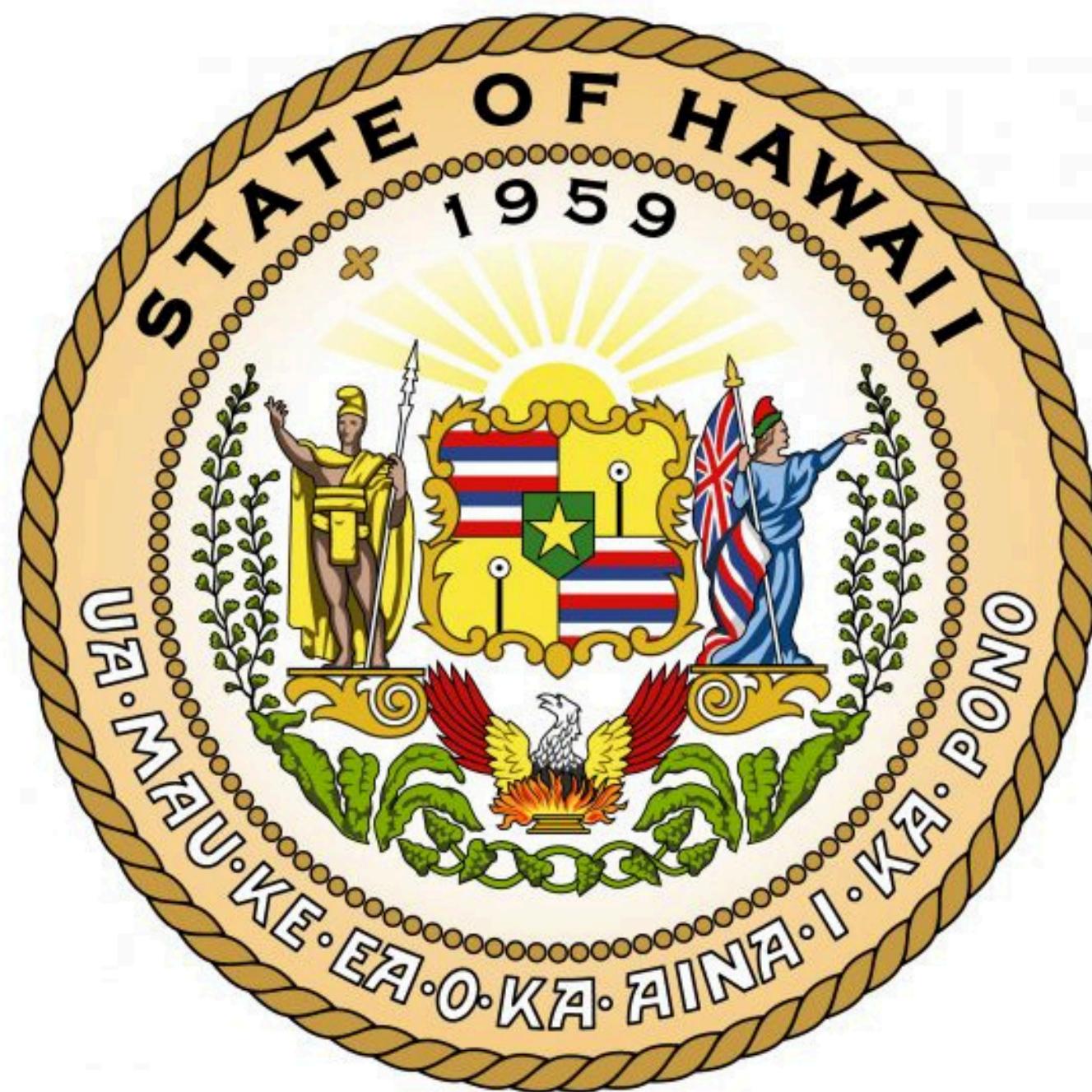


Report to the Thirty-Third Legislature
State of Hawaii 2026
Regular Session

HAWAII CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION
COMMISSION



Prepared by the
Department of Land and Natural Resources
State of Hawai‘i Section 225P-3(k), Hawai‘i Revised Statutes
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Annual Report



2025



Climate Change Mitigation and
Adaptation Commission

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Commission Members and Staff

Co-Chairs

Dawn Chang - Chairperson of the Department of Land and Natural Resources
Mary Alice Evans - Director of the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development

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Commissioners

Senator Mike Gabbard - Chair of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and the Environment
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye - Chair of the Senate Committee on Water and Land
Representative Nicole E. Lowen - Chair of the House Committee on Energy and Environmental Protection
Representative Mark Hashem - Chair of the House Committee on Water and Land
James Kunane Tokioka - Director of the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism
Sharon Hurd - Chairperson of the Board of Agriculture
Stacy Kealohalani Ferreira - Chief Executive Officer of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs
Kali Watson - Chairperson of the Hawaiian Homes Commission
Ed Sniffen - Director of the Department of Transportation
Dr. Kenneth Fink - Director of the Department of Health
Roy Takumi - Chairperson of the Board of Education
Dawn Takeuchi Apuna - Director of the City & County of Honolulu Department of Planning and Permitting
Kate Blystone - Acting Director of the County of Maui Department of Planning
Jeff Darrow - Director of the County of Hawai'i Department of Planning
Ka'āina S. Hull - Director of the County of Kaua'i Department of Planning
Major General Kenneth S. Hara - The Adjutant General
Christopher Liu - Manager of the Coastal Zone Management Program



Mission & Vision Statement

Mission Statement

Hawaii's Climate Commission recognizes the urgency of climate threats and the need to act quickly. It promotes ambitious, climate-smart, culturally responsive strategies for climate change adaptation and mitigation in a manner that is Clean, Equitable & Resilient.

Priority Statement: Mitigation

The Commission recognizes that ground transportation contributes significantly to Hawai'i's share of greenhouse gas emissions. It supports a price on carbon, and mechanisms to reduce overall vehicle miles traveled, as well as converting all remaining vehicle based ground transportation to renewable, zero-emission fuels and technologies

Priority Statement: Adaptation

The Commission recognizes the serious impacts of sea level rise on Hawai'i. It supports legislation to address development along beaches, as well as funding programs that assist in planning and implementation; urges the incorporation of the sea level rise exposure area into counties' general and development plans; and recommends that agencies identify and prioritize their assets that lie within this area.

Priority Statement: Guidance for Investment in Resilient Infrastructure

The Commission emphasizes that nature-based solutions, green infrastructure, and carbon-smart practices must be implemented now and prioritized in all planning and future actions as part of a climate ready Hawai'i. By doing so, it supports State sustainability and climate resiliency which provide a multitude of economic, environmental, and social co-benefits



CCMAC Member actions

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Co-Chair Department of Land & Natural Resources (DLNR), Chair Dawn Chang

DLNR, under the leadership of Chair Dawn Chang, played a central role in the passage of the Climate Impact Fee (“Green Fee”). This landmark funding mechanism is projected to generate approximately \$100 million annually to support environmental stewardship, climate hazard mitigation and resilience and sustainable tourism.

CCMAC’s major 2025 milestone was the release of the draft Climate Action Pathways (CAP). Released on December 1, 2025, the CAP provides a comprehensive roadmap for Hawai‘i’s climate mitigation and adaptation efforts. Given DLNR’s responsibilities for coastal-zone and natural resource management, this roadmap is particularly important for sea level rise, shoreline erosion, and nature-based resilience strategies. DLNR’s Office of Conservation and Coastal Lands, in collaboration with CCMAC, oversaw efforts to update the sea-level exposure area (SLR-XA) mapping tool with up-to-date science and social indicator datasets.

DLNR’s Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) advanced statewide climate resilience through continued implementation of the 30x30 watershed initiative, protecting Hawai‘i’s water security and carbon sinks. DOFAW also expanded land protection through biosecurity efforts with the Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council (HISC), its Legacy Land Conservation Program and other land acquisition efforts including the purchase of 948 acres at Kāne‘ohe Pali.

DLNR’s Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR) continued to lead statewide efforts to protect coral reefs as they face warming waters and ocean acidification through climate change. These actions protect food security and help to maintain a natural barrier to wave energy. DAR’s Makai Watch program further enhances climate resilience by educating communities and fostering stewardship of nearshore resources.



CCMAC Member Actions

07

Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity , Chair Sharon Hurd

The Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (DAB), under Chair Sharon Hurd, advanced in 2025 efforts linking agriculture, biosecurity and climate resilience. The DAB oversight helps ensure agricultural systems contribute to both GHG-reduction and resilience.

