

DRAFT
NOAA Ocean Council Priorities 2009

Background – Methods

At the January 22, 2009, NOAA Ocean Council meeting, the Co-chairs solicited ideas for priorities from attending members. The discussion resulted in a list of approximately 16 priority ideas and a discussion about the Council’s overarching strategic goals and ongoing, cyclical responsibilities. The co-chairs met shortly after the January 22nd meeting to strategize and narrow the list of suggestions for priorities.

Tier Structure

The co-chairs took input from NOC members and decided upon a tier structure for 2009 NOC Priorities.

1. Tier 1
 - NOC is the lead on a issue
 - NOC assigns specific staff to work on the issue
 - A NOC member is the “Champion” for the issue
2. Tier 2
 - NOC actively supports the issue
 - Other programs, Councils, and/or LOs have the lead
 - The NOC does not assign specific staff to work on the issue
 - A NOC member is the “Champion” for the issue
3. Tier 3
 - NOC monitors the issue as it may overlap with NOC-specific issues
 - There may be occasional updates
 - These are generally short-term issues
 - If needed, the NOC may ask a member to “Champion” the issue

Tier 1 Priority Description

The top three priorities identified by the NOC Co-chairs are *Oceans Tomorrow*, Ocean Energy, and Arctic/Polar Policy. These priorities are described here and summarized in the following table.

1. Oceans Tomorrow

Oceans Tomorrow was identified as a top priority at the 2008 NOC Retreat and at the 2009 priorities discussion. This priority is championed by Sam Rauch and is supported by an *ad hoc* working group composed of staff from NOS, NMFS, NWS, OAR and NESDIS. Over the past year the working group has accomplished its specific tasks to:

- Analyze major external ocean reports and actions (e.g. USCOP, Pew, OAP); and
- Analyze major internal NOAA and NOAA-related ocean priority setting documents and identify NOAA’s priority areas that might best be promoted and advanced at the interagency level.

On February 18, 2009, the Oceans Tomorrow Working Group presented its work and ideas to the NEC. The NOC is expected to return to the NEC on May 13th. The following tasks were identified after the NOC brief to the NEC:

- Task 1 – Identify regional governance organizations, find overlaps, and evaluate their effectiveness towards meeting *Oceans Tomorrow* themes and objectives
- Task 2 – Assess interagency bodies (e.g. JSOST, SIMOR), find overlaps, and evaluate their effectiveness towards meeting Oceans Tomorrow themes and objectives
- Task 3 – Revise the February presentation to express the immediate needs and priorities of the Nation and how *Oceans Tomorrow* would help meet those needs
- Task 4 – Interact with Craig McLean and the Ocean Policy Working Group to review the redundancies and overlapping authorities in federal agencies
- Task 5 – Prioritize the issues identified in *Oceans Tomorrow* by taking public input on priorities and comparing it to NOAA priorities

2. Ocean Energy

Ocean Energy is a growing issue for NOAA, and NOC members expressed interest in an ocean policy related to energy. In the subsequent Co-chair meeting, several items were discussed such as best practices and principles for ocean energy projects. In this product, NOAA would produce guidelines that ocean energy projects should conform to in order to minimize any impacts on the ocean, ocean resources, and coasts, consistent with NOAA's goals and mission.

The Co-chairs discussed formalizing the NOAA Energy Team and re-integrating this subgroup into the NOC. NOAA's *ad hoc* Energy Team (ET) is composed of a network of contacts across NOAA Line Offices and Headquarters. The genesis of this group was the intra-agency effort to coordinate reviews of LNG project proposals under the Deepwater Port Act (DWPA) inter-agency DWPA Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). While the NOAA ET functions effectively to coordinate among NOAA's Line Offices, there is no NOAA ET formal structure or operating procedure, no operating budget, and no authority given to NOAA ET members; other than as lead points of contacts for energy issues to coordinate on one-NOAA responses to policy and project specific matters. By taking this issue on, the NOC would not be interfering with the day to day review of LNGs and other projects that the ET currently handles. Such reviews often need to occur faster than the NOC process. Rather, the NOC would be available for major ocean related policy issues that the ET feels requires additional leadership.

3. Arctic/Polar Policy

Many arctic efforts are underway both internally and externally to NOAA. The C&T Goal Team is leading the cross-goal development of a NOAA Action Plan for the Arctic. Before leaving office, President Bush issued a new Arctic region policy that acknowledges the security, economic and environmental implications of melting ice at the North Pole and sets the stage for increasing responsibilities for federal agencies, including Commerce.

Co-chairs voiced concern that a cross-Goal Team group is coordinating a policy action plan. Co-chairs suggested the consideration of an internal governance structure and the creation of a NOAA Office on Polar Policy. The NOC would be responsible for developing and presenting to the NEP/NEC a plan regarding how such an office could fit into NOAA. Additionally, the NOC would be a vetting body for materials and presentations regarding NOAA's Arctic Plan before delivery to the NEP/NEC.

