# MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HAWAIʻI CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION COMMISSION

DATE: WEDNESDAY, November 8, 2023

TIME: 1:00 PM

PLACE: 1151 PUNCHBOWL STREET, CONFERENCE ROOM 132 HONOLULU, HI 96813, AND VIDEO CONFERENCE

PUBLIC VIEWING LINK: [https://www.youtube.com/@climatecoordinator2356](https://www.youtube.com/%40climatecoordinator2356)

Attendees:

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| Dawn Chang, DLNR, Co-ChairMary Alice Evans, OPSD, Co-ChairSen. Mike GabbardRep. Linda Ichiyama Rep. Nicole LowenJeremy Koki, DOEJustine Nihipali, OPSDSharon Hurd, DOAKatie Ducatt, DHHL DesigneeEd Sniffen, DOTMonique Schafter, DBEDT Designee | April Suprenant, Hawaii County DPP DesigneeJoshua Cooper, Maui County DPP DesigneeNoelle Cole, City & County of Honolulu DPP Designee Marianna Rossio, DOH DesigneeDiana Felton, DOH Designee Kaʻāina Hull, Kauai County DPPDon Aweau, HIEMALeah Laramee, CCMAC Staff Dante Hirata-Epstein, CCMAC StaffJo Dunne, CCMAC Staff |

Additional attendees: Amy Wirts (OCCL), Morris Atta (DOT), Michael Cain (DLNR), James Francucci (CCMAC), Brad Romaine (HI SeaGrant), Udi Butler, (CCMAC), Cindy Young (Deputy AG), James McCallen (DOH), Carlton Saito (Sen. Gabbard’s Office), Lauren Mark (HIEMA), Nicole Cernohorsky (HSEO), Meoh-Leng Silliman, Deputy Comptroller

The meeting took place in a hybrid format. It was hosted in person at 1151 Punchbowl Street and on Zoom and live cast on the Commission's YouTube for public viewing. All materials are posted on the Commission’s website: https://climate.hawaii.gov/hi-commission/.

1. **Welcome, roll call, and announcements.** The public viewing link opened approximately 15 minutes before the meeting began. Co-Chair Chang began the meeting at 1:02PM
	1. Co-Chair Evans/Laramee gave instructions for online meeting etiquette. Co-Chair Evans gave roll call. Quorum was reached.
2. **August 10, 2023 Meeting Minutes** (Action item) Co-Chair Evans (7:27)

# Co-chair Evans requested that any comments or additions to the commission meeting minutes for August 10th, 2023, be brought forth. No comments were given.

# Co-Chair Evans called for motion to approve the meeting minutes for August 10th, 2023. Motion by Co-Chair Chang, second by Commissioner Ducatt. Motion passed unanimously.