The DAB also engaged in the Hawai'i Interagency Biosecurity Plan update and invasive-species mitigation, which the report identified as important for climate-resilience co-benefits (since invasive grasses fuel wildfire risk). While the report presents aggregated actions, the DAB's portfolio is central to land-use, soil health, regenerative agriculture and adaptation through working-lands.

Moreover, the DAB conditionally supported outreach to farming communities, particularly in underserved/disadvantaged areas, to integrate climate-smart practices (e.g., soil carbon storage, agro-forestry) into agriculture operations

This support is contingent upon climate-smart practices having met the following expectations:

- The practices do not pose unknown or unacceptable risks to the participating agricultural producers.
- The practices have been subjected to proof-of-concept by agricultural producers.
- These practices propose real benefits (dollars/acre/year) to the agricultural producer, with a reliable estimate of the benefit's variability over the life of the obligated period.
- Program proponents provide the final cost (annualized) to the agricultural producer who chooses to participate, and,
- Offer federal and state cost sharing.

In doing so, the DAB is helping nudge Hawai'i's agricultural producers toward climate-resilient production in a manner that unequivocally benefits Hawaii's agricultural producers.

CCMAC Member Actions

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Coastal Zone Management Program (CZM), Manager Christopher Liu

In 2025, The CZM Program continued to support the State's progress in addressing coastal challenges and understanding various adaptation strategies. Under the Ocean Resources Management Plan (ORMP), the CZM Program commissioned a series of projects related to three focus areas: Coastal Hazards, Land Based Pollution and Marine Ecosystems.

Two major projects were completed in 2025, an analysis of managed retreat implementation strategies for the State, and the development of a Sea Level Rise (SLR) vulnerability assessment tool for state facilities

Additionally, the CZM Program began the pilot phase of the long-term

Regional Shoreline Adaptation Planning initiative. As a collaborator on the Pili Nā Moku project, CZM will be working in three moku to identify appropriate geographic scale for coastal adaptation planning based on technical analysis and community input. Agency consultations and technical mapping were completed in 2025, and community mapping workshops will begin in early 2026.

As the lead agency for the Special Management Area (SMA), CZM coordinates with and provides technical assistance to the County Planning Departments on their administration of the SMA and provides comments on county consultations for SMA permits

Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL), Chairperson Kali Watson

DHHL moved forward renewable energy and housing initiatives on Hawaiian Home Lands, which will reduce climate change vulnerability for DHHL beneficiaries. The Hawaiian Homes Commission formed a Permitted Interaction Group to explore geothermal energy development opportunities on Hawaiian Home Lands, which could provide long term, firm renewable energy sources.

Additionally, DHHL's coordination with the Commission's Grants To Projects Bridge (for community-based energy or resilience projects) provides a mechanism for iwi āina- and community-centered climate investments and workforce opportunities, furthering both mitigation and adaptation. In short, DHHL is aligning housing, energy and community resilience for native Hawaiian lands.



CCMAC Member Actions

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Department of Transportation (HDOT), Director Ed Sniffen

In 2025, HDOT released the state's first Transportation Energy Security and Waste Reduction Plan, a landmark roadmap to reduce transportation emissions across all modes and support Hawai'i's net negative emissions target by 2045. Developed in response to the Navahine Settlement Agreement, the Plan outlines near term actions and will be updated regularly to guide long term transportation decarbonization. HDOT is actively implementing Plan strategies while continuing critical resilience work to address sea level rise, coastal erosion, wildfires, and slides, and extreme storms. By advancing both mitigation through emissions reduction and adaptation through durable, resilient infrastructure, HDOT plays a central role in advancing the Commission's climate change mitigation and adaptation goals.

The Hawai'i Youth Transportation Council, composed of twenty youth ages 12–24 from across the islands, provided advisory input to HDOT on climate mitigation and adaptation, including development of the Energy Security and Waste Reduction Plan. In its inaugural year, the Council established leadership and committees, engaged youth statewide through outreach and events, participated in key professional forums, and partnered with HDOT, Earthjustice, and Our Children's Trust to support transportation decarbonization policies and public education efforts.

HDOT Airports Updates

- HDOT Airports is testing and implementing scalable electric and autonomous vehicle technologies, including an Electric Tram at Kahului Airport and Electric and Autonomous Shuttle pilots at Honolulu Airport.
- In 2025, HDOT opened 20 new Level 2 EV charging stations at HNL, available 24/7 on a pay-per-use basis, supporting the state's transition to sustainable transportation.
- HDOT Airports participates in the Airports Council International Airport Carbon Accreditation program, recognizing efforts to reduce carbon emissions through cleaner vehicles, renewable energy, and energy-efficient operations. The five largest Hawai'i airports have now received ACA recognition: HNL, KOA, and LIH at Level 3 (Optimization) and ITO and OGG at Level 1 (Mapping).
- HDOT Airports is finalizing its Airports Climate Action Plan to guide emissions reduction and operational resilience statewide. In parallel, a Sea Level Rise Strategy is being developed to protect airport infrastructure, incorporating design measures to accommodate up to 3.2 feet of sea level rise



CCMAC Member Actions

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Department of Transportation (HDOT), Director Ed Sniffen (continued)

HDOT Harbors Updates

- Infrastructure Resilience: HDOT Harbors is strengthening facilities to remain functional and adaptable amid rising seas, changing environmental conditions, and evolving operational needs.
- Major Projects: The \$555 million Kapālama Container Terminal expands berthing space, streamlines cargo handling, reduces traffic congestion, and incorporates environmental safeguards. Pier heights are constructed three feet above existing grade to address sea level rise. Redevelopment of the Sand Island Container Terminal will also consider sealevel rise, tide changes, and increased severe weather impacts.
- Digital Twin Technology: HDOT Harbors developed a real-time, interactive digital twin of its port infrastructure to support strategic planning, prioritize investments, communicate risks to stakeholders, and enhance long-term resilience. A public video introduces the technology: IDPP Outreach Video – YouTube.

HDOT Highways Updates

- Climate Adaptation Actions: HDOT Highways continued implementing strategies from the 2021 Highway Climate Adaptation Action Plan to make the state highway system more resilient to climate-related impacts. Pilot projects are underway to address immediate, medium-, and long-term risks to highway assets. The Final EIS for the Honoapi'ilani Highway Improvements Project was published on November 8, 2025, proposing to relocate approximately six miles of highway away from the coastline between Pāpalaua Wayside Park (milepost 11) and Launiupoko (milepost 17).
- Electric Vehicle Infrastructure: HDOT is expanding EV charging statewide through the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Program. In 2025, construction began on the second NEVI station on Maui at Kapalua Airport, with two Hawai'i Island stations planned for 2026. The EV and charging infrastructure-as-a-service contract with Sustainability Partners supports fleet electrification and fills gaps in Hawai'i's public charging network. Progress can be tracked at SP Hawai'i Projects – Google Earth.
- Priority Multimodal Network: The Priority Multimodal Network identifies projects to improve pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access statewide. Over the next ten years, HDOT will accelerate implementation, addressing critical gaps in the first five years and delivering more complex projects in years six to ten. These improvements enhance mobility for residents, visitors, disadvantaged communities, keiki and kupuna, and individuals with disabilities.

CCMAC Member Actions

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Department of Transportation (HDOT), Director Ed Sniffen (continued)

