

**To:** ResilientMass Metrics Project Management Team  
**From:** Consensus Building Institute (Abby Fullem, Elizabeth Cooper, and Ashira Pelt) on behalf of ResilientMass Metrics Consultant Team  
**Re:** ResilientMass Metrics Stakeholder Engagement Summary

**Date:** January 29, 2025  
**Proj. No.** 0100583.00

**cc:**

## Introduction

Meaningful internal and external stakeholder engagement was a critical component of developing rigorous and credible equity-centered resilience climate resilience metrics for the Commonwealth. The purpose of stakeholder engagement in the process was multifold:

- Develop climate resilience goals for Massachusetts to articulate what a climate resilient future would look like.
- Identify and prioritize potential metrics to measure progress towards increased climate resilience.
- Identify and integrate equity considerations, including metrics measuring issues of particular concern to environmental justice (EJ) communities.
- Incorporate considerations particular to environmental justice communities and procedural equity in the development of metrics.

The effort engaged several key audiences:

- **State agency representatives** across agencies and departments charged with implementing actions in ResilientMass, the state's climate resilience plan. These state agency representatives participated in meetings, departmental and sectoral focus groups, interviews, and office hours to provide advice and information to inform the framework and metrics.
- **Environmental justice leaders and representatives** from across the state, who the project team convened as an Equity Advisory Group, which met several times over the course of the project to bring an additional equity perspective and integrate environmental justice community lived experience into the metrics. In cases when the EAG members were unable to attend the meetings, they were provided the materials and engaged asynchronously.
- **External partners**, including non-profits, researchers, advocacy groups, and others, who met with the project team to provide insight on refining the metrics based on potential data sources as well as how the metrics might be used outside of government.
- **Public stakeholders**, who engaged through two public meetings and opportunities for comment via online tools.

Stakeholder engagement occurred across five “waves” throughout the process:

- Wave 0 | Identify stakeholders and form Equity Advisory Group
- Wave 1 | Introduce stakeholders to the ResilientMass Metrics initiative, develop draft climate resilience goals and indicators, and identify priority populations
- Wave 3 | Gather and incorporate state agency program information and data
- Wave 4 | Finalize climate resilience goals, prioritize draft climate resilience metrics, and develop recommendations for implementing the metrics framework

## Engagement Waves

The purpose, methods, materials developed, feedback requested, and feedback integration is captured below for each engagement wave.

### Wave 0 | Identify stakeholders and stand up Equity Advisory Group

#### Purpose

Identify stakeholders to engage throughout the process and stand up the Equity Advisory Group.

#### *Formation of Equity Advisory Group*

The Equity Advisory Group (EAG) served as a mechanism for elevating historically underrepresented voices in the ResilientMass Metrics planning process. The group provided input to guide the EEA in developing the RMM framework, ensuring that the experiences and insights of environmental justice communities shaped the outcomes. Throughout the project, the EEA and consultant team maintained an iterative feedback process, sharing draft materials with the EAG and incorporating their perspectives into the final product.

#### Methods

- With PMT support, development of a list of state agencies and specific staff representatives to involve in internal state engagement, public stakeholders, and key external partners.

#### Materials developed

- List of state agency representatives
- List of state agency representatives points of contact for each agency or division
- List of public stakeholders. This list was based on the MVP contact list. All participants who attended the first public meeting were added to the contact list and invited to the second public meeting.
- List of key partners
- Slate of EAG members

#### Feedback requested

Not applicable

#### Feedback incorporated

Not applicable

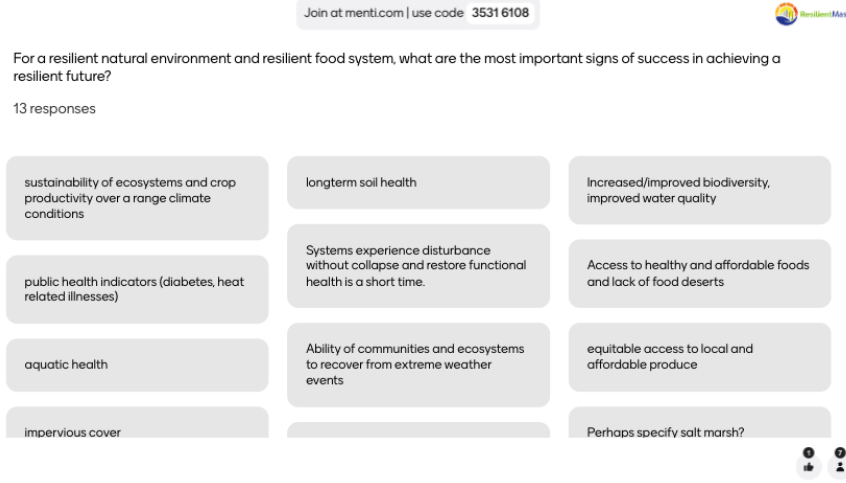
### Wave 1 | Introduce ResilientMass Metrics initiative, develop draft climate resilience goals, and identify priority populations

#### Purpose

Introduce the ResilientMass Metrics initiative to state agency representatives, EAG members, and public stakeholders. Share and elicit feedback on draft climate resilience metrics frameworks, climate resilience goals, and priority populations. Begin identifying strategies and actions for climate resilience goals.



