

## New Jersey Climate Change Alliance

<https://njadapt.rutgers.edu/>

NJ Climate Change Alliance

**The New Jersey Climate Change Alliance is a statewide network of diverse organizations that share the goal of advancing science-informed and evidence-based climate change strategies at the state and local levels in New Jersey.**

### **About Us:**

Climate change is increasing temperatures, causing heavier rainfall events, and rising sea levels affecting the health, welfare, and economy of New Jersey. The **New Jersey Climate Change Alliance** is a network of diverse organizations that share the goal of advancing through outreach and education science-informed and evidence-based climate change strategies and tactics at the state and local levels in New Jersey, with regard to 1) adapting to changing climate conditions, 2) eliminating greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions through source reduction, and 3) mitigating any remaining GHG emissions through nature-based sequestration and other emerging technologies.

Alliance participants include representatives of public, private, and non-governmental organizations from sectors including transportation, emergency management, business, energy, engineering, farming, insurance, environment, health, community planning, environmental justice, natural resource management, and others working on advancing climate change solutions in New Jersey. The Alliance does not work to influence political outcomes or specific pieces of legislation; rather, the work of the Alliance serves to integrate research and science with evidence and diverse points of view through the voices of Alliance participants for the purpose of informing short and long-term climate change strategies and outlining policy options for New Jersey.

All organizations participating in the Alliance commit to the following six principles and goals:

1. Support science-informed and evidence-based strategies to advance net-zero greenhouse gas emissions, nature-based systems sequestration, and long-term adaptation to changing climate conditions;
2. Promote equitable climate change solutions that focus on ensuring delivery of benefits to populations and communities disproportionately affected by climate change impacts and the emissions that contribute to climate change;
3. Promote climate change solutions that are not biased toward any particular political group;
4. Further climate change strategies that promote economic growth, improved health outcomes, natural solutions, and sustainable communities;
5. Share and promote Alliance analyses, reports, tools, educational materials, and other outputs within their networks; and
6. Maintain thoughtful, respectful and meaningful dialogue among participants in accordance with the following practices:
  - Participants are free to use information received via Alliance discussions but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any participant, may be revealed;
  - Participants will not distribute or publish any materials disclosed by other participants without prior approval of the participant providing the information;

- Participants will treat each other with respect, assume good intentions on the part of other participants, and allow fellow participants flexibility to explore and consider potential positions without prejudice or recrimination;
- Participants will participate personally rather than send a representative to the maximum extent possible;
- Participants value the diversity of Alliance participants, their perspectives, and the organizations they represent;
- Participants will manage efficient meetings, stick to the agenda, honor time limits, and focus use of email for administrative and informational purposes rather than iterative dialogues; and
- Participants generally agree that Alliance outputs will use the following language in public products: *This product has been reviewed by the Steering Committee of the New Jersey Climate Change Alliance. While individual participants of the Alliance do not necessarily agree with each and every insight outlined in this product, the Steering Committee concurs that the content of this product presents critically important issues facing New Jersey. The views expressed do not necessarily represent the official positions of participants of the New Jersey Climate Change Alliance or funders who supported this work. Rutgers University serves as the facilitator of the Alliance and recommendations in the report do not represent the position of the University.*

Since its inception in 2011, the Alliance’s work has involved:

- Leading demonstration projects that can be replicated throughout New Jersey;
- Identifying evidence-based state and local policy options relevant for New Jersey;
- Conducting outreach and education to state and local officials, communities, leaders, and the general public;
- Linking natural and social scientists, engineers, and other experts to decision-makers, communities, and leaders to inform policy and practice;
- Developing tools, guidance and analyses to inform planning and decision-making in the public, private, and nongovernmental sectors;
- Creating a forum that engages a diverse set of perspectives to advance evidence-based climate strategies and policy in New Jersey;
- Identifying gaps and areas for further applied scientific and policy research, planning, and policy analysis.

Equity is a critically important principle of the New Jersey Climate Change Alliance as is a dedicated focus on ensuring that climate change strategies are designed to benefit those communities and populations that are disproportionately affected by climate change emissions and impacts. The Steering Committee ensures that all work of the Alliance considers the implications of its efforts on communities and populations that are most affected by changing climate conditions both regarding sources of climate emissions and impacts of a changing climate.

Originally formed as the New Jersey Climate Adaptation Alliance, the Alliance changed its name in 2018 to better reflect the breadth of its work. The Alliance is facilitated by Rutgers University through the Rutgers Climate Institute and the Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy.

# Alliance Operations

## I. Alliance Co-chairpersons

Two Alliance participants serve as Co-Chairs and work closely with the Rutgers facilitators to manage the operations of the Alliance. The Co-Chairs are also members of the Steering Committee and the Executive Committee. Co-chairs are identified by the Nominations and Operations Committee and serve two-year, alternating terms.