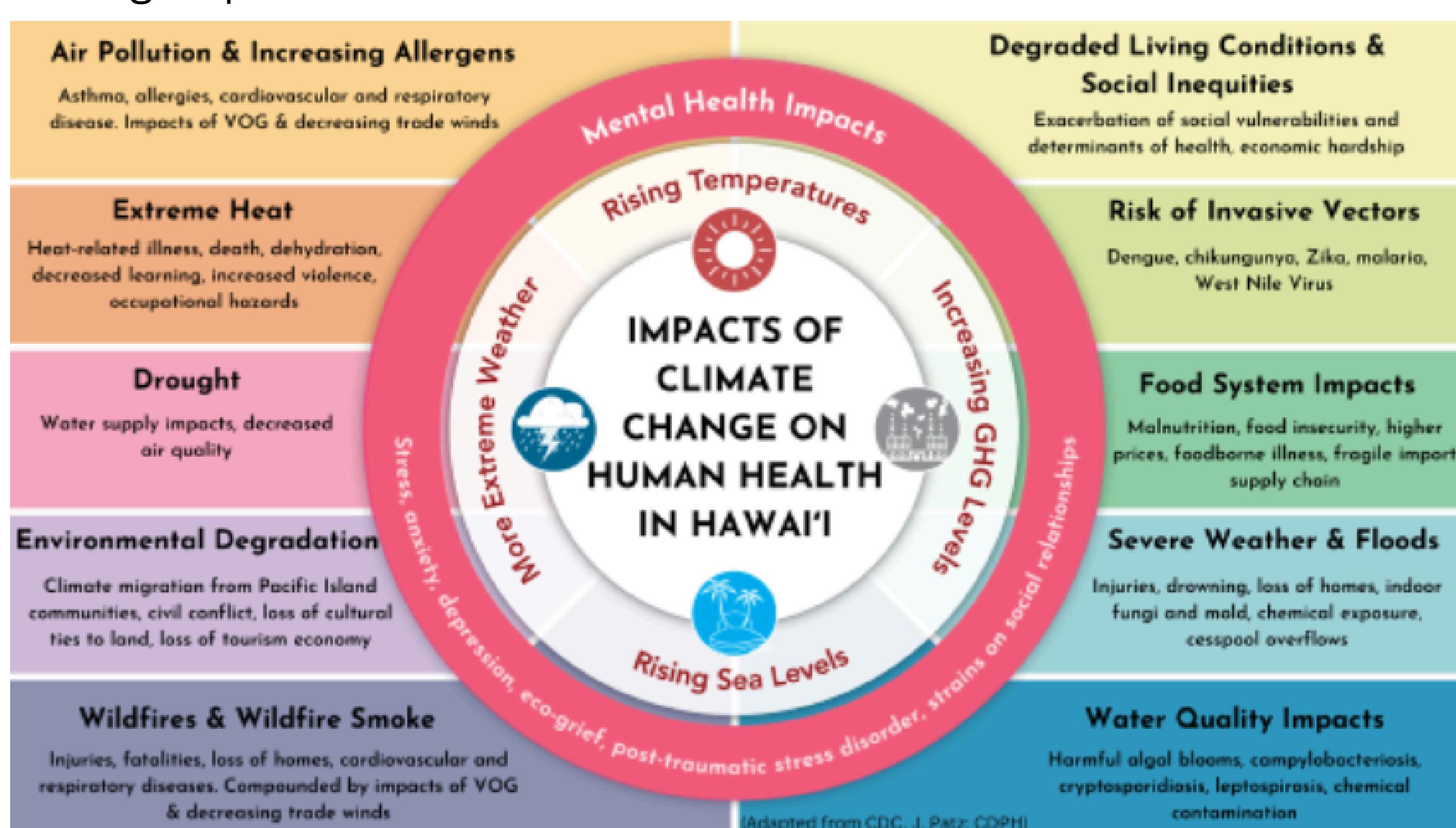
- Project Prioritization for Emissions Reduction: HDOT revised Mid-Range Transportation Plan (MRTP) criteria to prioritize projects with lower projected emissions using the PI'I (Project Island Impact) Tool. These updated criteria will carry forward into the next Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), which lists multi-year State and County transportation projects, including funding categories and federal/local funding shares.
- HDOT's Administrative Modal Unit led the Statewide Transportation Plan, advanced the Energy Security and Waste Reduction Plan, expanded the PI'I Tool, and drafted a Wildfire Action Plan to strengthen climate resilience. The Unit also supports nature and community based projects, the Hawai'i Youth Transportation Council, and agricultural initiatives that reduce reliance on imported food and associated emissions.

Department of Health, Director Kenneth Fink

The Department of Health (DOH) under Dr. Fink, continued efforts to assess climate related risks to public health and develop adaptation strategies to respond. Guided by the Hawaii Climate and Health Pinwheel, DOH works to incorporate these risks into programmatic public health activities and environmental activities across the department.

DOH continues to partner with groups across Hawaii and the nation to advance climate change and health work.

In addition, DOH plays a key role in facilitating Hawaii's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory project to evaluate greenhouse gas trends in the state, assess progress towards achieving statewide GHG reduction goals, and to provide direction in future GHG reduction efforts.



CCMAC Member Actions

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City and County of Honolulu Planning Department

The Office of Climate Change, Sustainability and Resiliency (Resilience Office) tracks climate change science and impacts; coordinates actions and policies to increase community preparedness; develops resilient infrastructure in response to the impacts from climate change; integrates sustainability and environmental values into City plans, programs, and policies; and promotes resilience of communities and coastal areas.

Supported the launch of the City's Climate Resiliency Fund, which will invest 0.5% of real property tax revenues in projects that mitigate climate change impacts and strengthen community resilience. Supported development and passage of Ordinance 25-23 to establish the fund in City ordinance, and collaborated with City Council and City agencies to identify FY 2026 priority projects for funding and to design a management framework that emphasizes community-based investments and cross-agency implementation.

Launched "Keep Cool O'ahu," a heat safety campaign to prepare the public for increasing temperatures and heat waves. The campaign promotes keepcoolohau.gov, a new webpage that includes 12 free printable heat outreach materials in five languages, geospatial data in a heat StoryMap, and relevant City plans and policies.

Initiated the implementation of the Climate Change Design Guidelines for Capital Improvement Projects that will require all City departments to use a Climate Exposure Screening Tool during the initial scoping of capital projects to ensure that climate risks are considered systematically and consistently across City projects to streamline costs and decisions for adaptive design.

Led a public outreach campaign for FEMA's Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) update after new preliminary FIRMs were issued for O'ahu. Outreach included a detailed FIRM webpage and interactive map, mailers, virtual and in-person open houses, information stations in public libraries, social media campaign, news releases, newsletters, and promotion of flood preparedness and insurance resources.

Released the City's Annual Sustainability Report, which measured 2024 performance in meeting established Citywide objectives and targets in the areas of City operations, climate action, transportation, climate adaptation, food systems, waste, and disaster resilience. The interactive report was presented in a revamped digital dashboard and included new datasets on TheBus ridership, commercial and multifamily building benchmarking, FireWise Neighborhoods, active flood insurance policies, and flood-related claim payouts.

Funds and Grants in the Climate Sector

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Funding Landscape

In 2025, significant shifts in federal funding priorities continued to alter the landscape for climate-related projects. Federal investment in mitigation and adaptation initiatives decreased substantially, intensifying competition for limited philanthropic and private-sector funds.

The current administration has drastically cut federal funds and programs for climate change. With major programs such as the Climate Pollution Reduction Program and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (Solar for All grants) being under threat, all Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) programs paused, and other programs in a state of limbo, finding funding to support climate-related projects has been difficult.

According to the Federal Funds Information for States Executive Grants Action Tracker released in early November of 2025, \$42,095,900,000 of climate-related funding has been canceled by the current administration. Hawai‘i would have been eligible for 90% of this funding, more than \$37.8 billion for climate-related projects. Other climate-related financing that has been paused or remains in limbo is on the order of hundreds of billions of dollars, as the fate of the IIJA and IRA funds remains unknown.

In response CCMAC broadened its funding strategy to include philanthropic, corporate, and blended public/private funding sources. However, with many states, counties, and nonprofits pursuing similar diversification strategies, competition has become increasingly intense. Several philanthropic organizations have since restricted eligibility to prior grantees or closed open solicitations, further limiting access to funds.

Another emerging funding source is the State Climate Impact Fee, better known as the Green Fee, a 0.75% increase in the Transient Accommodations Tax (TAT) scheduled to take effect in 2026. The Green Fee is projected to generate \$100 million dollars annually to support environmental protection climate resilience, sustainable tourism, and infrastructure projects across Hawai‘i.

In late October, the Advisory Council began accepting project concepts through an online portal. CCMAC shared this opportunity with participants in the Grants-to-Project Bridge and submitted a \$1 million project concept on behalf of a coalition of organizations working to expand native seed and seedling propagation capacity across the islands.

Funds and Grants in the Climate Sector

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As the Green Fee framework and distribution processes continue to take shape, CCMAC is actively engaging with the Advisory Council and the Governor's Office to support effective implementation. CCMAC has shared both the repository of climate projects collected through the Grants-to-Project Bridge and the community engagement methods used to identify and prioritize local climate action proposals.

While the Green Fee represents a promising and sustainable funding source for statewide climate initiatives, competition for these funds has been significant. State agencies, counties, and nonprofit organizations across Hawai'i are all facing critical funding needs to advance resilience and adaptation projects.

Funds Sought and Awarded

CCMAC pursued funding for a range of statewide climate mitigation and adaptation projects that advance the Commission's strategic priorities, as identified in the Hawai'i Climate Action Plan.

