implementation guidelines that:

A. Prioritize the welfare of the State's citizens and visitors and recognize and foster the value of the State's natural resources and natural resource-based industries; [PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (NEW).]

B. Encourage diversity, inclusion and equity; [PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (NEW).]

C. Provide education and training opportunities when appropriate; [PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (NEW).]

D. Build upon existing global, national and state plans and partnerships for addressing climate adaptation, emergency preparedness and disaster risk reduction; [PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (NEW).]

E. Encourage investments that prevent and proactively mitigate risk; [PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (NEW).]

F. Encourage, foster and utilize the most recent scientific and technical information available; and [PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (NEW).]

G. Incorporate means for measuring progress. [PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (NEW).]  
[PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (NEW).]

**4. Clean energy economy transition plan.** The updated climate action plan under subsection 1 must include a clean energy economy transition plan that, as applicable, incorporates feedback from the Maine Climate Council working groups established under section 577-A, subsection 7 and which may incorporate feedback from other entities with expertise in education, training, apprenticeships, workforce and labor. The clean energy economy transition plan under this subsection must:

A. Include opportunities for and address barriers to advancing the State's clean energy economy; [PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (NEW).]

B. Highlight strategies for the State's rural communities, workers and businesses as the State transitions to a low-carbon future that are designed to encourage good-paying jobs and long-term employment; and [PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (NEW).]

C. Identify policy recommendations; opportunities for public-private partnerships; workforce development and educational opportunities, including opportunities for training and retraining workers and the development of apprenticeship programs; and other strategies necessary to the creation of clean energy jobs and a robust clean energy economy in the State. [PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (NEW).]

[PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (NEW).]

**5. Effects of climate change.** The updated climate action plan under subsection 1 must provide the latest information on climate change effects in the State and on the sectors, ecosystems and communities most at risk from such effects.

[PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (NEW).]

**5-A. Greenhouse gas emissions reductions projections.** Beginning with the updated climate action plan under subsection 1 due by December 1, 2024, and for each subsequent update to the plan thereafter, the plan must include greenhouse gas emissions reductions projections, including sector-specific greenhouse gas emissions reductions projections, based on the strategies and actions in the plan and information regarding how those projections and the updated plan are designed to achieve the greenhouse gas emissions reductions specified in section 576-A.

[PL 2023, c. 234, §2 (NEW).]

**6. Submission of plan.** By December 1, 2020, and every 4 years thereafter, the council shall submit the updated climate action plan under subsection 1 and any recommended legislation to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over natural resources matters. Upon receipt and review of the plan, the joint standing committee may report out a bill to the Legislature related to the plan or the council's recommendations.

[PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (NEW).]

**7. Objectives.** In identifying the mitigation strategies and adaptation and resilience strategies to include in the updated climate action plan under subsections 2 and 3 and in developing the clean energy economy transition plan under subsection 4, the council shall give consideration to the following objectives:

A. Pursuing cost-effective, technologically feasible and equitable greenhouse gas emissions reduction pathways and adaptation and preparedness strategies, informed by scientific and technical expertise; [PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (NEW).]

B. Pursuing actions that minimize deleterious effects, including those on persons of low income and moderate income, to public health and the environment and that support economic sectors that face the biggest barriers to emissions reductions and creating, when feasible, additional employment and economic growth in the State, especially in rural and economically distressed regions of the State; [PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (NEW).]

C. Ensuring equity for all sectors and regions of the State and that the broadest group of residents benefit from the achievement of the greenhouse gas emissions reduction levels in section 576-A, with consideration of economic, quality-of-life and public health benefits; [PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (NEW).]

D. Encouraging the use of natural solutions to reduce net annual greenhouse gas emissions and increase resiliency, such as solutions related to forests, farms and coastal lands in the State and materials that sequester carbon; [PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (NEW).]

E. Maximizing involvement in interstate and regional initiatives and programs designed to reduce regional greenhouse gas emissions; [PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (NEW).]

F. Supporting industries, technology and training that will allow workers and companies in the State to benefit from carbon reduction solutions through jobs and economic activity; and [PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (NEW).]

G. Planning for adaptation and resilience strategies that will prepare the State's communities, infrastructure and industries for current and anticipated effects of climate change. [PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (NEW).]  
[PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (NEW).]

**8. Use of existing data.** In updating the climate action plan under subsection 1, the council shall draw upon existing state data and studies, including, but not limited to, analyses and data from the 2004 climate action plan and the 2010 adaptation plan developed by the department, the evaluations of the State's progress toward meeting greenhouse gas emissions levels under section 578, the comprehensive state energy plan pursuant to Title 2, section 9, subsection 3, paragraph C and the Efficiency Maine Trust's triennial plan pursuant to Title 35-A, section 10104, subsection 4.  
[PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (NEW).]

**9. Funding.** The costs to the council of updating the climate action plan pursuant to this section, including, but not limited to, the costs associated with the evaluation of mitigation strategies to reduce gross annual greenhouse gas emissions and net annual greenhouse gas emissions under subsection 2, may be funded using funds solicited and accepted by the council pursuant to section 577-A, subsection 9.

[PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (NEW).]

#### SECTION HISTORY

PL 2003, c. 237, §1 (NEW). PL 2019, c. 476, §8 (AMD). PL 2023, c. 234, §2 (AMD).

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