- Mentimeter polls. Tailored mentimeter polls were created for each of the six sector discussions. Example mentimeter feedback slide:



- **EAG meeting 1**
- **EAG meeting 2**

### Feedback questions

- **State agency representatives kickoff meeting:** *Not applicable*
- **State agency representatives focus groups:**
  - Do the draft climate resilience goals describe the most important goals related to climate resilience for this sector? If not, which goals are missing?
  - Who would you consider a priority population for this goal? Consider both EJ and equity factors and exposure, sensitivity or adaptive capacity.
  - Imagine you have met this goal. What does success look like? What are the outcomes we will have achieved? We welcome ideas for your statewide vision as well as for EJ and Other Priority Populations.
  - What are the most important or consequential strategies you are taking or could take to reach this goal?
- **Public stakeholders meeting:**
  - For a resilient [sector], what are the most important signs of success in achieving a resilient future?
  - Do these goals capture what is most important for a resilient & flourishing [sector]?
  - What do we need to consider to ensure that a resilient & flourishing [sector] is advanced equitably?
- **EAG meeting 1:**
  - Not applicable
- **EAG meeting 2:**
  - What are you most hopeful about?
  - What unintended consequences could come out of achieving these goals that we should be aware of and avoid?
  - What are some indicators that would tell us we are making progress in each of these key visions?
  - What kinds of actions do you think would be particularly beneficial for Environmental Justice / Priority Populations in achieving these goals? Would any actions be detrimental for Environmental Justice / Priority Populations?

### Feedback incorporated

Input from this wave was considered and incorporated into the draft climate resilience goals and priority population lists.

### Participation

- State agency representatives kickoff meeting: 39 invitees
- State agency representatives focus groups:
  - Environmental justice & equity: 36 invitees
  - Governance: 42 invitees
  - Human health & welfare: 50 invitees
  - Infrastructure: 62 invitees
  - Economy: 47 invitees
  - Natural environment: 63 invitees
- Public meeting: 206 registrants
- EAG meeting 1: 8 EAG members

## Wave 3 | Gather and incorporate state agency program information and data

### Purpose

Understand agency programs and data collection efforts to incorporate them into metrics development.

### Methods

- **State agency representatives update meeting:** August 2, 2024
- **Asynchronous information request**
- **State agency representatives office hours:** August 7, 8, & 13, 2024

### Materials developed

- State agency representatives update meeting presentation
- Information request template
- Information request FAQ (developed from questions asked during office hours)

## Wave 4 | Finalize climate resilience goals and prioritize draft climate resilience metrics

### Purpose

Share back progress on the climate resilience metrics framework and climate resilience goals. Prioritize climate resilience metrics with input from state agency representatives, the EAG, and public stakeholders. Identify ways to collaborate with key partners.

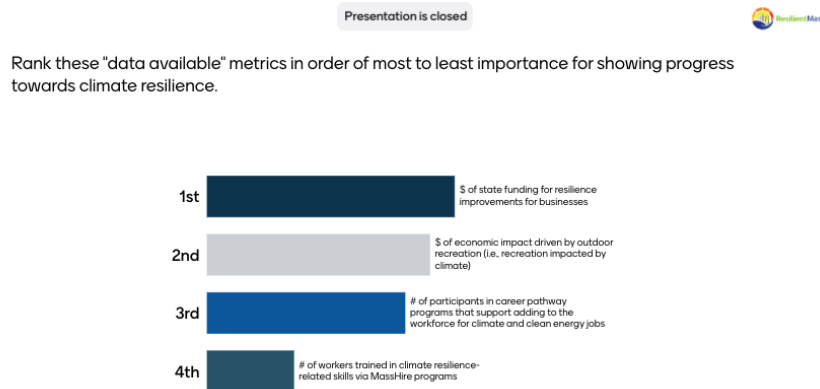
### Methods

- **State agency representatives prioritization meeting:** October 8, 2024
- **EAG meeting 3 on prioritization:** October 9, 2024
- **Public stakeholders prioritization meeting:** October 15, 2024
- **Key partners collaboration meeting:** November 15, 2024. Key partners were also invited to the public stakeholders meeting to give input on metrics prioritization.

