

# Climate Adaptation Policy Update for Massachusetts

Massachusetts Association Planning Directors  
Annual Meeting 2014

Karen Heymann, Legislative Director  
Mass Audubon  
[kheymann@massaudubon.org](mailto:kheymann@massaudubon.org)

# Preparing our Communities

## Temperature

- ❖ Warm weather energy demand stresses energy systems
- ❖ Vulnerable populations

## Precipitation

- ❖ Flooding, storm surge
- ❖ Combined sewer overflows >> water supply
- ❖ Loss of life due to drowning

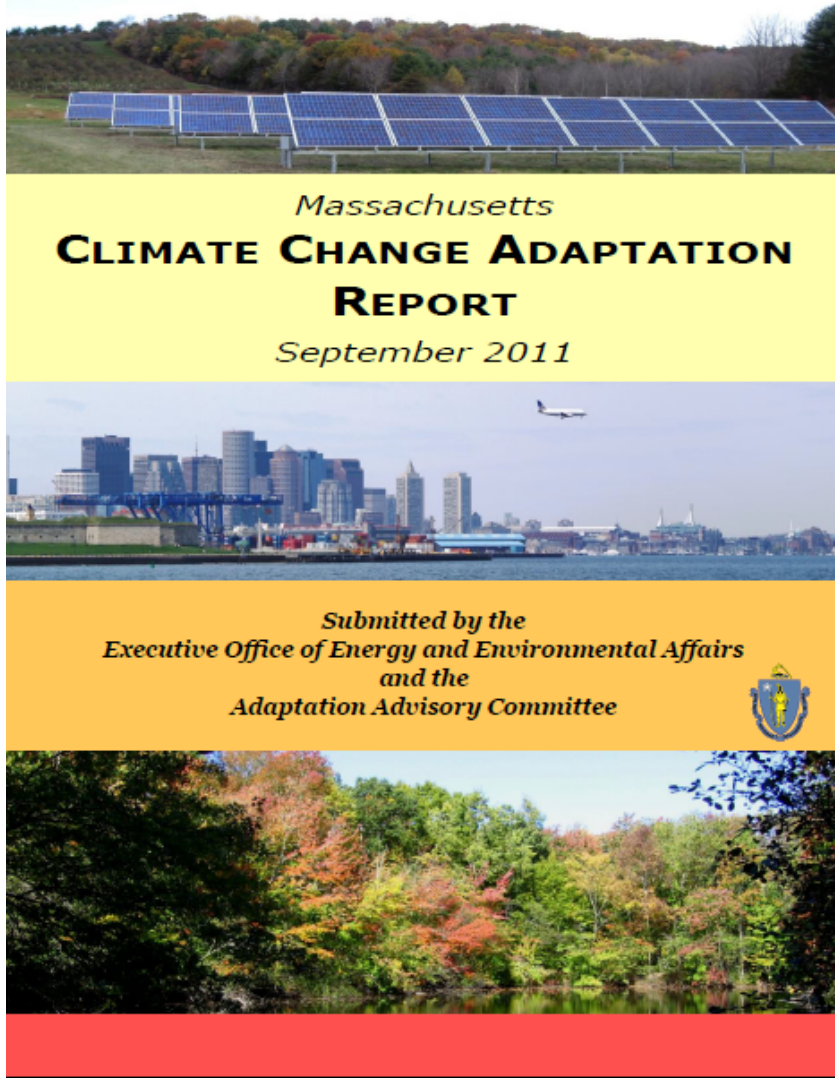
## Extreme weather events

- ❖ Energy supply
- ❖ Reduced emergency response capacity
- ❖ Public safety hazards

# Preparing our Communities

- ❖ Energy infrastructure
- ❖ Transportation infrastructure
- ❖ Drinking water supply, wastewater)
- ❖ Safety and flood control
- ❖ Solid and hazardous waste
- ❖ Buildings and structures
- ❖ Emergency preparedness

