



Brief Description of Catalog of State Policy Options

Government Policy Technical Working Group (TWG)

(Note that this listing is incomplete and will be fleshed out during the TWG process. TWG members are encouraged to provide input to the TWG facilitators on existing policies and programs, where relevant. Recently enacted policies and programs in Florida are listed where relevant in the policy options catalog notes. Additional details will be added to this document under each of the option descriptions, as they are provided.)

GP-1. Inventories, Reporting and Registries

GP-1.1

The responsibility for preparing the state's GHG inventory resides with the Department of Environmental Protection. That agency has the expertise needed to systematically compile information on GHG sources and sinks using established methods and data sources. Inventory and forecast efforts are on-going over time reflecting improvements to the accuracy and completeness of data collected.

The Department of Environmental Protection has prepared a preliminary inventory of Florida greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to help guide planning efforts in the state. The department's GHG emission inventory represents gross estimates. While more refined estimates may be obtainable over time, the preliminary inventory can be relied upon to identify the major categories of GHG emission sources and the general trend of emissions in those categories since 1990. Over the next several months, DEP, with the help of other experts in the field, will identify potential improvements to the inventory and make refinements as needed.

GP-1.2

Forecasts inform state leaders and the public on statewide trends, opportunities for mitigating emissions or enhancing carbon sinks, and verifying GHG reductions associated with implementation of action plan initiatives.

The GHG emissions inventory work within DEP's Division of Air Resources has begun to establish and maintain emission forecasting of general trends based on 10 years of emissions reporting, by accounting for growth and combined with utility and other major emitters' 10-year plans.

GP-1.3

A GHG emissions reporting program should be established to receive emissions data from Florida emitters. In order to assure cost-effective investment of resources it is essential to have accurate and current data and information about GHG emissions and impacts and also state of the art computer modeling capabilities. High quality data and accurate predictive capabilities are key elements in being able to plan strategically and track progress over time to reduce GHG emissions. It is also important to integrate efforts of multiple entities gathering GHG data so that additional monitoring and data collection resources are effectively utilized. One example might be formation of a state climate data and analysis center to develop and provide objective, state-specific information regarding climate data, analysis, assessment of options and directions, identification of trends, development or improvement of computer modeling, and other information to government, business, and the public.

The State of Florida is a party to the National Climate Registry.

GP-1.4

Advantages to developing a regional or multi-state GHG emissions reduction registry would allow for a larger impact on global GHGs. Collaboration with other states in the development of a GHG reporting program could influence the development of GHG reporting practices throughout the region and nation and build consistency and reciprocity with other state or regional GHG reporting programs. Although GHG reporting is commonly voluntary, some states now require certain sources to report their annual GHG emissions. Regional approaches can offer broader and more streamlined market opportunities to reduce GHG emissions in collaboration with partner states or other organizations. Regional and multi-state organizations have formed in several parts of the country to reduce GHG emissions. Examples are the Northeast States Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), the Midwestern Regional Greenhouse Gas Reduction Accord or the Western Climate Initiative.

Some discussion of this has taken place on the Action Team and a recommendation was made to investigate Florida's participation in existing regional carbon credit trading mechanisms.

GP-1.5

Assistance to Florida's major emitters could be provided by state government in order to educate them on the need and transition them into compliance.

GP-1.6

Identifying the state's major emissions sources for GHGs and recruiting them to supply their emissions data to the inventory would allow the inventory to better define the statewide GHG emissions and would enhance forecasting.

GP-1.7

An Environmental Attribute Registry would have the technical expertise and data access to determine and certify emission reductions and credits for a carbon trading program.

GP-2. Energy/Climate Government Policy Coordination

GP-2.1

Establishing goals for statewide GHG emission reductions is the first step in reducing those emissions in Florida.

Governor's Ex. Order 07-126 established GHG reduction goals for state agencies of a 10 percent reduction from current emission levels by 2012, a 25-percent reduction from current levels by 2017 and a 40-percent reduction from current levels by 2025.

