

Louisiana Approves First Climate Action Plan in the Gulf South

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Gov. John Bel Edwards' Climate Initiatives Task Force today unanimously approved the state's first ever **Climate Action Plan**. Louisiana's Plan contains a balanced set of recommendations to limit the severity of climate change while positioning the state to maintain its economic competitiveness in a low-carbon future. The science-based plan achieves the Governor's goals of reaching net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050, putting the state in line with pledges made under the Paris Agreement, and by the federal government, 25 other states, and hundreds of companies in the private sector.

"Today represents a step forward on a new path toward a brighter future for our climate and for our economy," said Gov. Edwards. "I am sincerely grateful for the leadership and commitment shown by every member of this Task Force. They confronted a difficult issue with immense implications for our state with dedication, commitment, and integrity. While creating consensus around these strategies was not always easy, they ultimately chose action over inaction. I thank them for their work and look forward to continuing the partnership as we move this plan into implementation."

The Louisiana Climate Action Plan contains 28 strategies and 84 specific actions to reduce GHG emissions across the entire state economy. It was developed through a bottom-up approach over a 15-month process that was conducted over 49 public meetings. The Task Force members represent a variety of perspectives, including the government, private sector, academia, and environmental and community advocates. They were supported in their work by volunteers from diverse backgrounds organized into six sector committees representing different sectors of the state's economy and four advisory groups focused on equity, science, legal, and financial considerations.

"From the outset, it was clear that this planning effort had to grapple with more than just greenhouse gas emissions," said Harry Vorhoff, the chairman's designee on the Climate Initiatives Task Force and Deputy Director of the Governor's Office of Coastal Activities. "Addressing climate change has significant implications for our communities, environment, and economy. Each of those perspectives was reflected in the membership of our Task Force and committees, which helped us maximize co-benefits and avoid potential harms in each recommendation for taking climate action."

The Task Force's planning effort also included an update to the state's greenhouse gas inventory, which allowed for a tailored approach to GHG emissions reductions. Sixty-six percent of Louisiana's GHG emissions are concentrated in the industrial sector, driven primarily by the state's refining, chemical manufacturing, and natural gas processing facilities. Another 19 percent of the state's overall GHG emissions come from the transportation sector, and 13 percent result from electric power generation. This information shaped the Task Force's approach and helped inform a modeling tool that was used to measure the effectiveness of different policy options for reducing GHG emissions.

“The Water Institute of the Gulf was proud to provide scientific and planning support to the Climate Initiatives Task Force as it weighed the best approaches to tackling climate change in Louisiana,” said Alyssa Dausman, Senior Vice President and Chief Scientist at the Water Institute of the Gulf. “Together our team was able to provide the Task Force with both qualitative and quantitative information across a wide swath of metrics and objectives to help inform their deliberations within a fast-moving planning process.”

The Climate Action Plan contains recommendations spanning eight sections:

- Clean Energy Transition
- Industrial Decarbonization
- Actively Managed Methane Emissions
- Transportation, Development, and the Built Environment
- Natural and Working Lands and Wetlands
- An Inclusive, Low-Carbon Economy
- Collaboration and Partnership to Ensure Successful Implementation
- Accountability and Adaptability to Ensure Lasting Success

The plan also includes three priority policy pillars: renewable electricity generation, industrial electrification, and industrial fuel switching to low- and no-carbon hydrogen.

“It’s been an honor to be a part of this Task Force,” said Task Force member and partner at Breazeale, Sachse & Wilson, LLP, Tim Hardy. “The weather events, the climate events that we have seen in recent years leave no doubt that we need to act. The impacts to communities are no longer speculative; they are real. To take climate action, we need a workforce ready for the low carbon future. As a member of the Board of Supervisors for the Louisiana Community & Technical College System Worker, I am happy to see this plan recognizes that workforce training will be critical for our workers and communities as we transition to more renewable sources of energy.”

As the state’s first effort to address the root causes of climate change, the Climate Action Plan also contains a detailed description of the science of climate change and details on how a warmer planet is impacting with increasing severity the state’s people, environment, and economy.

With the plan’s adoption, Task Force member and CEO & President of Foundation for Louisiana Flozell Daniels, Jr., expressed gratitude for the advocacy of climate-impacted communities. “These communities have ensured the inclusion of forward looking, justice-centered approaches and long-term accountability in this Climate Action Plan - increasing the likelihood of achieving climate and environmental justice that’s required for our collective survival. Now the work of building a future that’s safe, fair, and flourishing begins.”

The Climate Action Plan will be delivered to the Governor on February 1, and the Task Force will meet again in early March to move forward with the plan’s implementation. An executive summary of the Climate Action Plan can be found [here](#).

The web version of the 2022 Louisiana Climate Action Plan can be accessed [here](#).

The web version of the Executive Summary to the Climate Action Plan can be accessed [here](#).