# Preparing our Communities



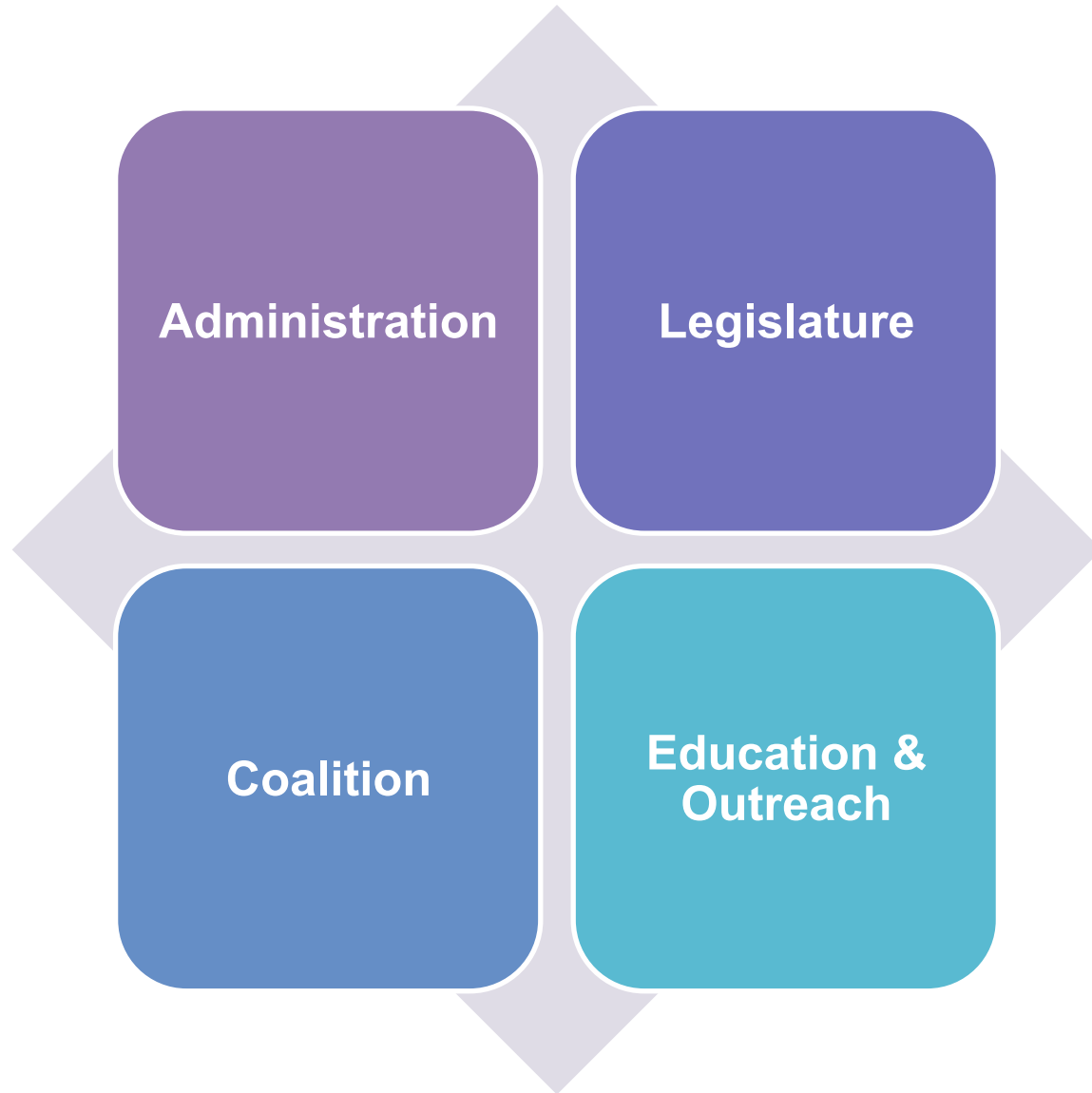
Global Warming Solutions Act  
- Mandatory GHG reductions  
- GWSA Sub-Committee on Adaptation

Sub-Committee report issued findings  
- Few specifics  
- No priorities, course of action