Governor's Ex. Order 07-128 established reduction goals to 2000 levels by 2017, to 1990 levels by 2025, and by 80 percent of 1990 levels by 2050. The Governor's order also required adoption of the California motor vehicle emission standards. The standard is a 22-percent reduction in vehicle emissions by 2012 and a 30-percent reduction by 2016.

GP-2.2

An accountability program would allow the state to keep track of emission reductions and help in determining what is working and what is not.

The Executive Office of the Governor is tracking and reporting financial savings and emissions reductions associated with Ex. Order 07-126 via the Florida Government Carbon Scorecard. Executive Order 07-128 direction provides for "Policies for emission reporting and registry that measure and document emission reductions."

GP-2.3

Participating in the development of accountability programs in other states within our region would be helpful in standardizing the general approach to such programs in the region.

GP-2.4

The state needs to determine if there is a role to be played by nuclear energy in addressing GHG reductions in Florida. Such a determination must be based on the life cycle impacts of nuclear energy and its waste, storage and transport.

This was a recommendation of the Action Team in Phase I of their deliberations.

GP-2.5

Early emission reductions by individuals and businesses could be incentivized by developing policies to reward those entities who make efforts to reduce GHGs in advance of regulatory pressure to do so.

This was a recommendation of the Action Team in Phase I of their deliberations

GP-2.6

Other policy proposals must continue to be examined and implemented to reduce GHG emissions in the state.

The Action Team, in Phase I of their deliberations, made three recommendations along these lines. The Action Team recommended further examination of the issue of statewide energy conservation and efficiency targets; stepwise improvements in building efficiency targets beyond 2009; and further examination of all energy technologies with low carbon emissions in addressing state's goals of reducing GHGs and pursuing energy security to include public outreach and engagement.

GP-2.7

If the state were to develop an effective carbon credit system, it would allow the state itself to either act as an intermediary and purveyor of the credits as well as act as the certification entity for private carbon credit exchanges. The workgroup deliberations should also examine a means to allow state government to purchase and sell credits.

GP-2.8

The workgroup's deliberations should include a discussion of bonding mechanisms that might be available, or made available, for carbon neutral activities.

GP-2.9

Local government planning efforts, to both establish their own targets and reduce emissions, should be encouraged through policy and incentives.

In Phase I of their deliberations, the Action Team recommended incentives to assist municipalities, counties, and schools in the development of programs that achieve the Green Standards and designation or similar applicable standards, involve cost-efficient solutions, improve quality of life, and strengthen Florida's economy. It may be appropriate to enable, assist and otherwise encourage local governments to pursue comprehensive, multi-sector climate action plans within their jurisdictions. Analogous to the state's effort, local climate planning

initiatives could involve local stakeholders, identify and address local mitigation opportunities, establish local emission inventories and/or forecasts, set local GHG reduction goals or targets, consider local climate impacts and possible adaptation responses, develop long-term sustainability plans, etc. The state should encourage local governments in such efforts and contribute technical and other assistance to the extent possible.

GP-2.10

Regional climate reduction initiatives need to be explored to capture the economies of scale available in a regional approach to GHG reduction.

GP-2.11

In order to focus state-wide efforts to reduce climate change, the workgroup should consider the possibility of a state climate data and analysis center.

Governor's Executive Order 07-128 provided that there be an examination of the possibility for a focal point in government for Climate Change, including existing program consolidations.

GP-2.12

Regional climate reduction initiatives need to be explored to capture the economies of scale available in a regional approach to GHG reduction.

In Phase I of their deliberations the Action Team proposed that the sale of carbon credits from emission offset projects developed in Florida be enabled. For that purpose, the Action Team recommended that Florida pursue emission offset monitoring and verification programs and agreements including but not limited to a Memorandum of Understanding with RGGI. The Action Team further recommended exploration of linkages to other emerging markets domestically and abroad as a feature of the market design process recommended for Phase 2

GP-2.13

State Incentives should be considered to encourage local governments to undertake inventories and GHG reduction programs.

The workgroup has proposed this recommendation for discussion.

