

Climate Bay Area January 3, 2011

Why Climate Bay Area?

Hundreds of Bay Area businesses, government agencies and non-profits are now actively engaged in climate protection and adaptation work. These organizations are developing programs, holding workshops and conferences, and advocating for action. However, the next giant step—the implementation of strategies that will significantly reduce emissions and prepare our cities for climate impacts—is not occurring at the scale and speed required by our changing climate. Why is this happening in the Bay Area—home to some of the most innovative organizations and green thinkers in the world?

We believe that a number of factors are at work. First, many climate groups are working in isolation, leading to duplication of effort and inefficient use of their limited resources. Second, roles are poorly defined for local, regional and state public agencies, particularly regarding working together to reach the AB 32 goals. Third, there is a lack of understanding about the major strategies that will significantly “move the needle” on emissions reduction in the Bay Area. Finally, while there is a much higher level of awareness of climate issues now in the region, there is still insufficient agreement on *what* we have to do, *how much* we have to do and *how fast*.

How Climate Bay Area Is Making A Difference

Climate Bay Area (CBA) provides a “meeting place” for the region, bringing together public, private and non-profit climate stakeholders to address these issues. By providing this critical networking role, CBA is helping to broker and catalyze stronger climate actions. By facilitating partnerships and focusing resources on the most important barriers and opportunities, CBA is helping the Bay Area climate movement to move forward at the speed and scale required.

Climate Bay Area performs two primary functions:

1. **CBA helps to align and coordinate climate efforts in the region.** CBA regularly “scans” the Bay Area to assist in identifying (a) key stakeholders in each sector, (b) the best projects/programs that could be replicated regionally, and (c) the top opportunities for climate action partnerships. CBA collects and disseminates this information through face-to-face meetings, phone conferences, the web and other means. In particular, we facilitate collaborations between different groups and individuals that will leverage their limited resources.
2. **CBA helps to focus the region on the most important climate opportunities and barriers.** To accomplish this, CBA works with its partners to:
 - Identify the most important opportunities and barriers.
 - Map the groups (if any) who are working to address each opportunity/barrier.
 - Create a unified coordinated “work plan” for each opportunity/barrier.

- Monitor and guide work groups, research experts, and consultants who will develop the needed work products.
- Bring together all reports and recommendations (from the previous step) for thorough review, discussion and decision-making by each stakeholder group.
- Help build new partnerships or alliances (as needed) for successful implementation.

As noted earlier, there are already a number of local and sub-regional climate programs in the Bay Area— such as the Bay Area Climate Collaborative (Silicon Valley Leadership Group, San Francisco, San Jose, Oakland and others), the Sonoma County Climate Protection Campaign (all nine cities plus the county), the City of San Jose’s Green Vision and Joint Venture Silicon Valley’s Climate Prosperity Project. Climate Bay Area will support and enhance these and other similar programs by focusing its resources on the regional mega-issues plaguing all Bay Area efforts, including the critical lack of financing/funding, our unclear relationship to AB 32, and the need for agreed-upon goals/indicators. These groups will all be members of Climate Bay Area and will help chart the course for CBA and benefit from its strategic approach to solving the top overall regional climate issues.

Climate Bay Area Structure:

1. *Climate Bay Area* is a multi-sector partnership including government, business, environmental and community organizations.
2. CBA has been organized by the Joint Policy Committee (JPC) and the Bay Area Council Economic Institute (BACEI) and will be led by a co-chair from each organization.