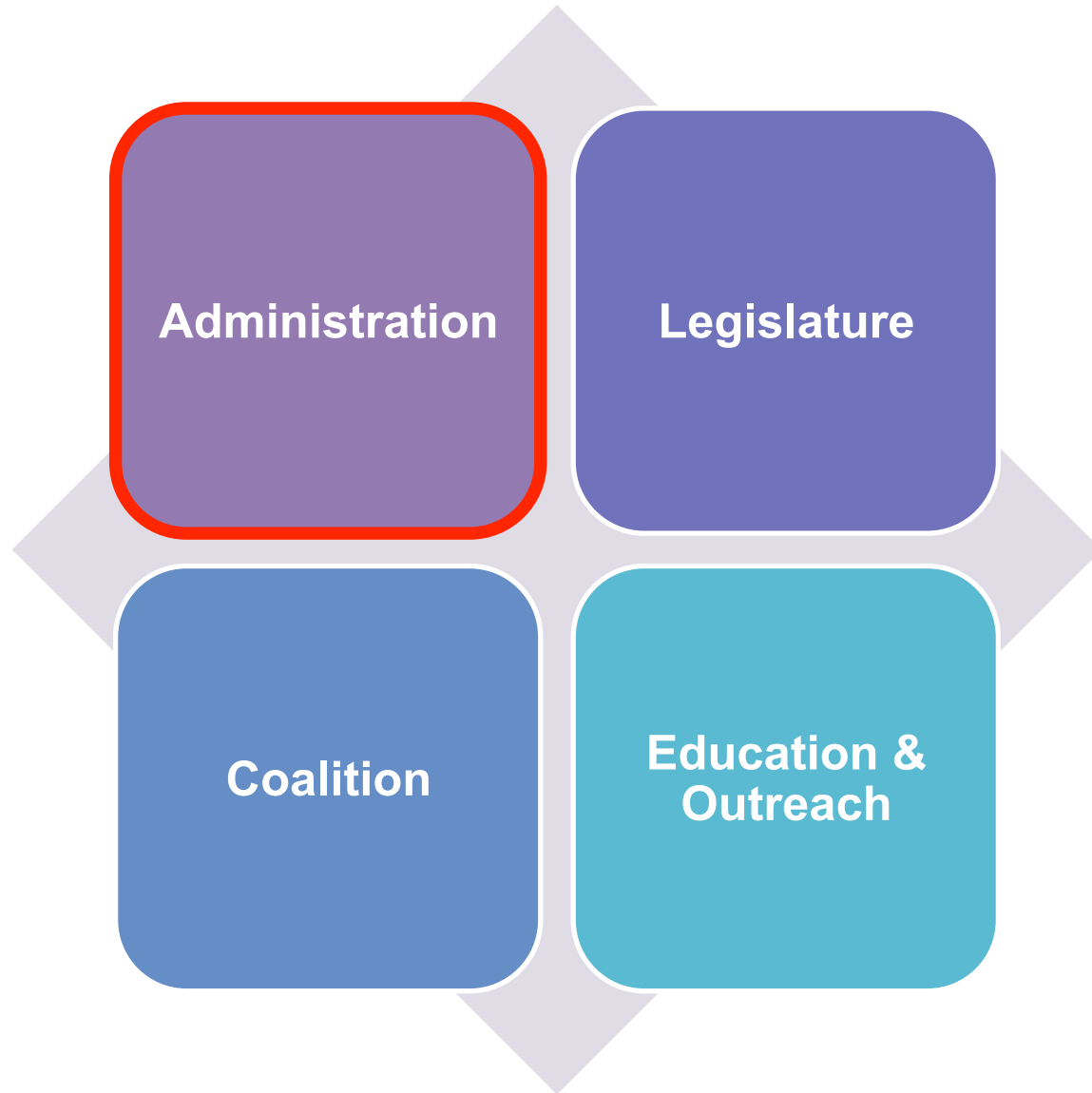
Statewide efforts are scattered and not well coordinated