GP-2.14

Technical support from the state to local governments may need to be provided in order to facilitate access to federal funding for inventories and GHG reductions.

The workgroup has proposed this recommendation for discussion.

GP-2.15

The state government should work with local governments to establish and standardize a methodology for measurement of emissions, including the funding for software licenses utilized in measuring and reporting emissions.

The workgroup has proposed this recommendation for discussion.

GP-2.16

The state government should find ways to get carbon reduction credits for homeowner retrofits and construction measures to reduce GHGs, and to use the proceeds to reward those homeowners.

The workgroup has proposed this recommendation for discussion.

GP-2.17

The state should determine and offer incentives within state-to-local grant programs for communities that undertake their own GHG reduction.

The workgroup has proposed this recommendation for discussion.

GP-2.18

The state should examine its practices and change existing measures to comport with GHG reduction as a priority. For instance, Vehicle Miles Traveled could be used in addition to the existing MPG basis for fleet management.

The workgroup has proposed this recommendation for discussion.

GP-2.19

The state should diversify and better coordinate mass transportation planning between local, state and regional agencies.

The workgroup has proposed this recommendation for discussion.

GP-3. Government Leadership by Example

GP-3.1

The state should lead by example in establishing GHG reductions in state government.

Governor's Ex. Order 07-126 established GHG reduction goals for state agencies of a 10 percent reduction from current emission levels by 2012, a 25-percent reduction from current levels by 2017 and a 40-percent reduction from current levels by 2025. A Phase I Action Team recommendation was to build upon the 15 percent increase in energy performance of new construction by 2009 as directed by Governor Crist in Executive Order 07-127, the Action Team also recommended stepwise improvements in building efficiency targets beyond 2009.

Executive Order 07-128 direction was to implement additional greenhouse gas emission reduction strategies beyond those directed in EO 07-127, as well as an overall blueprint for development of actions; to implement policies to enhance energy efficiency and conservation, including statewide targets; and to implement policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from state and local governments not addressed in EO 07-126

Gp-3.2

In order to better coordinate state, local and regional climate efforts, Florida may need a central office or administering body where such efforts are focused.

GP-3.3

Each state agency should be responsible for its own GHG reductions and data should be available down to the agency level.

GP-3.4

An accountability program would need to accumulate the data and report on progress with regard to state government GHG emissions.

The Ex. Office of the Governor is tracking and reporting financial savings and emissions reductions associated with Ex. Order 07-126 via the Florida Government Carbon Scorecard.

GP-3.5

Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) are documents that must be filed when the government takes a major action that significantly affects the quality of the human environment. Typically,

an EIS is composed of a statement of the purpose and need for the proposed action, a description of the affected environment, a range and discussion of options as alternatives to the action, and an analysis of the proposed impacts.

The Action Team, in their Phase I deliberations, recommended the development of life cycle analyses for various transportation fuels and the use of those analyses to determine appropriate pathways to protect natural resources required for sustainability.

GP-3.6

There are numerous sources of renewable energy, including solar, solar PV, wind, ocean current, hydrogen fuel cell technology and others. The technologies are established and in varying degrees of practical application in Florida.

The TWG added “including a study of renewable potential.” Extensive discussion of renewable energy sources has taken place on the Action Team. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services has implemented Farm to Fuel grants to promote renewable fuels. The Florida Energy Office at FDEP administers several grant and tax incentive programs for the promotion of renewable energy technology including solar and hydrogen fuel cell as well as many others.

GP-3.7

During the first few decades of environmental protection regulation in the U.S., the focus was on containing or cleaning up pollution after it was generated (P1). Faced with the limitations inherent in such pollution management strategies as containment and remediation, many sectors of government and industry are shifting toward a more preventive, proactive approach. This emerging approach, referred to as pollution prevention (P2), offers a promising means for protecting the environment and achieving more efficient use of resources. It involves identifying the root causes of waste and figuring out ways to minimize its creation, often by using energy and materials more efficiently.

