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Connecting People to Solve Problems

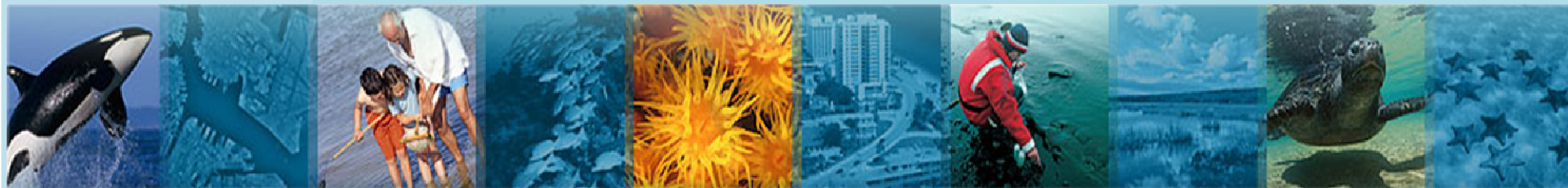
U.S. Fisheries Management and National Ocean Policy Reform: Opportunities and Implications

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Joint Ocean Commission Initiative

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Overview

- U.S. ocean policy context
- Current proposal for a national ocean policy
- Implications for fisheries management



Oceans in Crisis

- Declining fisheries and fishing economies
- Degraded water quality
- Climate change impacts
- Invasive species
- Competing uses including fishing, energy development, aquaculture, and shipping



Current Challenges

- **Fragmented mandates**
 - At federal level, more than 18 agencies managing ocean resources pursuant to 140 different laws
- **Uncoordinated management**
 - Oceans managed by sectors with fisheries, energy development, water quality, habitat, and other activities and resources managed by separate agencies/programs
- **Lack of a coherent overarching policy**
 - Policy needed to provide a common vision, bring coherency, and coordinate actions of multiple federal agencies



Brief History

- Stratton Commission:
 - First comprehensive look at U.S. ocean and coastal policy; released report in 1969
 - Led to landmark policy including creation of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and federal legislation addressing:
 - Fisheries management
 - Coastal management
 - Marine mammal protection
 - Water quality



Brief History

- Revisited by 2 national level ocean commissions:
 - Pew Oceans Commission: Independent; released report in 2003
 - U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy: Congressionally created; released report in 2004
 - Joint Ocean Commission Initiative: ongoing follow up effort
- Common theme:
 - Need for national ocean policy and integrated ecosystem-based approach



Ocean Policy Task Force

On June 12, 2009 President Obama established an Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force charged with developing recommendations for:

- A national ocean policy
- Coordinated implementation of the policy
- Framework for coastal and marine spatial planning



Task Force Interim Recommendations

- *Policy: America's stewardship of the oceans, our coasts, and the Great Lakes is intrinsically and intimately linked to environmental sustainability, human health and well-being, national prosperity, adaptation to climate and other environmental change, social justice, foreign policy, and national and homeland security*
- **Structure:** Interagency National Ocean Council
- **Next steps:** Final recommendations including framework for coastal and marine spatial planning by December 2009



Implications for Fisheries Management

- Establishing a national ocean policy and a national coordinating council would:
 - promote integration of fisheries management with management of other ocean and coastal resources and uses to advance ecosystem-based approaches
 - increase coordination and streamlining among regional fisheries management councils and other regional entities



Implications for Fisheries Management

- Coastal and marine spatial planning would engage stakeholders and managers to identify how particular ocean areas should be used
- Increased attention from the President and Congress to ocean issues may lead to increased resources for management, monitoring, and assessment of fisheries health





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