Legislation required for climate adaptation

# Advocacy Strategy



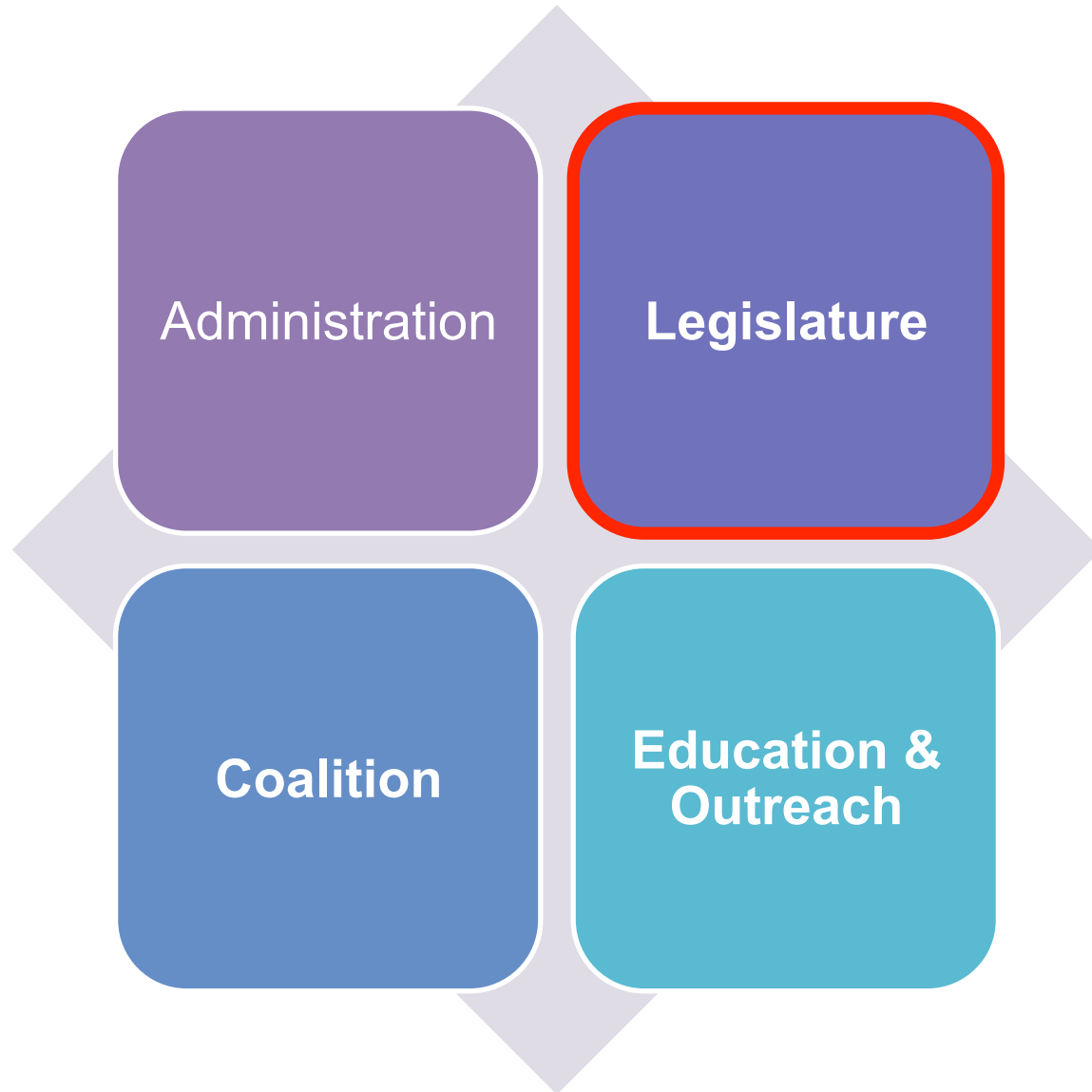
# Advocacy Strategy



# Administration Update

- ❖ Governor Patrick announced \$50 million investment for statewide plan to address climate impacts
- ❖ Includes \$40 million municipal resilience grant program (DOER) to harden energy services using clean energy
- ❖ MassDOT statewide vulnerability assessment and adopt plans by 2015
- ❖ MEMA planners will advise on emergency management
- ❖ Dept. Public Health