- Total Funds Sought (FY2025): \$5,558,676
- Total Funds Secured (FY2025): \$102,500

CCMAC submitted five Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) requests addressing core adaptation and mitigation needs:

1. Decentralized Compost Network: Establish a network of community composting hubs across the islands.

2. Portable Biochar Machine (Maui): Expand local wildfire fuel reduction and soil restoration capacity.

3. Waste Management and Wildfire Equipment (Statewide): Provide shared-use machinery for disaster debris management and prevention.

4. Hanakao'o Beach Stabilization Project (Maui): Address chronic erosion and protect public infrastructure.

5. O'ahu Native Plant Nursery: Support ecosystem restoration, disaster response, and native plant propagation.

Two of these projects were advanced by Hawai'i's congressional delegation but were not selected for final federal funding.

In 2025, CCMAC successfully secured \$100,000 to establish a statewide Solar Energy Program Manager within the Hawai'i State Energy Office. This position will:

- Accelerate implementation of renewable energy projects;
- Provide technical expertise and interagency coordination; and
- Train state and county personnel on energy retrofits and sustainable infrastructure.

This targeted investment will directly support Hawai'i's clean energy goals and greenhouse gas reduction commitments.

Funds and Grants in the Climate Sector

New Grants and Collaborative Projects

A major outcome of 2025 was the formation of a group working on a state wide native plant propagation developed through CCMAC's Grants-to-Project Bridge initiative and existing nonprofit networks. The hui includes organizations from Hawai'i Island, Maui, Moloka'i, O'ahu, and Kaua'i, working collaboratively to, collect and store wild native seeds, establish mother plants in native seed farms, and propagate seeds and seedlings for ecosystem restoration, reforestation, and post-disaster recovery.

The hui strengthens community-based conservation capacity, supports cultural resilience, and builds statewide readiness for ecological restoration and disaster response preparedness.

Building on this success, CCMAC has initiated plans to develop additional sector-specific working groups for key mitigation and adaptation strategies, including:

- Regenerative agriculture
- Circular economy
- Energy
- Nature-based solutions and restoration
- Resiliency
- Transportation
- Waste and wastewater
- Workforce development

Each hui will receive quarterly grant opportunity updates and hands-on proposal development support from the Commission's Grants-to-Project Bridge program. This model fosters collaboration across sectors, strengthens local capacity, and improves competitiveness for federal and philanthropic funding.

Climate Action and Community Engagement

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CCMAC actively engages Hawai'i communities to advance climate action, foster sustainability, and gather public input for the State's Climate Action Pathways (CAP). In 2025, CCMAC leveraged a combination of digital platforms—including a statewide events calendar, social media channels, and monthly newsletters reaching over 2,200 subscribers—alongside in-person outreach, including approximately 40 community events, library talk story sessions, Neighborhood Board presentations, and public screenings.

Partnerships with organizations such as University of Hawai'i Sea Grant, Capitol Modern, UH Cinematic Arts, and the Better Tomorrow Speaker Series supported innovative initiatives like artist residencies, student-made climate films, and a Sustainable Film Series, engaging residents across all islands. Through these efforts, CCMAC gathered more than 3,000 personal interactions and over 900 public comments on the draft CAP, ensuring that community perspectives informed Hawai'i's climate mitigation and adaptation strategies.



CCMAC developed and maintained an online statewide events calendar focusing on events centered around conservation, climate change initiatives and sustainability. Link: <https://climate.hawaii.gov/events/> This platform has become the go to site for . community facing climate events with dozens of events listed weekly.

CCMAC also coordinated with County partners to ensure that outreach efforts were not duplicative and were reaching the appropriate audiences on each island. These monthly engagement meetings have lead to increased cross jurisdictional collaboration beyond outreach and more thoughtful engagement with community partners.

Amplifying Climate Action: Our Social Media Presence

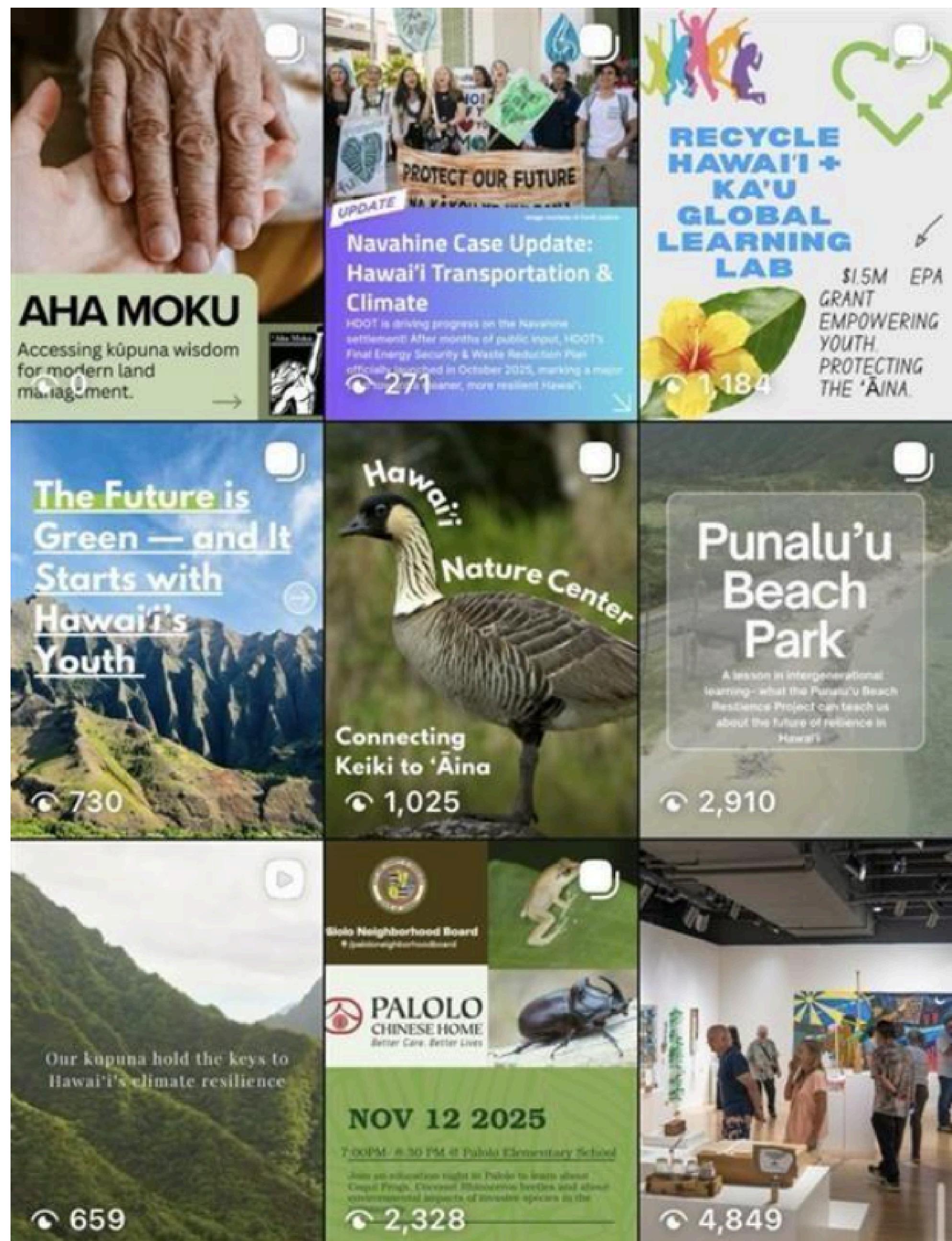
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In 2025, CCMAC significantly expanded its social media reach, growing followers from around 1,600 to over 2,200. Between July and October, consistent posting and strategic content led to a 452% increase in account reach, connecting more Hawai'i residents to critical climate information. The 2025 campaign, "Building Community in the Critical Decade," emphasized that we are in a pivotal ten-year window to take meaningful action to mitigate climate change and build resilience in our communities.

Each month focused on a specific theme to educate, inspire, and engage the public: January – Climate 101, February – Equity, March – Resiliency, April – Culture, May – Affordability, June – Waste, July – 'Āina, August – Health, September – Water, October – Food, November – Keiki & Kūpuna, and December – Community.

Throughout the campaign, the Commission collaborated with state agencies, nonprofits, and community organizations to share ideas, amplify important work, and highlight leaders in climate change mitigation and adaptation. This collaborative approach strengthened community awareness and engagement, helping Hawai'i residents understand the urgency of climate action and the opportunities to contribute to a sustainable future.

