



RGGI Benefits Maine

Updating this effective climate policy would create more Maine jobs, protect traditional industries, and lead to lower energy costs

The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) is a cooperative market-based initiative among nine northeastern states to reduce climate-changing carbon pollution from power plants and spur investments in energy efficiency and clean energy. The initiative took effect in 2009, and today RGGI is making our electricity supply cleaner and more efficient, while creating a more energy-independent and competitive economy for Maine. The nine states are now working to advance this effective program by setting carbon reduction targets for the next decade (2020-2030). This is an opportunity for the states to ensure that we are taking full advantage of RGGI to cost-effectively achieve long-term climate pollution goals.

We Must Address Climate Pollution

Maine is already experiencing the effects of climate change, from warming oceans and sea-level rise to changes in winter temperatures and precipitation patterns. Our coasts and oceans are not only icons of what makes Maine special, but are also huge economic drivers. Commercial fishing is a \$2 billion part of Maine's economy, employing roughly 39,000 people.

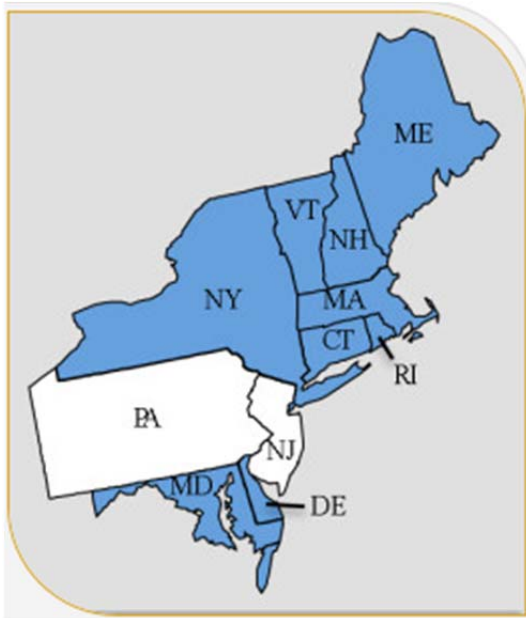


The warning signs in our oceans alone are clear:

- The Gulf of Maine is warming faster than 99 percent of the world's oceans.
- Maine's shrimp fishery has been closed for several years now, in part due to warmer waters.
- Invasive species like green crabs ravage Maine clam flats and eelgrass beds.
- Warming oceans are adding troubling volatility to lobstering, and warming waters just to our south have contributed to the collapse of the lobster industry there.
- Shellfish face an existential threat: the same carbon pollution that is warming the water is making the oceans more acidic, which makes it more and more difficult to build a shell.

We still have time to avoid much more disruptive impacts if we reduce the carbon pollution that is warming our atmosphere and waters and acidifying our ocean. But we must act now.

Working Together



Maine cannot solve climate change alone; however we can and must do our own part, especially to protect traditional Maine industries, resources, and our way of life. Working together with other states in the region multiplies our impact.

If the RGGI region were a country, in terms of carbon pollution, it would be the 14th largest emitter in the world out of 200 nations—similar to the United Kingdom, Mexico, or Indonesia.

In recognition of the value of regional cooperation, starting in 2001 the northeastern states and our Canadian neighbors set joint carbon pollution reduction goals that are informed by climate science.

	2010	2020	2030	2050
Goal:	Return to 1990 levels	10% below 2010	35-45% below 2010	75-80% below 2010
Status:	✓	Appears on track	Action needed now	Future action needed

(The 2030 carbon pollution goal was established by Governor LePage and other states in 2015, all others are in Maine law.)

RGGI Benefits Maine's Economy

Like most RGGI states, Maine has used most of its revenue from RGGI to help fund energy efficiency investments that help Maine people and businesses save energy and money while creating local jobs.

From 2013-2015, Efficiency Maine used \$25 million from RGGI to help Maine homes, businesses, and industry save \$167 million on heating and power bills. Those savings range from home weatherization on Monhegan Island to more efficient paper mill boilers in Madawaska.



Several independent studies have measured the net economic costs and benefits of RGGI, finding:

- Region-wide, residents and businesses have saved \$1.7 billion through RGGI-funded energy efficiency improvements since the program began
- Employment in the region has increased by 28,000 job-years because of RGGI
- Gross State Product in Maine has increased by \$215 million as a result of RGGI

Expanding the Benefits of RGGI

One reason RGGI is a powerful climate tool is because it affects most power plants across the northeastern United States, including places upwind from Maine like Maryland, where coal is still the #1 source of power. The U.S. EPA has set carbon pollution limits from power plants nationwide, called the Clean Power Plan. This is very important, however it won't take effect until polluter lawsuits are settled by the Supreme Court—and it sets very modest targets for our region. Maine cannot afford to leave climate protection solely to the federal government, especially when we have a proven tool here that works now, and can make greater progress and benefit our economy.