### Materials developed

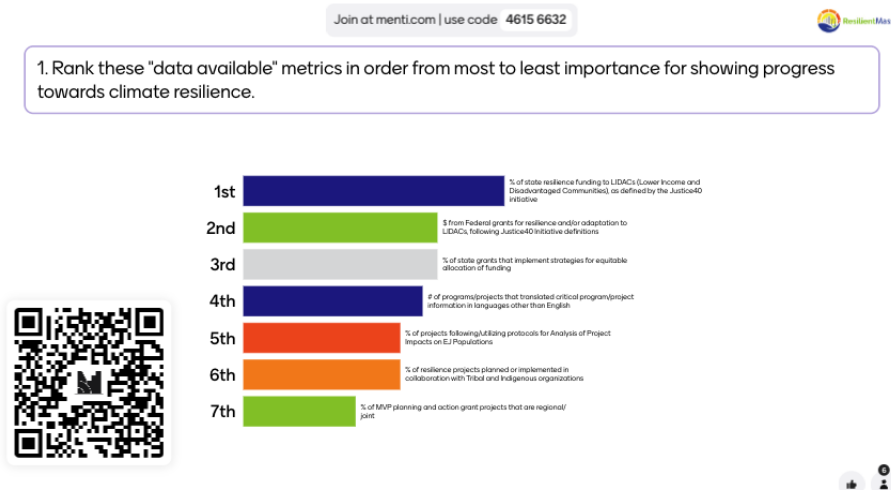
- **State agency representatives meeting:**

- Presentation
- Agenda
- Mentimeter polls. Tailored mentimeter polls were created for each of the six sector discussions. Example mentimeter feedback slide:



- **EAG meeting 3:**

- Presentation
- Agenda
- Worksheet
- Mentimeter polls. Tailored mentimeter polls were created for each of the six sector discussions. Example mentimeter feedback slide:



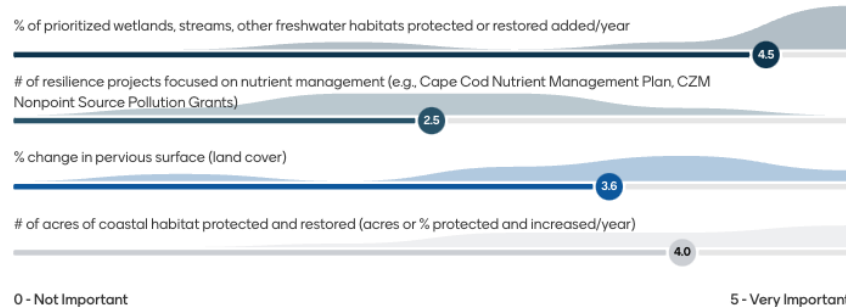
- **Public stakeholders meeting:**

- Presentation
- Annotated agenda
- Recording: <https://youtu.be/vclaw5ad3oA>
- Mentimeter polls. Tailored mentimeter polls were created for each of the six sector discussions. Example mentimeter feedback slide:

Presentation is closed



1. Rate each "data available" metric for how important it is in showing progress towards climate resilience (1/1)



- **Key partners meeting:**
  - Presentation
  - Annotated agenda

## Feedback questions

- **State agency representatives meeting:**
  - Rank each "data available" metric for how important it is in showing progress towards climate resilience
  - Rank each "data partially available" metric for how important it is for showing progress towards climate resilience
  - Rank each "data not yet available" metric for how important it is for showing progress towards climate resilience.
- **EAG meeting:**
  - Rank each "data available" metric for how important it is in showing progress towards climate resilience
  - Rank each "data partially available" metric for how important it is for showing progress towards climate resilience
  - Rank each "data not yet available" metric for how important it is for showing progress towards climate resilience.
- **Public stakeholders meeting:**
  - Rate each "data available" metric for how important it is in showing progress towards climate resilience
  - Rate each "data partially available" metric for how important it is for showing progress towards climate resilience
  - Rate each "data not yet available" metric for how important it is for showing progress towards climate resilience.
  - What would you add, remove, or edit in this draft list of prioritization criteria?
  - Any other comments or feedback to share?
- **Key partners collaboration meeting:**
  - Does this set of metrics capture what progress is most important to measure in the state's resilience work? Are there any major omissions that should be prioritized in the next phase of metrics development?
  - Do you collect or know of data sources for specific metrics? Do you see any ways to improve or frame these metrics?



- In what ways could these metrics inform or be used in your work?

### Feedback incorporated

Prioritization feedback from all stakeholders was incorporated into the selection process of the final suite of climate resilience metrics for this phase of the initiative.

### Participation

- State agency representative meeting: 89 attendees
- Key partners meeting: 28 participants
- EAG meeting: 7 EAG members
- Public stakeholders meeting: 101 attendees

## Lessons learned and considerations for future engagement

During this engagement process, the project team had dual goals of a) sharing information with stakeholders to raise awareness about the process and provide transparency for how the metrics were evolving, and b) getting meaningful feedback to shape the outcomes. Below are some learnings drawn from this process to consider for future engagement efforts.

