

A large, semi-circular satellite image of Earth's oceans, showing various shades of blue and white, occupies the left and bottom portions of the cover. It is partially overlaid by an orange horizontal band.

FINAL REPORT

Pre-Publication Copy

AN OCEAN BLUEPRINT

FOR THE 21st CENTURY

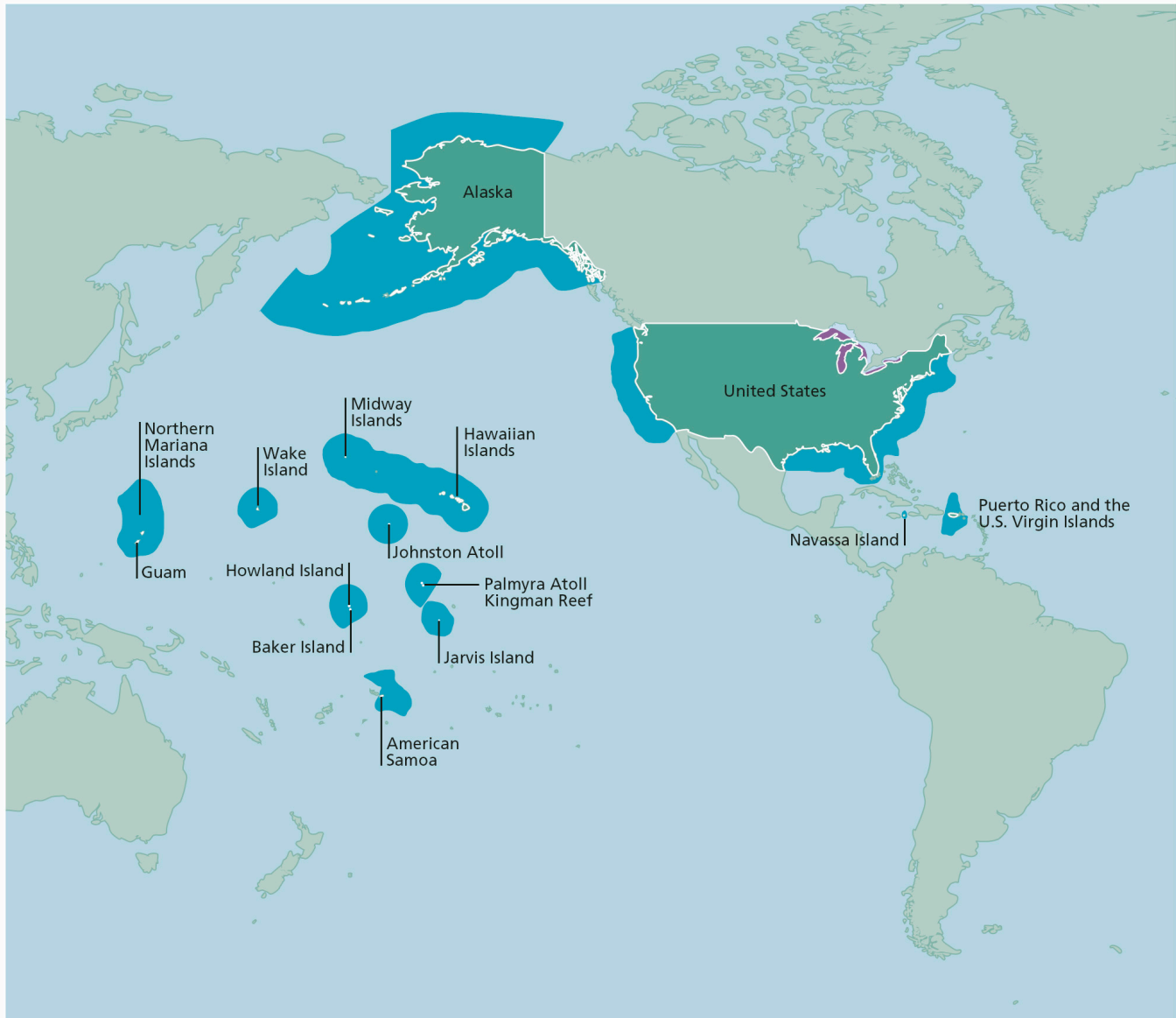
U.S. COMMISSION ON
OCEAN POLICY

A stylized, wavy blue line graphic representing the ocean, located below the text of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy.

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The United States Is an Ocean Nation



■ United States Exclusive Economic Zone ■ Great Lakes of the United States

The U.S. exclusive economic zone (EEZ) extends 200 nautical miles offshore, encompassing diverse ecosystems and vast natural resources, such as fisheries and energy and other mineral resources. The U.S. EEZ is the largest in the world, spanning over 13,000 miles of coastline and containing 3.4 million square nautical miles of ocean—larger than the combined land area of all fifty states. (A square nautical mile is equal to 1.3 square miles.)

U.S. states also have jurisdiction over a significant portion of the Great Lakes. This chain of freshwater lakes and its tributaries constitute the largest reservoir of fresh surface water on the planet, containing 6.5 quadrillion gallons of fresh water and covering an area of about 72,000 square nautical miles. The Great Lakes' U.S. coastline borders eight states and is roughly the same length as the entire Atlantic Coast.