GP-3.8

Carpooling and use of public transit by state employees is a practical measure when available, but would require lifestyle changes on the part of most employees that can be a difficult adjustment. A program that encouraged this would require some sort of incentive such as a more liberal work schedule or possibly an offering in combination with a telecommuting schedule.

The TWG added the phrase “”use of public transit””.

GP-3.9

Many local governments in Florida are already developing planning efforts designed to reduce GHGs and establishing targets. Encouragement and assistance in developing and coordinating these plans would be helpful.

Legislation has been filed that contains incentives, encouragement and assistance to local governments in establishing GHG reduction targets and plans.

GP-10

Climate-neutral means that there is no net increase in greenhouse gas emissions within the bond-issuing agency's geographical jurisdiction after the project becomes operational. A climate neutral bonding policy can be implemented immediately, without the need for an extensive survey of GHG emissions data. Setting a baseline GHG emission of zero would mean any GHGs emitted after the bond-financed project becomes operational would have to be offset.

GP-3.11

As mentioned in 3.9 above, many local governments are already developing GHG reduction plans and setting targets. Mandating such a plan by the legislature, as opposed to encouraging or incentivizing it, would require state funding.

GP-3.12

Many professional associations are providing continuing education or educational opportunities to their constituencies on climate change related building and construction efficiencies. Requiring a core competency in these areas within the state's licensing programs would further encourage these disciplines and professional education efforts.

GP-3.13

Geological carbon sequestration is the burial of liquefied carbon, that has been captured from emissions, within geological strata. The process is a developing science with concerns including leakage, monitoring and chemical reactions with groundwater and subsurface strata being explored in numerous pilot projects across the U.S., particularly in the Gulf Coast area from Texas to Louisiana in work funded by oil companies and utilities.

GP-3.14

Leadership by example in state government provides private industry with a form to follow in instituting private sector programs to reduce GHGs.

The TWG added this option. In July, 2007, Governor Charlie Crist signed the “Leadership by Example” executive order to require Florida’s state to lead by example by establishing more sustainable choices in public service operations. The benefits of such institutional commitment include reduced operating and capital costs, reduced liability risks, increased employee productivity, greater health and well-being of employees, property value increase and greater environmental responsibility. Legislation has been filed to extend the provisions of the governor’s executive order to other areas of state government outside the executive branch agencies.

GP-3.15

A comprehensive review of state policies pertaining to land use and public investments could result in coordinated benefits addressing climate change impacts.

GP-3.16

Tax exemptions of various sorts (sales, property, corporate tax) have been used to great advantage by the legislature to promote certain behavior and actions on the part of the public.

This option added by the TWG

GP-3.17

Great care will need to be taken in fashioning a precise recommendation on this option, particularly with regard to what constitutes “disturbance” of public lands. There are efforts now in the legislature that would allow electrical easements across public lands, for instance. Also, a careful examination of what constitutes “public lands” would be in order as many easements are acquired by state government (conservation easements, development easements, public access easements, etc.) in addition to lands acquired in fee simple.

This option added by the TWG.

GP-3.18

A close examination of state programs and statutory directives that promote energy intensive activities may reveal such activities as well as unintended redundancies or overlap.

This option added by the TWG

GP-3.19

Transportation emissions are among the largest volume emissions of GHGs. Closely examining the relationships between consumer, distributor and producer can reveal economies both fiscally and in the reduction of GHGs.

GP-3.20

Renewable energy demonstration projects situated in public places would advantage both the technology, as a practical usage, and public confidence/interest. Such displays on public lands, including state parks, greenways and trails and other public venues can appreciably advance these advantages.

This option added by the TWG

GP-4. Greening Florida's Economy

GP-4.1

Promotion of low carbon fuels and vehicles through government actions can be done through public education campaigns, tax/service and other incentives, and encouragement.

The Action Team, in their Phase I deliberations, recommended further examination of ways the state can support the public and private efforts to develop alternative fuels and technologies in Florida. The AT also recommended that policies be developed which promote the use of low carbon vehicles. There are several state and federal grant programs, some administered through the Florida Energy Office, that attempt to incentivize the use of these fuels and vehicles.