### What went well

- ***Use of existing EEA outreach infrastructure, such as MVP mailing list, for public engagement.***
- ***Tailored and right-sized engagement with internal agency stakeholders.*** Engagement of the “working group” of agency partners spanned large-group meetings covering all sectors to individual interviews at different phases. This allowed agency participants to hear from each other and see their resilience-related work in context of the whole-of-government ResilientMass effort, while also providing the opportunity for direct discussion of more granular issues such as data sets particular to individual programs.
- ***Opportunity to iterate with internal and external stakeholders, demonstrating and building buy-in on the evolution of the metrics.*** Stakeholders benefited from seeing the evolution of the metrics. Engaging them in the process of articulating what success and a resilient future would look like seemed to build buy-in and motivation to work towards a shared goal.

### Considerations and potential challenges

- ***Gauging where and when input can be most meaningful:*** Though the process defined several distinct “waves” of engagement, in reality there were many iterations of refining and checking in with stakeholders included in each phase of the process. Having multiple touchpoints and opportunities to weigh in is a benefit generally, but due to the time constraints, it was difficult to meaningfully consider and incorporate feedback from all of these points.
- ***Dealing with large volumes of feedback:*** With the added benefit of technical tools in the virtual stakeholder meetings held, the project team was able to collect a lot of written as well as verbal feedback. While helpful, the large volume of feedback meant that the team needed to take more time to ensure it was carefully incorporated.
- ***Gauging adequate and/or final agency input:*** Coordinating with the different agencies proved difficult and it was sometimes unclear who should give the final word on the agency’s feedback.



## Equity Advisory Group - Lessons learned

In addition to the thoughts above on the engagement process generally, below are some learnings and considerations specific to the Equity Advisory Group process.

### Member Selection and Representation

The selection process for EAG members balanced multiple priorities, seeking individuals who were networked within environmental justice communities, possessed relevant lived experience, maintained connections to community-based organizations, and had the capacity to participate fully in the process. The team prioritized diversity across multiple dimensions, including age, race, immigration status, rural and urban perspectives, and regional representation across Massachusetts.

Even with careful attention to lived experiences and identities, it is not possible for a small group such as the one that comprised the EAG to directly represent the full range of EJ identities in the state or to be considered representative of the range of perspectives within those communities. Such a group provides valuable advice based on the lived experience and expertise of the individuals in the group (and in some cases, by serving as a liaison to their communities to gather additional feedback.) This format of ongoing engagement with a standing group therefore would be complementary to a broader community engagement effort that engages more widely (though less deeply) with a larger group of stakeholders to achieve more representative engagement of EJ communities.

### Providing Opportunities for Ongoing Engagement

As the formal engagement concluded, the EEA opened pathways for continued involvement, including invitations to attend regular Environmental Justice Council meetings and ways to stay involved and learn about climate resilience and other activities, e.g. through the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) program newsletter. These opportunities represent initial steps toward sustained engagement with this valuable network of community leaders.

Going forward, continuing to provide more opportunities to engage community leaders outside of project-specific contexts (e.g. such as the EJ Council and other ongoing initiatives) helps build relationships, identify issues sooner, broaden the set of community leaders who are engaged and able to provide input, and deepen the possibilities for meaningful engagement in future projects.

### Preparation and EAG Support

Recognizing that EAG members were selected for their community connections rather than technical expertise in climate resilience, the team developed comprehensive support strategies. Bringing in lived experience and expertise to a technical project is hugely valuable, *and* to make participation from these groups effective, extra attention has to be given to equip participants with the context and technical information – in an accessible manner – so they can meaningfully engage with and influence the process. Strategies the project team used to ensure effective two-way exchange of information as a foundation for meaningful feedback included situating the specific project in the context of broader efforts within the state, providing pre-work and background materials including educational videos and carefully structured pre-work materials. This approach also required flexibility to acknowledge the competing demands on participants' time, and so one-on-one conversations were used when members could not join a group meeting. This approach enabled members to engage meaningfully with complex technical information while managing their existing commitments.

## Tribal Engagement Considerations

The project team successfully recruited two members with Tribal affiliations to participate in the EAG – one member of Tribal descent from outside of Massachusetts, and another member of a Tribe in Massachusetts. This engagement was meaningful and provided important perspectives on issues of Tribal concern relative to the development of metrics.

EEA was eager to engage Tribes more fully but is in the midst of a more comprehensive Tribal engagement strategy. For this reason, EEA maintained the ResilientMass Metrics engagement with Tribal members as a separate effort, and is continuing to work through EEA's Office of Environmental Justice and Equity on a more long-term plan for robust future Tribal engagement.

Note: This memo reflects lessons learned through the current stage of the process, with some activities still ongoing into early 2025.