1. **CCMAC Annual Report to the Legislature** (Action item.) Co-Chair Evans, Jo Dunne (CCMAC) (8:15)
2. Co-Chair Evans and Laramee (CCMAC) introduced the draft of the 2023 CCMAC Annual Report to the Legislature, which was included in everyone’s Commissioner packets.
3. Dunne (CCMAC) gave a short presentation on the purpose of the report and key projects highlighted for 2023.
	1. Act 32 mandates that CCMAC submit an annual report with the addition of periodic 5-year reviews. 2022 was the most recent 5-year review.
	2. Report includes CCMAC’s identified high impact actions with the addition of four new actions that were adapted within the past year.
	3. Report gives an overview of funding, legislative efforts, and climate mitigation and adaptation projects.
	4. Focus on equity and improved community engagement have been highlights this year.
4. Commissioner Sniffen asked if the report was intended to focus just on actions, or on progress toward the 2030/2045 goals. Co-chair Evans clarified that the 5-year review needed to go over target goals and progress but this report does not have to. Evans recommended to check county websites to see progress towards climate goals. Sniffen pointed out that CCMAC is supposed to be the coordinating body on climate change, so it could be beneficial to have all of that information in one place.
5. Co-Chair Chang clarified that CCMAC’s role is to serve as an advisory body on climate change. Chang suggested that updates on commission member actions be included in the report in order to show that every agency is collectively working together.
6. Commissioner Ichiyama suggested that the Aloha+ Dashboard be included in the report as a source for data on progress toward climate goals. She also asked for clarification on what year the report was for, as the cover page said 2022. Laramee said that it was a typo and would be changed to 2023.
7. Co-Chair Evans asked Schafer (DBEDT) what HSEO is doing to track progress on clean energy. Schafer informed her that HSEO and DOH are working together to find pathways for GHG reduction, and DOH has been put in charge of the GHG inventory.
8. Commissioner Lowen pointed out that the Aloha+ Dashboard is not always up to date, so it would be beneficial to figure out how to better coordinate the data.
9. Commissioner Nihipali encouraged everyone to think about the needs that have to be met to meet Hawai’i’s climate goals, and prioritize that when reporting on what investments should be made and pursuing funding opportunities.
10. Co-Chair Chang pointed out that having metrics is helpful to inform legislators on where our gaps are, as well as for the public to know what progress is being made. Chang asked Laramee to reach out to all commission members to provide updates on what they have done, and include that in the report. Laramee agreed, and said that she would start with the updates provided during the Commission meetings over the past year.
11. Commissioner Sniffen clarified the need for clearer sources on data tracking towards climate progress and coordinating between agencies/departments.
12. Commissioner Lowen and Commissioner Schafer provided information on how the upcoming decarbonization plan will improve progress tracking and help the data to be more comprehensive in the future. It will include metrics for tracking Hawai’i’s renewable portfolio standard and will be published 20 days before the next legislative session.
13. Commissioner Gabbard agreed with the general sentiment that it will be good to coordinate data on progress and future plans, since the public expects accountability from the government for doing so.
14. Commissioner Cooper expressed that we are definitely in the midst of a climate crisis, and that perhaps the most helpful thing we can do is to have local/county action plans that address both collective and individual actions. Co-Chair Evans pointed out that several counties already have detailed action plans which can be taken into consideration.
15. Co-Chair Evans called for motion to approve the 2023 Annual Report to the Legislature, subject to updates by staff. Motion by Co-Chair Chang, second by Commissioner Sniffen. Motion passed unanimously.
16. **Climate and Health Legislative Report** (Action item) Co-Chair Evans, James McCallum (DOH) (32:52)
17. Co-Chair Evans introduced James McCallen (DOH) who is filling in for Commissioner Felton. McCallen stated that the Climate and Health Legislative Report will be a formal update on DOH’s Climate and Health Program, which Felton had presented on at the last Commission meeting.
18. McCallen summarized the legislation that mandated the Climate Commission to develop a climate and health plan, the background of DOH’s Climate and Health Program, and its current projects including online resources and the climate and health working group. The program will also likely be requesting additional funding and positions from the legislature in the future.
19. Co-Chair Chang asked McCallen if he is developing the framework for the educational component of the program, at what point he took it to the public. McCallen clarified that they needed to develop the content to present before communicating it to the public, so that has been their priority over the last few months. However, outreach efforts have already started with the creation of the web portal.