Our most liked post featured the Nāulu Cloud Bridge and highlighted the rains on Kaho'olawe. Collaborating with @Hawaiidlnr and @Kahoolawaislandreserve, the post received 1,134 likes and 35.4k views.



Climate Future Forum and Hawai'i Youth Climate Summit



The summit achieved significant political engagement, drawing participation from over 20 state legislators and several representatives from the Honolulu City Council. The presence of U.S. Representative Jill Tokuda underscored the importance of youth-driven climate action, confirming that young voices are actively shaping policy discussions at every level of government.

On Saturday, November 1st, 2025 CCMAC sponsored the annual Climate Future Forum and Youth Climate Summit event at the state Capitol. The free event held to inspire youth to be active and engaged in the 2026 legislative session on climate policy and action. The event brought together youth (ages 14-26), educators, policymakers, experts and community organizations to evaluate and discuss climate action priorities and provide tangible steps to empower youth in legislative action. The event featured 19 organizations and over 170 attendees, including youth statewide from Hawai'i public schools, charter schools and private schools.



Kaiāulu: Rising together

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CCMAC's Artist Climate Action Residency program connected Hawai'i residents to critical climate change challenges and actions through artistic expression from a range of different media. The program received an overwhelming response with 65 applications from artists across Hawai'i with four artists selected by an expert panel of professional artists, curators and scientists.

Since the summer of 2024 the selected artists have been engaging with themes that reflect a changing climate and with topics that are also tackled in CCMAC's Climate Action Pathways. Benjamin Fairfield turns trash into functional musical instruments, showing how things deemed worthless can still have value and voice. Erin Voss' work visualizes the concept of 'ridge to reef' planning, and watershed thinking inspired by the tradition of ahupua'a land management, focusing on the impact of urbanization on coastal ecosystems. Gillian Duenas' paintings explore what Pacific Islander residents of Hawai'i imagine for a climate-just future in Hawai'i and the Pacific. Keisha Tanaka's photography, guided by 'āina and 'ike kūpuna, documents the overlooked moments that weave the rich tapestry of community when we kāko'o (support) one another.



Keisha Tanaka, Erin Voss, Gillian Duenas and Ben Fairfield at Opening of Kaiāulu: Rising together Exhibition, Capitol Modern October 4th 2025, photo by Udi Mandel

All of the artists have also collaborated with various communities as part of their art-making practice.

"This residency has given me renewed motivation to bring my works out of my studio and into the community." says Benjamin Fairfield, one of the selected artists in residence, "I have so enjoyed collaborating with local elementary schools to have students think through how, where, and why everyday products are sourced, consumed, and discarded. The CCMAC coordinators have been key in helping me build and expand upon community networks."

The exhibition took place at the Capitol Modern from October 3rd to November 22nd.

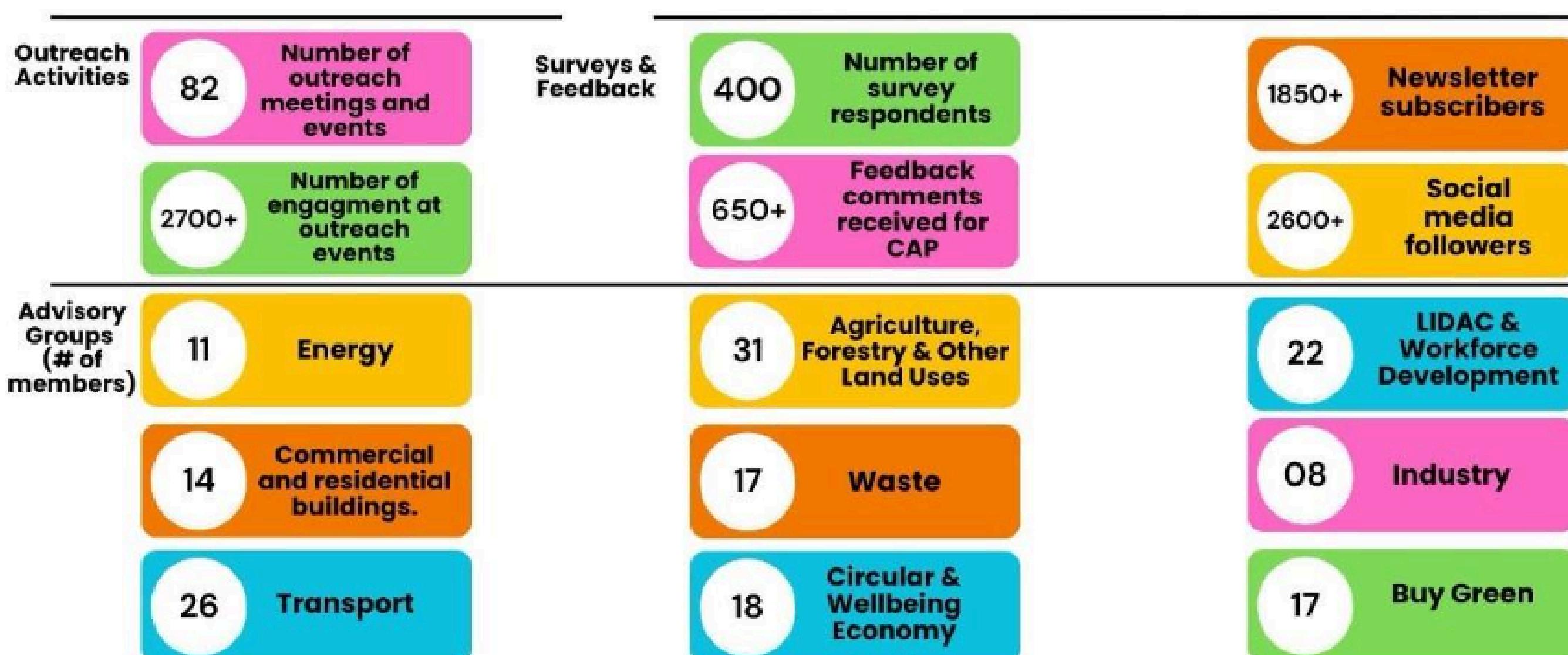
CAP Outreach

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Over the period of January-December 2025 CCMAC staff has been developing and leading several activities and processes leading up to the final version of the Climate Action Pathways (CAP). The CAP, available here: <https://climate.hawaii.gov/hi-mitigation/>, has been a large and exciting

responsible agencies and departments for the different measures in the CAP. A preliminary version of the plan of the CAP was shared with these working groups in September and feedback was obtained to further refine the implementing agencies for each sector. From October-November 2025 the team

ENGAGEMENT METRICS FOR CAP DEVELOPMENT 2023-2025



endeavor involving of people across sectors and jurisdictions since 2023 as can be seen in the graphic below. This CAP will shape the state's climate action over the coming decades showing pathways to reach Net Zero carbon emissions by 2045.

The team facilitated a regular meeting of these working groups and synthesized the discussion into actionable policies and programs to be included in the CAP. Conversations in these groups also helped to identify the responsible agencies and

From October-November 2025 the team analyzed and synthesized data from community outreach meetings and public feedback in the Consider.it platform to inform the final version of the CAP.

