

**Maine Climate Council Equity Subcommittee
Draft Recommendations - for Deliberative Purposes
Natural and Working Lands and Waters
Version 8-26-2021**

Please note:

This document contains draft recommendations for deliberation by the equity subcommittee members. Edits and revisions will be discussed during upcoming working sessions of the subcommittee, the schedules of which will be posted on the [subcommittee website](#) in early September.

Public comment on these draft recommendations will be accepted during upcoming subcommittee meetings on September 23 and October 21, or anytime through this [online form](#).

All upcoming meetings and meeting materials can be found [here](#).

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Original Source of Proposed Recommendation (Direct Comments/Notes from Equity Subcommittee Minutes) ¹	<i>Proposed recommendation</i>
<p>The sector is heavily fossil fuel dependent, and a carbon tax/fee may place additional burden on industry.</p>	<p>Working with the University of Maine and other partners, the state should study potential opportunities and challenges associated with carbon pricing policies for Maine-based industries, particularly natural heritage industries and others heavily dependent on high-carbon fuels and/or highly vulnerable to climate changes.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There may be climate driven opportunities for farmers who can switch to higher value crops. ● Local food strengthens economies and food system resilience. 	<p>In partnership with the University of Maine Cooperative Extension and the private sector, as well as with the Resolve To End Hunger in Maine by 2030, the state should explore agricultural opportunities associated with growing new crops sustainably in a changing Maine climate.</p>
<p>Access to green space is unevenly distributed, and should be available to all.</p>	<p>The state should explore the distribution of green space and access to it, especially in historically disadvantaged communities. This should include assessing visitorship at state owned parks and other sites, access to working and recreational waterfronts, and equitable participation in the Land for Maine’s Future program.</p> <p>The state should incorporate equity considerations into grant scoring for the Project Canopy Grant Program, such as criteria which prioritize use of funding for street trees in town centers and urban areas, particularly in low income or otherwise disadvantaged communities.</p> <p>(see example: American Forests’ Tree Equity Score map: https://www.treeequityscore.org/map/#3.21/38.89/-97.56)</p>

¹ Text in this column is from Equity Subcommittee meeting minutes.

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<p>What further opportunities exist to return land to Maine tribes?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Changing the definition of what conservation means – indigenous people are the stewards of 80% of biodiversity, globally. It isn't recognized as conservation. 	<p>Working together with tribal representatives, the state's natural resource agencies should continue to explore opportunities for cooperative ownership or management of land with Maine tribes.</p>
<p>The state should further focus on just transition.</p>	<p>In partnership with the Department of Labor, DECD, private industry, and others, the state should develop a comprehensive approach to just transition, including adopting a comprehensive definition and prioritizing workforce retraining initiatives, especially in those industries and communities most threatened by climate change. These retraining programs must be developed in close collaboration with impacted communities and industries.</p>
<p>The state must continue to provide incentives for clean technology transition in this sector, particularly for those small business and self-employed individuals at the margin.</p>	<p>The State must continue to provide incentives for clean technology transition in heritage industries, particularly for those small business and self-employed individuals at the margin.</p>
<p>The state should promote neighbor-to-neighbor educational opportunities in these sectors for demonstrating new technology. Pilot new technology on local farms and enable communication.</p> <p>The State needs to work to overcome the mindset of incompatibility and unreliability on a consumer/business level with new clean tech, and provide opportunities to see new tech in action in Maine's context.</p>	<p>The State should pilot new clean technologies on local farms, in local fishing businesses, and in forestry applications to demonstrate effectiveness, and should develop platforms to allow for peer-to-peer learning.</p> <p>Ex: Department of Marine Resources to pilot a new marine vessel meeting EPA Tier 4 standards.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Need to establish principles for climate and environmental data collection and ownership. 	<p>The State should encourage just principles for climate, environmental, and socioeconomic data collection and ownership through the climate research and monitoring hub and in state agency climate research/monitoring</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The state should prioritize community participatory approaches in data collection.● Do we monitor climate changes at a level that is accessible to most Mainers? How can we document and value hyperlocal experiences of climate change?● Are there traditional frameworks of data collection or evaluation that we can welcome into a monitoring platform?	<p>work, and should prioritize community participatory approaches in data collection which ensure transparency and build trust.</p> <p>The State should encourage the collection of climate and environmental data at scales relevant to Mainers and encourage the sharing of data in an accessible way, for example through the establishment of a coastal and marine information exchange.</p> <p>Finally, the state’s climate data platform should value and honor the role of traditional environmental knowledge, especially from Maine’s indigenous peoples.</p>
<p>Can economic development resources be prioritized to invest in diversification focused in the most vulnerable populations? Women especially are starting to diversify the industry.</p>	<p>The state should prioritize economic development investments in diversification of natural and working land industries in the most vulnerable communities first, with a focus on increasing diverse participation in these industries.</p>
<p>Opportunities for further marketing and value add include B corps status, blue economy of sustainably harvested seafood.</p>	<p>The state should make resources available to natural and working land industries to pursue value added environmentally friendly certifications, such as B Corps and Certified Organic.</p> <p>Ex. Following recent direction from the legislature, the Department of State and DECD will work together to make information available to all Mainers about the costs and opportunities of B-Corps status.</p>
<p>Are folks informed about climate risks when making new investment in equipment, etc?</p>	<p>The state should consider mandating a climate risk disclosure requirement for certain investments.</p>

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Summary of data needs and future research

In addition to the above recommendations, the Equity subcommittee recommends that the state study the following areas for future consideration by the Equity subcommittee and the Maine Climate Council:

- How will climate driven uncertainty with regards to fish stocks continue to impact the fishing industry? Are there additional opportunities for diversification (aquaculture, seaweed, shellfish, etc) within this industry that the state can support in a targeted way? More broadly speaking, what are best practices in natural heritage industries facing large climate uncertainties?
- How can the state foster a sense of shared ownership and shared prosperity in the climate transition?
- What is the demographic makeup of Maine's natural heritage industry workers? Are there opportunities to diversify this industry?
- What are the barriers to new Mainers and other vulnerable who wish to enter heritage industries? Are there unique skills they bring to these industries from other countries that Maine could recognize and amplify?
- Which workers are most vulnerable to climate change, in terms of either physical location of their industries or operational misalignment with climate imperatives? Has the state adequately engaged with these workers, and is the state pursuing retraining opportunities in these communities?
- Do natural heritage industry workers experience disproportionately high exposure to diesel pollution, with associated health impacts? Are there opportunities to decrease this exposure, including through the increased used of biofuels?
- Are there other disproportionate health impacts associated with communities surrounding natural heritage industry sites, especially tribal communities near paper mills?