20. Commissioner Sniffen asked if meeting the state’s clean energy goals will improve any of the potential negative health outcomes. James said that it likely would, and coordinating the program with the goals would be beneficial, however the top priority is mitigating whatever health impacts take place.
21. Commissioner Cole asked if there has been any guidance on water quality impacts in relation to health. McCallen clarified that there is existing mapping through DOH that identifies toxic sites that could spread contamination when the sea level rises. More work is needed to complete this assessment, however.
22. Laramee clarified that the final Climate and Health Legislative Report will be sent out to all commissioners.
23. Co-Chair Evans called for motion to approve the Climate and Health Legislative Report. Motion by Commissioner Hull, second by Co-Chair Chang. Motion passed unanimously.
24. **Establishing** **a Permitted Interaction Group Pursuant to HRS Section 92-2.5 for the Creation of a Workplan for the Hawaii Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission** (Action item) Co-Chair Evans (43:20)
	* 1. Co-Chair Evans introduced this measure, the purpose of the proposed group, and the laws that would guide it. The permitted action group would be able to address gaps in areas of work such as wildfire prevention and report back to CCMAC to shape its work.
		2. Co-Chair Evans called for a motion to approve the establishment of a Permitted Interaction Group Pursuant to HRS Section 92-2.5 for the Creation of a Workplan for the Hawaii Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission. Motion by Commissioner Hull, second by Commissioner Sniffen. Co-Chair Evans opened it up to questions before passing.
		3. Commissioner Young asked about the group’s scope and who its members would be. Co-Chair Evans said that it could be up to ten members, although she recommended fewer than that. State agency members would include OPSD, DLNR, DOH, DOT, and DHHL, with a volunteer from the counties.
			1. Commissioner Hull volunteered to serve in the group as a representative of the counties.
			2. Commissioner Lowen volunteered to serve on behalf of the house.
			3. Commissioner Gabbard volunteered to serve on behalf of the senate.
		4. Commissioner Young clarified the process of when the group would meet and how their decision-making would interact with the Commission.
		5. Commissioner Nihipali asked if unnamed entities would be represented since the named entities could only work within the scope of their roles. Co-Chair Evans clarified that all 20 commission members have a role to play, and the unnamed entities would be covered under the mandate that the group act as an advisory body. The group would act as more than just its members since there are so many gaps that need to be identified and addressed.
		6. Co-Chair Chang asked if the main purpose would be to create a framework for the Commission or to identify the gaps in climate change response. Co-Chair Evans said that looking at the impacts of climate change and the gaps in certain impact areas in light of the Commission’s work would be the group’s main purpose.
		7. Co-Chair Evans asked if there were objections to the motion, and none were given. Motion passed unanimously.
		8. Co-Chair Chang asked who will convene the group. Co-Chair Evans said that she would.
		9. Co-Chair Cole suggested that a survey be given to the entities that will not be a part of the group to increase its chances of being successful. Co-Chair Evans agreed that this would be helpful and thanked her for the suggestion.
25. **Commission Member Updates on Climate Change Initiatives** (Non-action item) Co-chair Evans, Leah Laramee (CCMAC) (54:58)
26. Co-Chair Evans introduced the item and asked for volunteers to begin giving updates.
27. Commissioner Gabbard recently participated in the senator retreat, and they were all working on determining priorities for the coming year. Issues surrounding Lahaina have been central so far. Gabbard also announced that Carlton Saito will be his new committee clerk, and will be here in his absence for the rest of the meeting.
28. Commissioner Lowen has been defining and working towards goals for her committee such as energy systems, energy efficiency, electrification, and decarbonization. She has no further specifics, but hopes to coordinate with other sectors and define priorities as the next legislative session becomes closer.
29. Commissioner Ichiyama taken a broad perspective on climate change related issues, and her committee will prioritize focus on disaster response. Combining permitting systems is a priority as well, which may pave the way towards a future green fee.
30. Commissioner Hull shared that the county has finished community interface for the Kauai Climate Adaptation Plan and is now in the 3 month long drafting stage. Potential managed retreat policies have been controversial, but land has been set aside for possible land swaps for coastal retreat. Transfer of development rights are a potential option as well. Density of agricultural lots has also been an issue, and there has been pushback from Hawaiian communities in West Kauai even though the new policies would be voluntary. Hull pointed out that in other parts of Polynesia, managed retreat isn’t even considered as an option until the ocean is right up to a house due to indigenous perspectives. Hull also shared that the Kauai Planning Department also won this year’s sustainability award for planning departments through the American Planning Association.