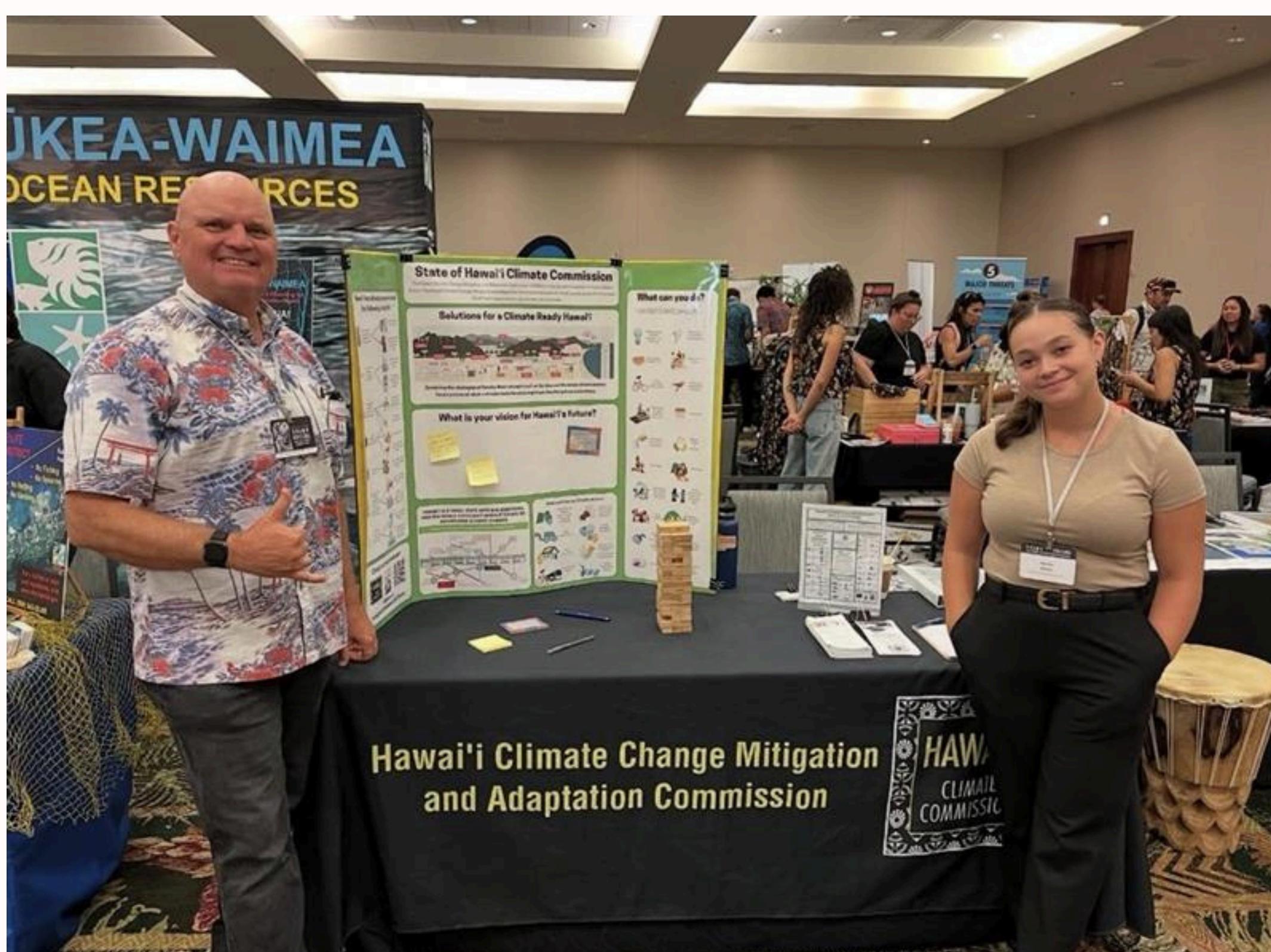
Beyond the local outreach events CCMAC has also shared the CAP work in national networks including the Conveners Network a national network conference for state agencies developing their climate action plans under the EPA's CPRG program.

VISTAs & Hele Mua Interns: Emerging Climate Leaders

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Natalie Ovena served as a VISTA with the Commission, where she contributed by conducting outreach, helping with event planning, and tracking legislation, drawing on her experience as a committee clerk for the Hawai'i House of Representatives. She studied Environmental Science at Hawai'i Pacific University and has continued her advocacy for environmental and social justice by pursuing her JD at Elisabeth Haub School of Law in White Plains, NY.

Hannah Sambrano, a recent UH Mānoa graduate, served as a VISTA supporting the UH Better Tomorrow Speaker Series, an initiative that brings together community members, educators, and experts to discuss pathways toward a sustainable future. Hannah helped coordinate events and engagement for the series, and has since joined the state judiciary while preparing to return to school to study education with the goal of becoming a teacher. Both Natalie and Hannah concluded their VISTA terms in July 2025.



VISTAs & Hele Mua Interns: Emerging Climate Leaders

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Summer Cornell joined the Commission in February 2025 as a VISTA, taking on social media leadership, outreach, communications, and event planning. Through her work, she discovered a passion for translating complex climate information into engaging content for the public, and hopes to continue building her career in communications or event planning.

Allison, serving as the Commission's Coastal Hazards VISTA, officially began her AmeriCorps term in September 2025, supporting CCMAC on the update of the State's Sea Level Rise Vulnerability Report. She is motivated by a desire to contribute to a sustainable future for Hawai'i and protect the land she grew up on. While she is still exploring her long-term career path, she is eager to understand how climate change uniquely impacts Hawai'i and hopes to continue pursuing opportunities in sustainability.

This year also marked the start of CCMAC's partnership with the Hele Mua Work Training Program, through which Daria Monkus, a recent UH Mānoa graduate who studied anthropology, joined as an intern in August 2025. Daria



supports outreach, communications, and event planning, approaching climate change from a social perspective. She extended her three-month internship to six months and hopes to continue contributing to social and environmental causes in Hawai'i through her work. Together, these emerging leaders have strengthened the Commission's mission while gaining invaluable experience in climate action, communications, and community engagement.

Climate Equity Hui

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In 2025, the Commission continued to convene the Climate Equity Hui, a working group composed of representatives from state and county agencies, industry professionals, and community-based organizations. Meeting bimonthly, the Hui has served as a vital space for community leaders and public agencies to connect, share perspectives, and identify barriers and opportunities around climate equity in Hawai‘i.

Members have shared on-the-ground perspectives about community priorities, created a shared working definition of climate equity, mapped out the top climate concerns they want to see addressed, and participated in focus groups to identify needs and recommendations to addressing these. Through this process, the Hui contributed to the development of the State Climate Action Pathways, providing input recommendations and in identifying and characterizing disadvantaged communities throughout Hawai‘i. Members worked collaboratively to brainstorm innovative approaches to resource-sharing and nonprofit support, helping to shape how the state approaches equitable climate adaptation and mitigation.

The working definition of climate equity as determined by the Climate Equity Hui is as follows:

Climate equity is the process of ensuring that Hawai‘i’s climate change responses prioritize and uplift disadvantaged communities, particularly those most burdened by the effects of climate change as well as colonialism and historical inequities. Mitigation and adaptation strategies should incorporate traditional, place-based Native Hawaiian knowledge, provide equitable access to resources, and prevent future inequities through systemic change. This process must also ensure that the economic benefits of transitioning to a climate-smart economy are shared among all residents, particularly vulnerable and historically marginalized communities.

The Hui’s discussions have centered on ensuring that climate action in Hawai‘i uplifts communities most affected by climate change through high energy costs, disaster exposure, and limited access to resilience resources. Through collective dialogue, members have explored how to integrate community priorities into policy and planning, support community-based organizations leading movements to build community and strengthen trust and collaboration between government and grassroots organizations. As it evolves, the Climate Equity Hui continues to serve as a bridge between policy and practice, building relationships, surfacing challenges, and fostering collaboration across sectors to make climate action in Hawai‘i more equitable and effective.

Workforce Development

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In 2025, CCMAC advanced efforts to strengthen Hawai'i's climate-ready workforce through cross-sector collaboration, stakeholder engagement, and statewide planning. Recognizing that climate action will create thousands of new jobs across the islands in sectors such as clean energy, regenerative agriculture, resilience planning, and public health, the Commission worked to ensure that these opportunities are accessible, equitable, and aligned with local community needs.

CCMAC engaged extensively with partners across public agencies, educational institutions, industry, and community organizations to identify existing programs, barriers, and emerging workforce needs. This outreach informed the development of a comprehensive Workforce Development chapter in the Climate Action Pathways, which outlines strategies to strengthen workforce partnerships, address anticipated labor shifts, identify the technical skills needed for Hawai'i's climate-related careers of the future, and develop stackable credential and training pathways to prepare residents for those opportunities.

Through this process, CCMAC collaborated with key partners including the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR), Department of Education (DOE), the University of Hawai'i system, and nonprofit organizations. Together, these organizations are helping to expand pre-apprenticeship

and apprenticeship programs, strengthen clean-energy sector partnerships, and build place-based career pathways that reflect Hawai'i's cultural values and community priorities.

Hawai'i also joined the U.S. Climate Alliance's Climate-Ready Workforce Initiative, a national effort to accelerate the growth of a diverse and inclusive climate workforce. A key focus of this initiative is the expansion of Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs) and other earn-and-learn models that connect residents to stable, good-paying jobs in climate mitigation, adaptation, and resilience fields. Participation in this initiative supports the state's long-term goal of developing a skilled local workforce that can implement climate solutions while creating stable, good-paying jobs for kama'āina.

These collective efforts are laying the groundwork for a coordinated, equity-driven workforce development system that prepares residents for meaningful careers in Hawai'i's climate-resilient future while ensuring that economic opportunity remains rooted in the islands.



