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NOAA Fisheries Scientist Kenneth Sherman Wins Gold Medal

Award for ecosystems work is highest given by Department of Commerce

NOAA National Marine Fishery Service scientist Dr. Kenneth Sherman has been named winner of a Department of Commerce (DOC) Gold Medal by DOC Secretary Carlos M. Gutierrez. The Gold Medal is the DOC's highest award and is given for distinguished and extraordinary contributions that further the mission of the department.

Secretary Gutierrez will present Sherman with the medal in a formal ceremony December 6 in the Herbert C. Hoover Building in Washington, D.C.

Sherman is director of the Narragansett Laboratory and the Office of Marine Ecosystems Studies in NOAA's Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC), and an adjunct professor of oceanography in the University of Rhode Island's Graduate School of Oceanography. He has played a leading role in the international effort to establish a worldwide network of Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs). LMEs are made up of coastal waters, including rivers and estuaries, and ocean waters out to the boundaries of continental shelves. These areas, which produce more than 90 percent of the world's fish catch, are the site of the ocean's most degraded habitat and worst pollution.

Since LMEs were established, managers, policy makers and scientists have focused on these areas in their attempts to reduce degradation, pollution, habitat loss, and overfishing. The concept of LMEs has allowed NOAA and management agencies in other countries to do a better job of protecting and managing marine resources.

"Ken has been a tireless ambassador for the LME approach," John Boreman, NEFSC Science and Research Director, said. "In 2004 alone, Ken traveled as the U.S. representative or

head of delegation to France, Iceland, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, and Turkey to establish or support LME Assessment and Management Projects.”

Between 1986 and 2003, Sherman was the senior editor or co-editor of 13 LME Volumes and the author or co-author of 42 published reports and articles on LME research.

Sherman has been a leader and visionary in ecosystem research and management for more than 30 years. As the first director of the NEFSC’s Narragansett Laboratory, he played the central role in developing and implementing the first systematic survey of phytoplankton, zooplankton, and ichthyoplankton on the Northeast Shelf. He established a program of “MARMAP” (Marine Resources Monitoring, Assessment, and Prediction) surveys that continue today, providing essential information that helps scientists understand marine food webs regionally and globally.

“Ken has established himself as a global diplomat for NOAA and an active advocate for marine ecosystems research through more than 40 years of government service,” Boreman said. “His achievements are truly remarkable and he is well deserving of this high award.”

NOAA Fisheries Service is dedicated to protecting and preserving our nation’s living marine resources and their habitats through scientific research, management and enforcement. NOAA Fisheries Service provides effective stewardship of these resources for the benefit of the nation, supporting coastal communities that depend upon them, and helping to provide safe and healthy seafood to consumers and recreational opportunities for the American public.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation’s coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with its federal partners and nearly 60 countries to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the planet it observes.

On the Web:

NMFS Northeast Region: www.nero.noaa.gov

NOAA Fisheries Service: www.nmfs.noaa.gov

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