31. Co-Chair Chang shared that DLNR hopes to work more closely with planning departments in the future to try to determine the best possible solutions for issues such as managed retreat.
	1. Michael Cain (DLNR) invited DLNR to a future presentation to further collaborate on sea level rise issues. Commissioner Hull commented that Hawai’i’s current policies on seawalls are the most progressive in the nation, so a lot of work still needs to be done.
	2. Commissioner Hurd made a comment concerning presentation ideas to bring managed retreat planning to functions such as 28 Nations next June. Hurd also suggested that more planning is needed to protect traditional/food-producing entities such as fishponds. Co-Chair Evans agreed and said she would pass this on to her colleague Dennis Lang.
32. Commissioner Suprenant shared that Hawaii County’s Climate Action Plan is complete as of the last Commission meeting, but there are no other new updates.
33. Commissioner Cooper apologized for not having been at the August meeting due to the wildfires, and summarized Maui County’s work on recovery and setting up resiliency hubs. Sea level rise will be taken into consideration when planning the rebuilding of Lahaina. Maui County is also re-constituting its Climate Action Resiliency Plan with the addition of a resiliency hui that will meet November through Earth Day. The County also recently hosted Maui Nui Climate Week, and has begun to implement a program that will give out native trees and shrubs to local families for future wildfire prevention.
34. Commissioner Cole shared that the Resilient O’ahu strategy has been released and is opened to comments through December 1st. Honolulu County’s Urban Resilience Plan has been transferred to the planning commission and will be heard on Nov 15th.
35. Commissioner Hurd expressed that it would be beneficial for DOA’s focus areas and concerns to be integrated into other plans such as the Climate and Health Report. Sharing concerns about fishponds and agricultural revitalization will also be important.
36. Commissioner Felton invited DOA to join the climate and health working group. Felton reiterated from James’ presentation that it will be important to have climate and health information out in the open. The data DOH is collecting on heat-related illness will also determine the level of risk and inform possible future adaptation efforts such as community cooling centers and subsidies for air conditioning. The Clean Air Branch also received the technical support documents for the clean air inventory, and is working through the comments. The 2nd Annual Statewide GHG report will be completed in March 2024.
37. Commissioner Ducatt shared that there are no new initiatives for DHHL. There are ongoing efforts to explore sea level rise adaptation/managed retreat in coastal homestead communities, and collaboration amongst groups focused on sustainability.
38. Commissioner Sniffen shared that DOT received funding to complete adaptation plans for highways, airports, and harbors. DOT is making progress on electrifying its vehicle fleet and improving charging infrastructure, although more progress is needed in counties outside of Honolulu. Going all electric by 2030 might not be enough, however, and it should also be taken into consideration that there are not enough EVs on the island in the first place. DOT has continued its initiative to encourage e-bikes, with a rebate that can pay for up to $500 for the purchase of one, however only 700 people have taken advantage of it. DOT has also continued to work with airports on conditioned air plug-ins that reduce plane emissions at the gate. Working on improving building materials, plastic reduction, and lowering emissions in production has also been a priority. DOT has also worked to mitigate high-fire-risk areas by reducing fuel usage. installing firebreaks, and developing a native planting pallet to promote native species growth in invasive species prone areas.
	1. Commissioner Lowen pointed out that although there is an existing mandate to use low-carbon materials in production, not enough attention is paid to it, so it is good that DOT is doing this work.
39. Commissioner Haruki introduced himself as he is new, since the DOE chair changed over. DOE is looking at adaptation strategies for schools in coastal areas, progressing towards decarbonizing school transportation, incorporating tree planting into new school construction, and reducing food waste. There is still a lot of work to be done, however, and DOE hopes to provide further updates in future Commission meetings.
	1. Co-Chair Chang expressed that existing goals are worth revisiting since climate change is moving faster than we anticipated. The Climate Commission has a lot of responsibility to inform both the public and decision-makers. It is an opportunity to look forward to, and it will be beneficial for every sector to work together instead of staying in silos.