GP-4.2

Promotion of low carbon technologies, as in the promotion of low carbon fuels and vehicles in 4.1. above, can be done in a number of ways.

As also mentioned in 4.1. above, there are state and federal grant programs, some administered through the Florida Energy Office, that attempt to promote and incentivize these technologies.

GP-4.3

Low carbon energy markets have grown tremendously in recent years, but depend on a radical public transition. Low carbon markets would include renewable technologies such as energy production from solar, wind, small hydro, biomass, ocean thermal, tidal and wave, geothermal, fuel cells, and related energy storage and conversion technologies.

GP-4.4

Having a government focal point for promoting the development of climate protection businesses would enhance the efficiencies of such an effort.

The TWG added the phrase "or designate".

GP-4.5

Recognition of Florida's businesses that make the effort to reduce their GHG emissions or that produce or utilize low carbon products could greatly enhance public education and outreach efforts through an awards system.

GP-4.6

Government encouragement of voluntary GHG reductions in Florida's businesses could be accomplished through a focused program utilizing education and incentives.

GP-4.7

A business incubator would focus exclusively on low carbon energy economy products and services. By accommodating and supporting organizations that are developing sustainable energy products and technologies including fuel cells, hydrogen infrastructure technology, photo-voltaic technology, wind energy, wave/tidal energy and bio-fuels. Such a business incubator might also provide access to resources, networks, information and ICT infrastructure, training and start-up services including grants, debt and equity finance where applicable.

The Florida Energy Office administers several statutorily-authorized and funded programs to provide grants and tax incentives for promotion of renewable energy technology businesses in the state including solar and hydrogen fuel cell as well as many others.

GP-4.8

Current structures for financing and commercializing innovative technologies are failing to deliver much-needed low-carbon technologies to market. Efforts to grow the pace of low-carbon technology innovation by creating broad-scale financing and commercialization could achieve results.

The Action Team, in its Phase I deliberations, recommended further examination of ways the state can support the public and private efforts to develop alternative fuels and technologies in Florida. The Action Team also recommended consideration of an organizational model that fosters greater public-private cooperation for the development of a low-carbon energy market in Florida.

GP-4.9

Incentive points could increase the extent of business participation in various state-to-business grant programs by rewarding higher levels of participation.

This option added by the TWG.

GP-5. Education and Outreach

GP-5.1

State government outreach and education actions should reflect the state's emphasis on climate change and GHG emission reductions.

The Action Team recommends further examination of all energy technologies with low carbon emissions in addressing state's goals of reducing GHGs and pursuing energy security to include public outreach and engagement.

GP-5.2.

Targeting policy-makers with outreach and education efforts would help climate change efforts gain traction. Climate change can play a part in many, if not all, policy decisions made for state government.

GP-5.3

Integrating climate change into the educational curriculum and professional licensing can bring greater awareness of the impact that climate change has on all personal and public actions.

GP-5.4

Outreach, recognition and education that targets local community leaders and community based organizations can greatly enhance the message.

GP-5.5

Outreach and education efforts to increase awareness of climate change in the general public can help people understand how to incorporate this awareness into their private and professional lives.

GP-5.6

Outreach, recognition and education efforts targeting industrial and economic sectors can help them incorporate climate change efforts into business plans and practices.

GP-5.7

Personal admonition by the governor to Floridians to conserve and reduce their energy consumption will help influence the public to make these practices a part of their daily lives.

GP-5.8

Volunteer Florida is an organization that helps to develop, promote and implement volunteerism and service throughout the state. The organization works through AmeriCorps volunteers and others in communities around the state and coordinates volunteerism through Volunteer Centers and with grant funding. The organization could take on a Serve to Preserve component that emphasized residential energy efficiency and education/outreach on renewables and low carbon technologies. Public education and outreach can comprise and/or support GHG emissions reduction programs, policies, or goals. Public education and outreach is vital to fostering a broad awareness of climate change issues and effects among a state's citizens (e.g., co-benefits such as clean air and public health). Ultimately, public education and outreach is the foundation for the long-term success of all policy initiatives.