In 2016, the RGGI states are conducting their periodic “program review.” This year, they are also considering what RGGI pollution limit to set for the year 2030. Of the several scenarios under consideration, one of those—a 5% annual reduction from 2020-2030—is consistent with Maine’s overall goals to reduce carbon pollution and our rate of reductions in recent years. This is an opportunity to maximize the benefits of our most cost-effective and powerful carbon reduction tool, including lower energy costs from increased energy efficiency.

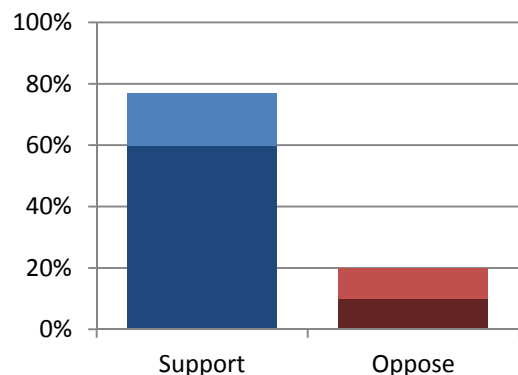
RGGI is Broadly Supported in Maine

Maine people overwhelming support reducing power plant carbon pollution through RGGI by 5% per year from 2020-2030, according to 2016 polling. That's true across all demographic groups and political parties.

RGGI has broad support from businesses and public health organizations around Maine. These are some examples of support for further reducing carbon pollution through RGGI in 2016:

- Maine businesses such as Reed & Reed, Gulf of Maine Custom Homes, East Brown Cow, and the Maine Pellet Fuels Association
- Public health groups such as the Maine Public Health Association, the Maine Nurse Practitioners Association, and the American Lung Association of the Northeast
- Utility companies such as National Grid, Exelon, and Calpine
- Regional businesses that do business in Maine such as King Arthur Flour, Stonyfield, Staples, Thule, and Ben & Jerry's

Do you support a 5% per year reduction in regional power plant carbon pollution?



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RGGI Works to Cut Pollution

RGGI is one of the most powerful, successful, and cost-effective tools we have to reduce carbon emissions. RGGI shifts the burden of carbon pollution costs from families and our communities to polluters and fossil fuel companies.

RGGI works by setting a limit of carbon pollution region-wide and requires power plants in the region to compete for a permit to pollute. Power plants bid on carbon permits and the states receive the revenues, which they can then reinvest in their economy. This model uses market forces to reduce carbon pollution at a competitive cost.

Power plants have reduced their carbon emissions more than 35% since RGGI took effect, and economists have shown that RGGI is responsible for a large portion of those reductions. Another benefit is that these plants have also cut dangerous and toxic air pollutants by dramatic amounts.

Under the proposal to reduce pollution 5% annually, the portion of clean, renewable power across the region would double from 20% of our power supply to 42 percent.



Future of RGGI

Maine has an important say in the future of RGGI. Through it we can directly influence harmful carbon pollution not only within Maine or New England, but in a large region with substantial emissions. The decisions we make in the 2016 program review could affect everything from our climate to how energy efficient we can make our homes and businesses.

Regional Reports and Additional Resources

1. "[The Economic Impacts of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative on Nine Northeast and Mid-Atlantic States.](#)" Analysis Group. 2015.
2. "[The RGGI Opportunity: RGGI as the Electric Sector Compliance Tool to Achieve 2030 State Climate Targets.](#)" Synapse Energy Economics. 2016.
3. "[The Investment of RGGI Proceeds through 2014.](#)" RGGI, Inc. 2016.
4. RGGI Status Reports: "[Part I: Measuring Success](#)" & "[Part II: Achieving Climate Commitments.](#)" The Acadia Center. 2016.
5. "[Climate Change Resolution 39-1](#)" (To reduce emissions at least 35-45% by 2030). New England Governors & Eastern Canadian Premiers. 2015
6. "[Why Have Greenhouse Emissions in RGGI States Declined? An Econometric Attribution to Economic, Energy Market, and Policy Factors.](#)" Brian Murray, et al. Duke University. 2013.



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