40. Commissioner Aweau shared that HIEMA is closing out response phase after the Lahaina wildfires and is moving into the recovery phase. Aweau also gave an update on the Mililani wildfire and HIEMA’s response. The Mililani fire is 90% contained.
41. Commissioner Nihipali shared that CZM has been working on adaptation component of the Ocean Resources Management Plan. CZM is also working on an RFP for funding to address shoreline setbacks in DHHL communities. Phase 1 for the methodology in the Shoreline Management Initiative has been made publicly, and it gives guidance for appropriate management including nature-based solutions. Moving forward, it could be beneficial to develop a costal atlas to identify ocean activity at locations across the state, types of shoreline, and acceptable solutions. CZM is working closely with county planning departments on how to support agencies who have shoreline management responsibility. There are also efforts to support communities who are at risk for costal erosion, and develop an equitable response by utilizing block group data instead of census tracts. CZM is working with CCMAC to research this. CZM also received CIP for state facilities and is drafting an RFP with an action team for developing a standardized vulnerability assessment process.
	1. Commissioner Aweau stated his appreciation for CZM’s work, and Maui’s capacity for highway adaptation is limited.
42. Schafer shared HSEO’s progress on the Decarbonization Strategy with a focus on mitigation and methodology. HSEO is also working on federal funding opportunities such as the Priority Climate Action Plan using Climate Pollution Reduction Grant funding.
	1. Commissioner Sniffen asked if agencies will be able to review the Decarbonization Strategy and make recommendations before it is publicly released. Commissioner Schafer said that they would, and feedback they had received from outreach so far would also be incorporated.
	2. Co-Chair Chang asked if the community has been engaged in preparation for these reports. Commissioner Schafer shared that this has been hard due to the short time frame, especially with the utilization of quantitative analysis, and sound science has been a bigger priority than comprehensive community engagement. Co-Chair Chang stated that while it takes time, proactively engaging the community is beneficial due to the historical lack of involvement and mistrust. Schafer shared that HSEO is also conscious of outreach fatigue and is coordinating outreach efforts with the Climate Commission and other departments so that outreach for projects on the same topic can be combined.
	3. Commissioner Hull stated the importance of finding the cross-sectors where there are community benefits in addition to GHG reduction. Co-Chair Chang agreed and encouraged the consideration of how efforts can be made more relevant to communities who are disproportionately impacted.
	4. Commissioner Lowen suggested that it will always be possible to go back to the Decarbonization Strategy and build on it after it is complete.
	5. Commissioner Felton pointed out that state agencies can be at a disadvantage to conduct solid community engagement since they do not have the same capacity and staff as other non-government entities.
43. **Results of the Survey on Sea Level Rise Risk Perceptions and Policy Preferences Among Hawaiʻi's Elected Officials** (Action item) Co-Chair Evans, Dr. Ketty Loeb, Dr. Colin Moore (2:17:13)
44. Co-Chair Evans introduced Ketty Loeb and Colin Moore from the University of Hawai’i, who conducted a survey surveying elected representatives on their perceptions on sea level rise. Loeb and Moore presented on the survey methodology and findings.
	1. Elected official perception of sea level rise has not been explored in many other states, so it is a relevant and important topic.
	2. The survey had 27 questions and was ran June 26th through September 7th. There was a 29% response rate of 32 out of 102 which is quite a high number for a legislators as a target group.
	3. The results of the study may have had some response bias, since officials with pre-existing interest in sea level rise and with a politically liberal stance were more likely to respond. The Lahaina fires also may have influenced some responses as 88% of surveys were taken before the fires and 12% were taken afterwards.
	4. Overall, the study found a high level of concern about sea level rise. Officials reported high leanings toward its seriousness, urgency, and likelihood of negative impacts. Most respondents perceived that the state is underprepared. However, there was a comparatively lower level of prioritization of sea level rise against competing legislative priorities.
	5. A high level of support was reported for policies such as for revising adaptation codes and protecting public infrastructure, but there was less support reported for protecting public property.
	6. A much higher level of support was reported for nature-based solutions rather than built protections. Strong support was expressed for enforcing seawall regulations. There was a more favorable response towards government-funded relocation being based on equity rather than being available for all homeowners.
	7. Officials reported lack of funding and lack of coordination to be significant barriers to responding to rea level rise. There is also a lack of research, education, and rubrics to inform response.