Strategic Goals Identified by NOC Members at the January NOC Meeting

In addition to the priorities that the Co-chair organized into tiers, at the January 2009 meeting, NOC members discussed overall strategic goals for the NOC to ensure the NOC is effective. The Co-chairs agreed with these strategic goals. They are:

1. Communicate products to the NEP/NEC in a timely manner
2. Present the NOC as a “natural home” for Jane Lubchenco on ocean policy issues
3. NOC should be proactive versus reactive

Ongoing/Cyclical Issues

The NOC members also discussed the importance of being involved in some cyclical issues such as PPBES. These issues were found to be required per the terms of reference and a necessary part of the duties of the NOC. As such, the issues identified here are ongoing tasks that are not specified as part of the annual priorities outlined in the tier structure. Rather than having a champion for these issues, generally NOC staff will handle the requests and asking for NOC member review.

1. Review and comment on reports, plans, proposals as requested
2. PPBES engagement
 - a. Effect process earlier

Tier 1: NOC Lead [details and blanks to be discussed]

Priority	Description	Deliverable	Champion	Milestones	Target Date
Oceans Tomorrow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taskings from NEC presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NEC Presentation • Oceans Tomorrow White Paper • USCOP Gap Analysis 	Sam Rauch		May 13
Ocean Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practices/principles for ocean energy projects • Review NOAA responsibilities • Formalize NOAA Energy Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practices document 	Laura Furgione		
Arctic/Polar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Propose creation of NOAA Arctic/Polar Policy Office • Oversight role of strategic plan • Review of products relating to the strategic plan before they go to NEP/NEC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft plan for creation of such an office • Presentation to the NEP/NEC 	Steve Barnum/ Ashley Chappell		

Tier 2: NOC Actively Supports *[details and blanks to be discussed]*

Priority	Description	Deliverable	Champion	Milestones	Target Date
Coastal Enterprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversight role on NOAA’s internal efforts to consolidate its coastal strategic plan Review products before going to the NEP/NEC 		Debbie Larson		
Next Generation Strategic Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? 		Laura Furgione		
Ecosystem Forecasting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversight to LOs 		Ming Ji		
Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? 		Chet Koblinsky/ Krisa Arzayus		
Mapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articulate NOAA strategy for mapping 		Steve Barnum		

Tier 3: NOC Monitors *[details and blanks to be discussed]*

Priority	Description	Champion	Milestone
Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review relevant legislation as needed/requested (NOAA Organic Act, CZMA, Oversight of implementation – S. 22, etc) 	Jack Dunnigan	
Oceans and Human Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review/be updated on relevant policy issues as needed 	Debbie Larson	
IOOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review/be updated on relevant policy issues as needed 	Jack Dunnigan	
Invasive Species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review/be updated on relevant policy issues as needed 	Craig McLean	

APPENDIX I

NOC Member Brainstorm List from Jan. 22, 2009 NOC Meeting

- Oceans Tomorrow
- Coastal Enterprise
- Ocean Energy
- Oceans and Climate Change
- Arctic Plan
- Legislative Ideas
 - Farm Bill engagement
 - NOAA Organic Act
 - CZMA
 - Oversight of implementation – S. 22
- Mapping needs
- Ocean Exploration
- Alternative Technology Utilization
- Oceans and Human Health
- Socioeconomic issues
- Communication – outreach using new tools (blogs, twitter, etc.)
- NOAA Fleet issues
- Ocean Sensor Requirements
- Ocean Color
- Ecological Forecasting
- Increase/Improve Interagency Play
 - US GEO
 - NOPP
 - ICOSRMI, JSOST, SIMOR
 - CCSP

APPENDIX II

NOC Terms of Reference

Purpose:

The NOAA Ocean Council (NOC) is established as the principal advisory body to the Administrator and focal point for the agency's ocean activities and interests, including open ocean, near shore, coastal, estuarine and Great Lakes activities. Specific purposes of the Council include, among others deemed as appropriate:

- Coordinating ocean activities across NOAA, including with other councils.
- Proposing priorities and investment strategies for NOAA ocean-related initiatives (both internal and external).
- Identifying NOAA's ocean and coastal programs that have the greatest potential to benefit from integration via a matrix management approach.
- Coordinating NOAA's participation in the interagency National Oceanographic Partnership Program (NOPP).

Roles and Responsibilities:

The NOAA Ocean Council shall provide recommendations to the NOAA Executive Panel. The Assistant Administrators of NOAA Oceans and Coasts and NOAA Fisheries will co-chair the Council. The Council will:

- Provide the NOAA strategy for leadership on national and international ocean issues.
- Serve as a cross-line office advisory committee on the management of ocean programs and activities within NOAA and with external partners.
- Develop recommendations to improve coordination of ocean activities within NOAA through mechanisms such as partnerships and matrix programs.
- Develop recommendations to improve customer service and product delivery, both nationally and through enhanced local and regional coordination and communication.
- Develop performance measures for NOAA's ocean and coastal activities that are linked to the NOAA Strategic Plan performance measures. This will include the responsibility to develop and state the expected outcomes and/or benefits of NOAA's investment in ocean activities.
- With respect to NOPP, the NOAA Ocean Council shall:
 - Maintain cognizance over all NOAA interests in NOPP activities and coordinate NOAA preparations for participation in the National Ocean Research Leadership Council (NORLC) and its associated efforts (e.g., the Interagency Working Group, the Ocean.US Executive Committee, the Ocean Research Advisory Panel (ORAP), and the Federal Oceanographic Facilities Committee (FOFC)).
 - Identify activities and funds to be proposed for NOPP consideration, including, where appropriate, the use of NOPP for proposal solicitations by NOAA Line Offices and the coordination of these solicitations with partner agencies.