2025 Legislative Highlights

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Hawai‘i made significant progress in 2025 with the passage of multiple climate-focused bills that advance sustainability, clean energy, and environmental protection. Key highlights include:

- **Wastewater and Cesspool Management:** Act 60 ensures that all treatment plants will stop discharging wastewater into state waters by 2026. Act 188 funds positions to support cesspool upgrades and conversions, while Act 198 launches a three-year pilot program for innovative wastewater technologies.
- **Recycling and Waste Reduction:** Act 103 directs a statewide assessment to improve waste reduction, reuse, and recycling, and Act 162 expands electronic device recycling requirements while enhancing reporting and consumer education efforts.
- **Renewable Energy and Transportation:** Act 192 requires gas utilities to develop renewable gas tariffs, and Act 209 establishes a working group to maximize recycling and reuse of electric vehicle batteries.
- **Economic and Youth Initiatives:** Act 96 leverages Transient Accommodations Tax revenue for climate mitigation and tourism projects. Act 101 continues support for the Green Jobs Youth Corps Program, engaging youth in sustainability-focused work.
- **Energy Efficiency and Other Measures:** In addition to the above, legislation passed this year extends energy efficiency goals and advances a variety of other climate initiatives across the state.
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For a full list of bills passed in 2025, visit our website: <https://climate.hawaii.gov/hi-news/climate-legislation/>

Tracking Hawai‘i’s Climate Goals

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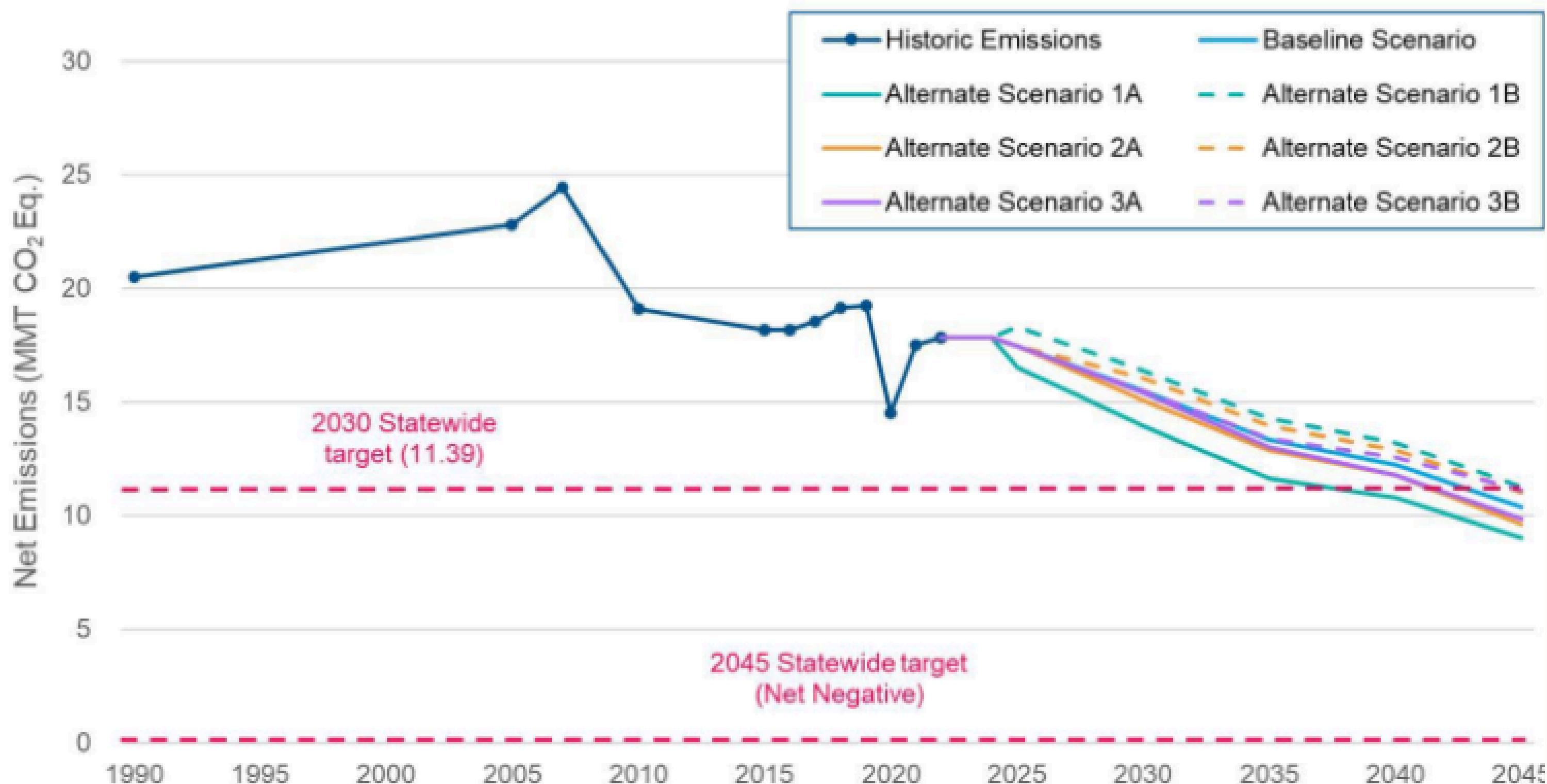


Figure 2. Hawai‘i’s statewide net GHG emissions estimates and Projections (Including Aviation).

Hawai‘i has established itself as an international leader in comprehensive climate action, developing an extensive legislative and policy framework that addresses both climate change mitigation and adaptation over nearly two decades. The state’s unique geographic position as an isolated island chain in the Pacific Ocean has created both vulnerabilities that demand urgent climate action, as well as opportunities to serve as a model for sustainable development and climate resilience.

However analysis presented in the 2025 Hawai‘i GHG emissions report project that Hawai‘i will not meet its goals without

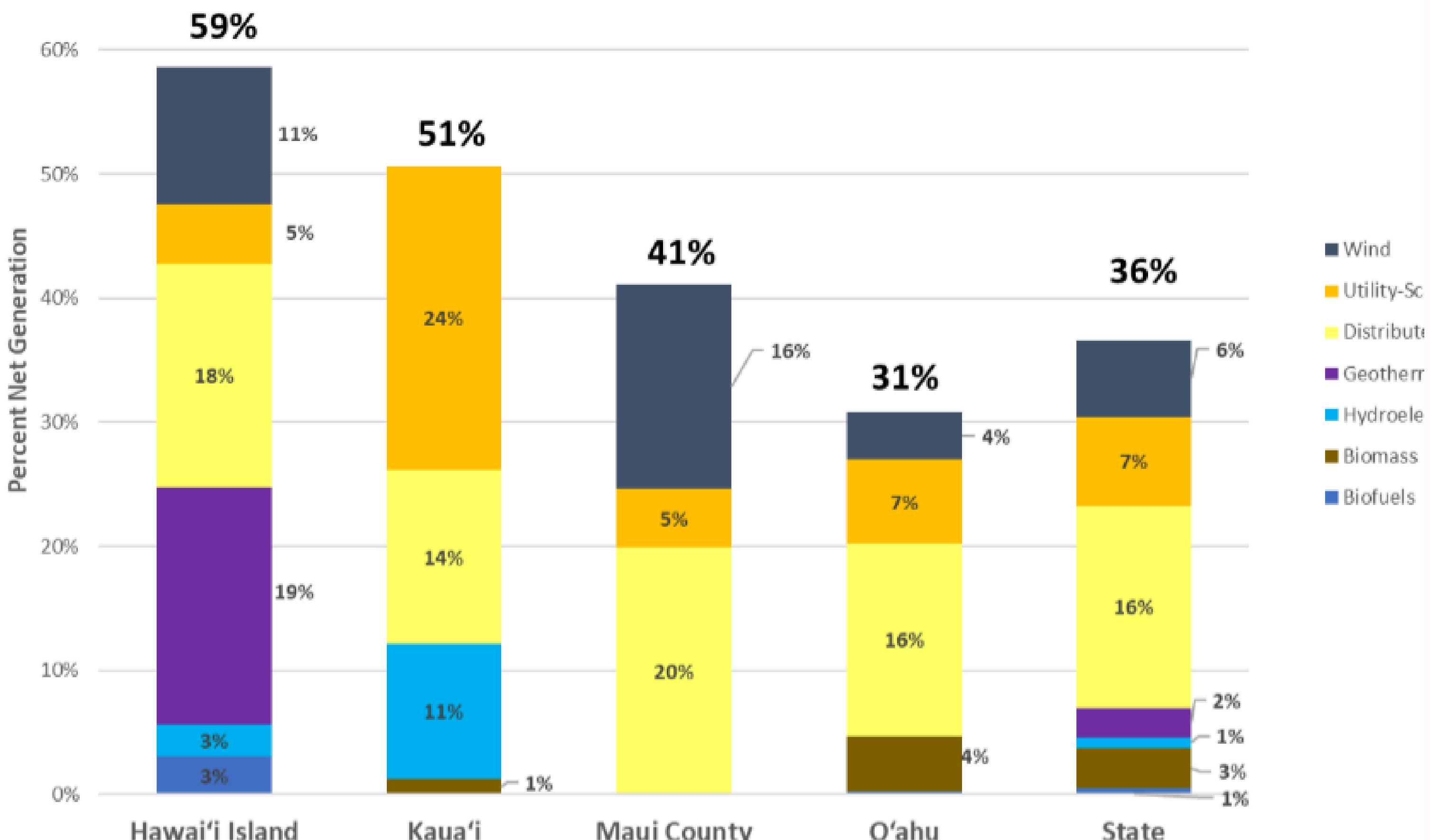
increased ambition. Figure 2 above shows GHG projections under various business as usual scenarios. Net GHG emissions (including aviation) in 2030 are projected to be greater than the target emissions level of 50 percent below 2005 levels (including aviation) pursuant to Act 238, and in 2045 are projected to be greater than the target of net-negative levels pursuant to Act 15.

