



Connecticut Bureau of Air Management, Anne Gobin, Acting  
Maine Bureau of Air Quality Control, James Brooks  
Massachusetts Bureau of Waste Prevention, Barbara Kwetz  
New Hampshire Air Resources Division, Robert Scott  
New Jersey Division of Air Quality, William O'Sullivan  
New York Division of Air Resources, David Shaw, Acting  
Rhode Island Office of Air Resources, Stephen Majkut  
Vermont Air Pollution Control Division, Richard Valentinetti

## **Status of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Registry (RGGR)**

### **Background**

In October 2003, the Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use Management (NESCAUM) began development of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Registry (RGGR) for the Northeast. RGGR is a key piece of the infrastructure necessary for the northeastern states to move ahead in meeting their climate change commitments under the New England Governors-Eastern Canadian Premiers Climate Change Action Plan, adopted in August 2001, and individual targets set by New York and New Jersey. Beyond the NESCAUM states,<sup>1</sup> RGGR participants also include Delaware and Pennsylvania, with several other states outside of the Northeast observing the process.

The registry will use quantification and reporting protocols based on the GHG Protocol, a multi-stakeholder collaboration led by the World Resources Institute and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development. The GHG Protocol corporate standards have been used by the California Climate Action Registry, the World Economic Forum Registry, and many other climate initiatives. Adopting these standards will promote consistency and harmonization within the United States and beyond. In addition, NESCAUM is coordinating work on RGGR with the California Climate Action Registry and will work to design RGGR so that it is as compatible as possible with the California Registry while still meeting the individual needs of participating states. A work plan and schedule for the project have been approved by the participating states.

### **Functions of RGGR**

While the initial purpose of RGGR was to support organized reporting and recording of information on GHG emissions, the member states have recently agreed that the registry should serve three additional, more specific purposes: (1) voluntary reporting, (2) mandatory reporting, and (3) the RGGI process.

(1) **Voluntary Reporting:** The registry will support the voluntary registration of emissions from companies. The registry will provide sufficiently rigorous and detailed information to permit states to afford baseline protection for participants should states so choose. States may choose to incorporate incentives to voluntarily report emissions, such as a requirement to register emissions prior to registering project-based reductions.

(2) **Mandatory Reporting:** The registry will support state mandatory reporting requirements of GHG emissions. In an effort to promote reporting consistency among the participating states, NESCAUM and the RGGR staff working group are in the process of choosing design criteria that would build the framework of an ideal state mandatory reporting program. Upon the selection of the design criteria, a model rule and/or a model regulatory guidance document for

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<sup>1</sup> NESCAUM member states include the six New England states, New York and New Jersey.

mandating GHG reporting will be developed for use by states choosing to require mandatory reporting of GHG emissions.

(3) Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) Reporting: The RGGR staff working group agreed in January that the registry should support RGGI as appropriate. Though many design decisions are yet to be made, RGGR is expected to serve as the emissions and allowance tracking system for participating RGGI states, as well as the repository for project-based emissions reduction projects or offset credits to the extent such reductions and offset credits are recognized by RGGI.

### **Establishing RGGR design criteria:**

The last few meetings of the RGGR staff working group have been dedicated to choosing the design elements for RGGR. Design criteria include defining: (a) geographical and organizational boundaries; (b) gases covered; (c) direct sources covered (stationary, mobile, process, fugitive); (d) scope of emissions covered (direct, indirect); (e) verification (self, state, 3<sup>rd</sup> party); (f) project-level reporting requirements; (g) emissions calculations, inventory quality, and monitoring; (h) methodologies for adjusting the base year; (i) reporting templates; (j) reporting frequency; etc. The group has made good progress but a number of design criteria decisions remain outstanding.

### **Moving forward**

During the next few calls, the RGGR staff working group will finalize the design criteria of the registry. Upon choosing the design criteria, we will initiate a stakeholder process to review and comment on the decisions of the RGGR development process made thus far.

It also should be noted that NESCAUM has created a RGGR website. Please visit [www.rggr.us](http://www.rggr.us) to see our preliminary site. However, please note that the site is still under development and will be significantly improved upon over the coming months.

### **Questions? Comments?**

Contact the Project Leads at NESCAUM:

Suzanne Watson ([swatson@nescaum.org](mailto:swatson@nescaum.org)), Climate and Energy Team Leader  
Kelly Levin ([klevin@nescaum.org](mailto:klevin@nescaum.org)), Policy/Technical Analyst