# Advocacy Strategy





# Legislative Update

***Senate bill 2028.***

***An Act providing for the establishment of a comprehensive adaptation management plan in response to climate change***

**Sponsor: Marc Pacheco (D-Taunton)**

**Co-sponsors:**

## **House**

**Frank Smizik (Brookline)**

**Lori Erlich (Marblehead)**

**Stephen Kulik (Worthington)**

**Denise Provost (Somerville)**

**Robert M. Koczera (New Bedford)**

## **Senate**

**Stanley Rosenberg (Amherst)**

**Michael Barrett (Lexington)**

**William N. Brownsberger (Belmont)**

**Benjamin B. Downing (Pittsfield)**

**James B. Eldridge (Acton)**

**Brian A. Joyce (Milton)**

**Daniel A. Wolf (Cape and Islands)**

**Jason Lewis (Winchester)**

**Kenneth Donnelly (Arlington)**

# Legislative Update

- ❖ Commit state to considering climate change in all planning moving forward
- ❖ Data collection and compilation
- ❖ Produce report, 2 years
- ❖ Establish committee to carry out plan
- ❖ Regional technical assistance grants
- ❖ Establish coastal buyback program

# Technical Report

- ❖ **2 year timeline**
- ❖ **Establish goals, priorities**
- ❖ **Focus on resiliency, protection, restoration**
- ❖ **Inventory and vulnerability assessment of human populations, and natural and built assets of the commonwealth subject to the threat of climate change**
- ❖ **Existing and projected impacts of climate change**
- ❖ **Emergency response related to energy, transportation, communications, health and other systems**
- ❖ **Economic vulnerability to local businesses in high risk communities**

# Multi-stakeholder process

- ❖ Transportation and built infrastructure
- ❖ Commercial, industrial and manufacturing activities; commercial property management and real estate
- ❖ Low income consumers
- ❖ Energy generation and distribution
- ❖ Land conservation
- ❖ Water supply and quality
- ❖ Recreation
- ❖ Ecosystems dynamics
- ❖ Coastal zone and oceans
- ❖ Rivers and wetlands
- ❖ Local government

# Regional Technical Assistance

## Report will outline regional planning agency guidance

- (i) step-by-step process for regional climate vulnerability assessment and adaptation strategy development;
- (ii) a definition of regional impacts by supporting communities conducting climate vulnerability assessments; and
- (iii) an understanding of regional characteristics, including regional environmental and socioeconomic characteristics.

# Regional Technical Assistance

- ❖ Advance regional and local efforts to adapt land use, zoning, infrastructure, policies and programs
- ❖ Reduce vulnerability of the built and natural environment

# Coastal Buyback

- ❖ Voluntary; land acquired for protection of the people
- ❖ Land abutting or adjacent to areas subject to the ebb and flow of the tide or on barrier beaches or in velocity zones of flood plain areas – structures repeatedly damaged
- ❖ Conservation and recreation management plan – agreement between agency and municipality
- ❖ Public hearing required

# Coalition

Mass Audubon

The Nature Conservancy in Massachusetts

The Environmental League of Massachusetts

The Trust for Public Land

Conservation Law Foundation

Sierra Club Massachusetts chapter

Appalachian Mountain Club

The Trustees of Reservations

Charles River Watershed Association

Mass Rivers Alliance

The Boston Harbor Association

The Association to Preserve Cape Cod

Great Marsh Coalition

Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions

Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition

Massachusetts Association of Planning Directors

Metropolitan Area Planning Council

Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies

Collaborative Institute for Oceans, Climate and Security, UMass, Boston

Cape & Islands Self Reliance Corporation

Climate Action Liaison Coalition



# Thank You!

Karen Heymann, Legislative Director

Mass Audubon

[kheymann@massaudubon.org](mailto:kheymann@massaudubon.org)

Sign up for our Weekly Roundup!

[www.massaudubon.org/get-involved/take-action](http://www.massaudubon.org/get-involved/take-action)