In national surveys Hawai‘i consistently ranks as one of the US states with the highest levels of awareness of and concern about climate change and where demands for climate action are amongst top priorities. The political and community will is prime to take further action.

Tracking Hawai‘i’s Climate Goals

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70%



Renewable Portfolio Standards by Generation Source for 2024, Source PUC Docket 2007-0008, compiled by Hawai‘i State Energy Office

Significant progress that has been made, in the development of renewable energy resources. Yet extraordinary investments are required to accomplish essential, transformative improvements. Clean-energy projects especially utility-scale renewables like solar farms, wind farms, storage, and grid upgrades require large up-front investment. Financing those relies heavily on borrowing and/or equity. Capital constraints caused by the impact of Maui wildfire related liabilities on Hawaiian Electric’s credit rating, Hawai‘i’s exceptionally high electric rates and other economic headwinds has compounded challenges in financing renewable energy

projects. It is vital that Hawai‘i face the challenges head on. In 2024 the PUC made this clear "it cannot be overstated that investing now will save lives and money in the short and long run".

In January 2025 Governor Green issued executive order 25-01 which called for accelerated targets for Maui, Moloka‘i, Lana‘i, Kauai and Hawai‘i island. The executive order called for a 100% RPS for these islands by 2030. This call to action has directed HSEO, the Public Utility Commission, HECO and KIUC to work together to come up with creative solutions to achieve this.

Tracking Hawai‘i’s Climate Goals

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In addition to renewable energy significant greenhouse gas (GHG) reductions are needed in all sectors to meet state targets. The largest quantity of statewide GHG emissions were from Transportation sources, which made up 49.8% of Hawaii’s statewide GHG emissions.

Significant investment in new and ongoing programs is essential to get close to the states Climate Goals. The Hawai‘i Department of Transportation’s (HDOT) Energy Security and Waste Reduction Plan outlines opportunities to reduce transportation emissions and expand affordable transportation options for all residents. The plan provides strategies for the transportation sector to achieve the state climate targets set in law.

The pillars of the plan are island energy security, affordability for kama‘āina and emissions reduction. A sampling of strategies in the plan includes incentives for electric vehicles and cleaner fuels; the build out within five years of significant pedestrian, bicycle and transit projects so that people can chose transportation options other than single passenger vehicles, and immediate investment in carbon sequestration efforts such as native reforestation. The plan fulfills a commitment made by the Hawai‘i Department of Transportation under the youth-led Navahine Settlement Agreement that was reached in June 2024.

Hawai‘i’s Climate Action Pathways (CAP) also provides detailed mitigation strategies for reductions to meet the 2045 goals through 36 recommendations in all sectors of the economy including energy, waste buildings, transportation, agriculture, and natural resource management.

This comprehensive framework builds toward a more sustainable, healthy and affordable Hawai‘i. The CAP also provides actionable supporting measures around workforce and equity. The completion of this framework, can be used to guide further climate action and legislation and is crucial to help the state reach its goals. Its completion marks a major milestone of CCMAC’s initiative.

Progress in other sectors in regard to climate action however state goals have also been challenging without proper action and implementation. Locally source agriculture and agriculture sales have been trending upward between 2017-2022 but remain short of the goals of 2030 including 20-30% of food being locally grown and sourced.

In solid waste reduction Hawaii has gone down from 43% in 2015 to 22% in 2019 and stagnant at present. From 2021 to 2023, recycling tonnage dropped from 696,000 to 544,000 tons.

Tracking Hawai‘i’s Climate Goals

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In the natural lands sector an estimated a 22% of priority watersheds are currently protected though protective actions such as invasive species removal and exclusion, and should reach the 30% target by 2030.

In 2021, the State of Hawai‘i pledged to plant, conserve, or protect 100 million trees by 2030 as part of the global Trillion Trees initiative. The pledge spans a broad coalition of state agencies and programs, including the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR), Division of Forestry and Wildlife’s (DOFAW) programs including Native Ecosystem Protection & Management (NEPM), Watershed Partnerships, the Forest Reserve System, Kaulunani Urban & Community Forestry, the Forest Stewardship Program (FSP), the Legacy Land Conservation Program (LLCP), Plant Extinction Prevention Program (PEPP) as well as the Hawai‘i Army National Guard (HIARNG), the Department of Defense (DOD), and the Hawai‘i Department of Transportation (HDOT).

Across all contributing agencies, Hawai‘i continues to advance toward its 100 million tree pledge. Restoration plantings have exceeded initial projections in several programs, while state investment in land acquisition ensures permanent conservation of critical habitat.

Statewide planting efforts remained strong across programs in 2024 and 2025 with major contributors included NEPM, Forestry, Watershed Partnerships, and urban forestry activities statewide.

- NEPM planted 53,849 trees in 2024, and 110,103 in 2025.
- Forestry programs planted 3,493 trees in 2024 and 3,927 in 2025.
- The Plant Extinction Prevention Program (PEPP) planted 471 trees in 2024 and 1,251 in 2025.
- The HDOT supported native plantings statewide through purchasing native plants for DOFAW to outplant. HDOT now has a [website](#) to track progress.
- The Hawai‘i Youth Transportation Council, with Hawai‘i Department of Transportation’s support, planted 12 native trees at the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport.

Significant progress was made in securing and expanding protected lands.

- The Legacy Lands Program added 1,400 acres in FY2024 across five properties.
- DOFAW acquired several properties to put into perpetual conservation including
 - East Maui Coastal Rainforest Phase 1 88.43 acres.
 - Kāne‘ohe Pali 956.589 acres
 - East Maui Phase 2 651 acres

Where we are headed

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CCMAC is focused on a comprehensive approach to climate action that balances both mitigation and adaptation strategies. Mitigation efforts aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through measures such as renewable energy adoption and improved energy efficiency, while adaptation strategies prepare communities for the impacts of climate change, including sea-level rise and extreme weather events.

A central focus is on personal needs and experiences, recognizing that climate solutions must reflect the realities of Hawai‘i residents. CCMAC emphasizes affordability, ensuring that climate initiatives are accessible and equitable for all income levels; health, promoting clean air, safe water, and comfortability as temperatures rise; and safety, implementing measures to protect communities from climate-related hazards such as flooding, storms, and heat events. This approach ensures that climate action not only addresses environmental challenges but also enhances the quality of life for residents across the state.

CCMAC is committed to fostering greater collaboration within state agencies and with local governments, businesses, non-profit organizations, and community groups, leveraging diverse expertise to implement effective and inclusive climate strategies. In addition, CCMAC continues to shape policy development that supports both mitigation and adaptation, advocating for legislation and frameworks that reflect Hawai‘i’s unique needs.

Looking ahead, CCMAC will focus on translating the actions identified in the CAP into on the ground projects and programs. These initiatives will aim to both mitigate climate change and help communities adapt to its impacts, ensuring practical and measurable outcomes that support a resilient and sustainable future for Hawai‘i.