45. Amy Wirts (OCCL) asked if the survey had questioned respondents’ familiarity with the Sea Level Rise Vulnerability and Adaptation Report. Loeb said that it did not, but it would have been a good question.
46. Commissioner Cole asked if future surveys would measure agencies’ capacity to deal with these issues. Loeb thanked her the recommendation.
47. Commissioner Ichiyama asked if there was any difference in the responses from officials whose districts were in coastal areas versus those whose districts were inland. Loeb said that the survey was too small to draw conclusions about this, but in larger surveys in other states there was a measurable difference.
48. Commissioner Nihipali suggested that asking about officials’ willingness to fund additional capacity for sea level rise response could be helpful in the future. She expressed concern about the disconnect between legislators’ concern about it and current funding allocations.
49. **Update on the Environmental Protection Agency Climate Pollution Reduction Grant awarded to CCMAC for Climate Action Planning** (Non-action item) Leah Laramee (CCMAC) (2:36:49)
50. Co-chair Evans introduced the next item. Leah Laramee (CCMAC) gave short presentation about the Climate Commission’s progress on the Climate Pollution Reduction planning grant.
	1. Both a Comprehensive Climate Action Plan and a Priority Climate Action plan are required. The PCAP is due 03/01/24, and the CCAP will be due between July-August of 2025.
	2. CCMAC was awarded the planning grant and is working within a short timeframe to meet the March 1st deadline for submitting the PCAP.
	3. The quality assurance plan was submitted this morning, and additional assessments will be completed to ensure project equity. There was unfortunately a contracting issue that prevented CCMAC from hiring new personnel to help, and re-running the RFP has pushed the schedule several months back. This will prevent CCMAC from including everything in the plan as had been deemed beneficial, however, all of the EPA’s requirements will still be met.
	4. Laramee introduced Udi Butler, the newly-hired program manager for the CCAP and the PCAP. Butler introduced himself and expressed excitement to be involved.
	5. The Maui Outreach Specialist position has been filled, however, 3 positions are still open, including the Grant Specialist position.
	6. HSEO has agreed to take on the implementation grant for CPRG, however it will be a coalition application between DLNR, HSEO, and the counties. The request for interest will be released in mid-November.
51. Commissioner Ichiyama asked if commissioners will be notified when the request for interest is released. Laramee said that they would be.
52. Commissioner Ichiyama asked if there will be a State matching requirement for the implementation grant. Leah clarified that there would not be.
53. **Coordinator’s Update** (Non-action item)Leah Laramee (CCMAC) (2:45:28)
54. Laramee presented an update on CCMAC’s work on equity.
	1. CCMAC recently met with CEQ to advocate for flexibility on the CEJST tool to more accurately represent Hawai’i. There is little flexibility as they are only using federal data, however, CCMAC plans to submit feedback to CEJST anyway in partnership with other departments who have done previous work to analyze social vulnerability such as CZM, DOT, and HIEMA.
	2. CCMAC is advocating for Hawaiian Homelands locations to be represented in the CEJST as well, since federally recognized tribes and Alaska Native Villages are automatically recognized as disadvantaged but Native Hawaiian communities are not.
	3. CCMAC is also working on creating a local data map for Hawai’i, since it is needed to guide local community planning and needs assessments. Currently, there are efforts to hire a Climate Justice Data Specialist
55. Amy Wirts (OCCL) gave an update on the Punalu’u beach restoration project.
	1. Sea Engineering completed geotechnical surveying of the area, and identified offshore sand that could be brought back onto the beach.
	2. Community engagement for the project has included beach pop-up booths, online surveys, attending community meetings, and school outreach. Collaboration has begun with Parks & Rec as well. CCMAC is also coordinating a community planting day to restore dunes using native plants.
	3. Co-Chair Evans asked whether county involvement would be needed to restore the Beach. Wirts said that this would be the case, and this is why there has been coordination with Parks & Rec.
56. Trinity Gilliam (CCMAC) presented on the ongoing Multimobility Hub Study, which inventories State parking spaces to identify potential locations for future mobility hubs.
	1. Gilliam gave an overview of the current inventory numbers, the benefits of having this information, and how mobility hubs will improve transportation equity as well as environmental considerations.
	2. Evans asked if Gilliam had worked with OPSD to ensure that there is no overlap with this project. Gilliam said that they had, and were coordinating to make sure they were not surveying the same locations.
57. Laramee stated that the Commission meeting schedule for 2024 would be announced at a later date. She also acknowledged the AmeriCorps VISTAs whose term would be ending before the end of the year.

 **Meeting adjourned at 4:02PM (YouTube time stamp at 3:01:04)**