Americans use and consume over 10 tons of products and resources (“materials”) per person each year. The materials we use flow through the economy from extraction to processing, manufacturing, use, and recovery or disposal. Each stage requires energy and results in greenhouse gas emissions. In fact, more than 40% of U.S. emissions are a result of producing, transporting, and disposing of materials.

**Sustainable Materials Management**

*Sustainable materials management* is an approach to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and environmental impacts throughout every stage of a product’s lifecycle, from manufacture to disposal. Examples of effective greenhouse gas emissions emission reduction strategies include reducing the amount of materials used to make products or provide services, influencing product design to reduce the amount of raw materials used and increase their durability so they last longer, and increasing ease of disassembly, recycling, and transformation of products for further use of their components.

“Our mission is to inspire, inform and show communities how to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions by improving the way they source, use and recover materials.”

**Join the West Coast Climate Forum**

The West Coast Climate and Materials Management Forum is a collaboration of state, local, and tribal governments that are developing ways to institutionalize sustainable materials management practices.

Become part of our growing network of governments and you can:

- Learn more about sustainable materials management tools and strategies to further your climate change goals.
- Get support planning and prioritizing your materials management efforts.
- Be a peer mentor by sharing your experiences and lessons learned.
- Get recognized for your work through the West Coast Climate Forum’s website, social media, and quarterly newsletters.

Visit: WestCoastClimateForum.com

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**References:**
1. “Sustainable Materials Management: The Road Ahead” (U.S. EPA, June 2009)