

RCW 70A.05.010 Development of an integrated climate change response strategy.

(1) The departments of ecology, agriculture, commerce, health, fish and wildlife, natural resources, and transportation, the state conservation commission, the Puget Sound partnership, and the emergency management division shall develop an integrated climate change response strategy to better enable the state to prepare for, address, and adapt to the impacts of climate change. The integrated climate change response strategy should be developed in collaboration with local government agencies and tribal governments with climate change preparation and adaptation plans to the extent feasible.

(2) The department of ecology shall serve as a central convener for the development of vital programs and necessary policies to help the state adapt to a rapidly changing climate.

(3) The department of ecology shall consult and collaborate with, at a minimum, the departments of fish and wildlife, agriculture, commerce, health, natural resources, and transportation, the state conservation commission, the Puget Sound partnership, and the emergency management division in developing and implementing an integrated climate change response strategy and plans of action to prepare for and adapt to climate change impacts. Other state agencies may choose to participate in the process.

(4) The department of ecology will engage other relevant state agencies to ensure that other climate resilience actions such as those related to worker safety and community response are incorporated in the updated strategy.

(5) In updating the integrated climate response strategy, the department of ecology shall collaborate and engage with local governments, tribal governments, nongovernmental organizations, public and private businesses, and overburdened communities as defined in RCW 70A.02.010. In developing the engagement plan for development of the strategy, the department of ecology shall announce the opportunity to participate and include, to the extent possible, organizations that express interest in participating. The department of ecology shall also use guidance from the office of equity, the environmental justice council, the community engagement plan adopted under RCW 70A.02.050, and tribal consultation framework adopted under RCW 70A.02.100 to direct agency engagement with historically or currently marginalized groups, overburdened communities, vulnerable populations, and tribal governments.

(6) (a) The department of ecology shall work with the University of Washington climate impacts group to ensure the state has access to relevant scientific and technical information about the impacts of climate change on Washington's ecology, economy, public health, and society, including a central location for accessing this information and use of any existing climate impact tools.

(b) The University of Washington climate impacts group will explore opportunities to partner with other data providers and leverage existing tools that can help further the understanding of climate impacts, such as the department of health's Washington tracking network.

(c) The University of Washington climate impacts group must examine existing best practices and new methods that could be used to measure and evaluate climate change resilience for the purpose of better understanding and tracking how investments made in climate change resilience translate into outcomes. The results of this

examination must be provided to the legislature by June 1, 2024.
[2023 c 169 s 2; 2009 c 519 s 10. Formerly RCW 43.21M.010.]

Findings—Intent—2023 c 169: "(1) The legislature finds that Washington is already experiencing negative community and environmental impacts due to climate change with disproportionate impacts to certain communities and populations and further finds that actions to increase climate resilience, as defined in RCW 70A.65.010, can help prevent and reduce impacts to communities and ecosystems.

(2) The legislature further finds that greater cross-agency coordination on resilience, including an updated statewide climate resilience strategy, will help the state: Avoid high costs in the future; address and reduce the highest risks and greatest vulnerabilities; create more efficiencies; better leverage funding; foster more equitable outcomes; and provide for greater accountability.

(3) The legislature further finds that RCW 70A.65.050 requires an updated statewide strategy for addressing climate risks and improving resilience of communities and ecosystems. Therefore, the legislature intends to direct the department of ecology to update and modernize the *2012 Integrated Climate Response Plan* with the assistance of other state agencies.

(4) The legislature intends for the department of natural resources to continue pursuing climate resilience actions on the public lands they manage and to collaborate with other state agencies in statewide climate resilience efforts." [2023 c 169 s 1.]