



I am writing to share important news about the future of the Climate Leaders program. Recognizing the need to promote and advance climate leadership amid growth and change, EPA has decided to transition the program over the coming year in order to take advantage of the full range of information, expertise, and approaches available to Partners eager to go above and beyond in reducing their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

The context in which Climate Leaders is operating is far different from when it was launched in 2002. Through your participation in the program, Partners have taken important steps to manage their GHG emissions through developing corporate-wide GHG inventories and setting ambitious reduction goals. In addition, a number of national organizations have established credible and robust climate business engagement initiatives while states have adopted climate change action plans and created regional GHG emissions trading programs that are designed to support overall GHG reduction efforts. EPA has also finalized and is implementing Mandatory Reporting Rules that the Climate Leaders program helped to inform. These rules provide the foundation for a new comprehensive GHG Reporting Program that EPA is confident will spark significant interest in and support for GHG emissions reductions.

EPA has determined that climate programs operated by the states and NGOs are now robust enough to service our Partners and other entities that wish to continue to advance their climate leadership through comprehensive reporting (that exceed mandatory reporting requirements) and/or the establishment of facility or corporate-level GHG reduction goals. For this reason, over the coming year, EPA will phase down services the Agency provides under the federal Climate Leaders program and encourage and assist the transition of our Partners into non-federal programs that our Partners choose to join. With the exception of programs offered by our state co-regulators, EPA cannot endorse any particular program – it is up to each Partner to decide which program would be the best fit.

EPA very much values the effort that our Partners have made to meet Climate Leaders requirements and achieve program milestones and is proud of your many accomplishments. I want to be clear that this transition does not signal the end of EPA's commitment to recognize climate leaders. In fact, EPA intends to stay involved in important initiatives related to corporate GHG accounting and to support companies' actions to reduce their GHG emissions through other programs such as ENERGY STAR and the Green Power Partnership. We also intend to pursue a jointly sponsored recognition program with one or more NGOs to allow our Partners and other climate leaders to continue to be acknowledged for their GHG reductions. This transition will also allow us to realign EPA resources to better assist companies in learning from the emissions data collected through the GHG Reporting Program to facilitate the exchange and application of best practices and innovative technologies across a wide range of industries.

In light of the proposed transition, we have decided to alter the agenda of the upcoming Partners Meeting in New Orleans so that it will now take place from October 5-6, starting in the afternoon. We will be sending out the new agenda very soon. I am planning to attend to speak about these changes in more detail and to answer your questions. The Climate Leaders team is also organizing sessions to share ideas and solicit your input concerning how to structure the transition so it is of most use to you.

We look forward to working with you during this time of transition, and want to reiterate our sincere appreciation for your engagement in the Climate Leaders program and acknowledge the impressive efforts you have made to reduce GHG emissions over the years.

Sincerely,

Gina McCarthy
Assistant Administrator
Office of Air and Radiation