## II. Alliance participants:

Representatives of organizations that participate in the Alliance commit to the six principles and goals of the Alliance.

- Alliance participants meet bi-annually, once to coincide with the Alliance annual conference and a second time virtually to exchange ideas and experiences, receive updates from workgroups, and share participants' climate change initiatives.
- Any participant of the Alliance is eligible to:
  - Participate in any of the Alliance workgroups;
  - Suggest establishment of a new workgroup to the Steering Committee;
  - Use the Alliance logo on their organization's materials and social media;
  - Chair a workgroup, as approved by the Steering Committee.
- Alliance participants are encouraged to assist in distribution of news and information about the Alliance in their own organizations' communication efforts and to cite their participation in the Alliance in their own websites and social media communications.
- Alliance participants are encouraged to assist with fundraising efforts of the Alliance and to actively participate in Alliance projects and workgroups.
- Alliance participants are encouraged to participate in and assist in planning the annual conference and meeting;
- Organizations that are interested in becoming new participants in the Alliance are reviewed by the Steering Committee and may reach out to the Alliance facilitators for more information.

## III. Standing Committees:

The Alliance maintains the following standing committees:

- *Nominations and Operations Committee* – The Nominations and Operations Committee is appointed by the Co-chairs. It serves to nominate Co-chairs as well as new members of the Steering Committee. The Nominations and Operations Committee will serve to offer suggestions for additional members of the Steering Committee at such time that Steering Committee members depart and/or when the Steering Committee identifies a significant gap of expertise in its membership. The Nominations and Operations Committee will also lead any updates to the Alliance operations and procedures as needed.
- *Development Committee* – The Development Committee is appointed by the Nominations and Operations Committee. The Development Committee works closely with the Rutgers facilitators to monitor the fiscal health of the Alliance, launch development opportunities, and align fiscal resources of the Alliance with the Alliance priorities as outlined in its workplan.
- *Executive Committee* – The two co-chairs, the chair of the Development Committee, and the Chair of the Nominations and Operations committee will constitute an Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will meet monthly to set the agenda for the monthly meeting of the Steering Committee.
- *Steering Committee* – The Steering Committee oversees the routine governance of the Alliance. Because the Steering Committee strives to operate through consensus, Steering Committee members

must demonstrate a high level of trust among members, allow sufficient time for deliberation on issues, and practice a willingness to listen to ideas from other members. The Steering Committee meets for approximately one hour monthly either in-person or remotely with biannual work sessions that are encouraged to be in person. The Steering Committee advises the New Jersey Climate Change Resource Center on its workplan priorities. The Steering Committee is chaired by the two Alliance Co-Chairs.

Responsibilities of the Steering Committee include:

- Adoption of a workplan set of priorities every 1-2 years;
- Establishment of new workgroups to focus on a particular topic or workplan item;
- Identification of new Steering Committee members;
- Approval of new Alliance participants;
- Invitation of subject matter experts to participate in Alliance activities;
- Public release of Alliance-branded products, including products developed by workgroups;
- Identification of priorities for the annual conference and establishing a subcommittee to assist with conference planning, as needed.

The Steering Committee strives to operate through a consensus process in which members are encouraged to express their views and acknowledge other points of view. If the Steering Committee cannot achieve an outcome on any given decision in a timely fashion using consensus, the Co-chairs may opt to: ask the facilitators to investigate the issue further; or ask certain members to remain neutral on the issue at hand for purposes of their participation in the Alliance. Steering committee members that do not participate in a monthly in-person or virtual meeting and do not otherwise provide input on a pending decision are assumed to be in agreement with the pending decision.

#### **IV. Workgroups:**

Alliance workgroups provide a forum for Alliance participants to advance issues on specific climate change topics. Workgroups may serve to provide a forum for exchanging ideas on an emerging topic; outline public policy options on a specific topic area; and/or develop guidance, tools, and information on specific topic areas. Workgroups are established by the Steering Committee either at the Steering Committee's initiative, at the recommendation of an Alliance participant, and/or at the recommendation of the Alliance facilitators.

The length of time that a workgroup may deliberate can vary based on its mission. Each Workgroup will be chaired by an Alliance participant. A workgroup chairperson may choose to invite non-Alliance participants to participate in the Workgroup, including subject matter experts. Workgroups are expected to seek out participation from underrepresented populations and communities on workgroups.

#### **V. Equity Advisors:**

The Alliance maintains a small group of advisors that is designed to provide routine insights to the Steering Committee and workgroups on issues related to equity. The advisors receive a modest stipend as set by the Steering Committee. Advisors are identified by the Nominations and Operations Committee. Among other roles, the Equity Advisors advise the Steering Committee on: content of the annual workplan, content of the annual conference, topic areas that would benefit from establishment of a workgroup and dedicated focus of the Alliance.