U.S. COMMISSION ON OCEAN POLICY



July 22, 2004

The Members of the U.S. COMMISSION ON OCEAN POLICY,
directed by the United States Congress and appointed by the President
under the Oceans Act of 2000 (Public Law 106-256) to
make recommendations for a coordinated and comprehensive
national ocean policy, hereby approve

An Ocean Blueprint for the 21st Century,
the final report of the Commission's findings and recommendations in
fulfillment of our responsibilities and obligations under such Act.

Admiral James D. Watkins, USN (Ret.), Chairman

Robert Ballard, Ph.D.

Mr. Lawrence Dickerson

Dr. Frank Muller-Karger

Mr. Ted A. Beattie

Vice Admiral Paul G. Gaffney II, USN (Ret.)

Mr. Edward B. Rasmuson

Mrs. Lillian Borrone

Professor Marc J. Hershman

Dr. Andrew A. Rosenberg

Dr. James M. Coleman

Mr. Paul L. Kelly

Mr. William D. Ruckelshaus

Ms. Ann D'Amato

Mr. Christopher Koch

Dr. Paul A. Sandifer

U.S. COMMISSION ON
OCEAN POLICY



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September 2004

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I am pleased to submit for your consideration *An Ocean Blueprint for the 21st Century*, the final report of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy. As mandated by the Oceans Act of 2000, this report contains balanced and practical proposals for the establishment of a comprehensive and coordinated ocean policy for our nation. The sixteen Commissioners you appointed, representing diverse interests and experience, unanimously support the Commissions' findings, recommendations and vision for the future.

The value of the oceans and coasts to the nation is immense and their full potential remains unrealized. Over half the U.S. population lives in coastal watershed counties and roughly one-half of the nation's gross domestic product (\$4.5 trillion in 2000) is generated in those counties and in adjacent ocean waters.

However, there is widespread agreement that our oceans and marine resources are in serious trouble, increasingly affected by rapid growth along our coasts, land and air pollution, unsustainable exploitation of too many of our fishery resources, and frequently ineffective management. The consistent message we heard throughout the country is that we must act now to halt continuing degradation.

We believe that a historic opportunity is at hand to make positive and lasting changes in the way we manage our oceans. The comments we received from Governors of states and territories, tribal leaders, industry, nongovernmental organizations, and the public at large were strongly supportive of our assessment of declining ocean and coastal conditions, the need for a new management approach, and our call for immediate action.

A comprehensive and coordinated national ocean policy requires moving away from the current fragmented, single-issue way of doing business and toward ecosystem-based management. This new approach considers the relationships among all ecosystem components, and will lead to better decisions that protect the environment while promoting the economy and balancing multiple uses of our oceans and coasts.

COMMISSIONERS

ADM JAMES D. WATKINS, USN (RET.), CHAIRMAN * ROBERT B. BALLARD, PH.D. * TED A. BEATTIE * LILLIAN C. BORRONE * JAMES M. COLEMAN, PH.D.
ANN D'AMATO * LAWRENCE R. DICKERSON * VADM PAUL G. GAFFNEY II, USN (RET.) * MARC J. HERSHMAN * PAUL L. KELLY * CHRISTOPHER L. KOCH
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THOMAS R. KITSOS, PH.D., EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Commission, therefore, considers the following actions essential. First, a new national ocean policy framework must be established to improve federal coordination and effectiveness. An important part of this new framework is strengthening support for state, territorial, tribal, and local efforts to identify and resolve issues at the regional level. Second, it is also critical that decisions about ocean and coastal resources be based on the most current, credible, and unbiased scientific data and information. Finally, formal and informal ocean education should be strengthened to better engage the general public, cultivate a broad stewardship ethic, and prepare a new generation of leaders to meet future ocean policy challenges.

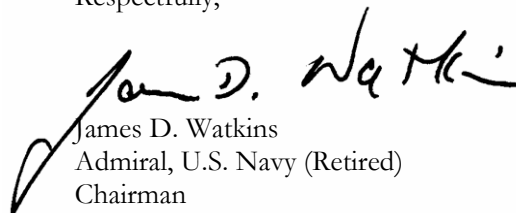
Implementation of the Commission's recommendations, which will require a new and modest investment over current funding levels, can create a system that sustains our resources and generates significantly greater benefits for our nation. We have recommended creation of an Ocean Policy Trust Fund that will dedicate funds generated from ocean activities to implement our Ocean Blueprint for the 21st Century.

The urgent need for action is clear. It is equally clear that, by rising to the challenge today and addressing the many activities that are affecting our continent at its edges, our nation can protect the ocean environment, create jobs, increase revenues, enhance security, expand trade, and ensure ample supplies of energy, minerals, food, and life-saving drugs.

Our report is just the beginning of what must be a sustained effort. The Commission encourages you to work with Congress, the Governors and other stakeholders, and, where appropriate, to use existing Presidential authorities to commence implementation of our recommendations at an early date.

On behalf of all sixteen Commissioners, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to serve our nation as members of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy. It has been a privilege to contribute to a new age of ocean awareness and stewardship. Although our work officially ends ninety days after submission of this report, we stand ready now and in the future to assist in the implementation of our recommendations and achievement of our vision – one in which our oceans and coasts are clean, safe, sustainably managed, and preserved for the benefit and enjoyment of future generations.

Respectfully,



James D. Watkins
Admiral, U.S. Navy (Retired)
Chairman

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September 2004

The Honorable William H. Frist, M.D.
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Leader:

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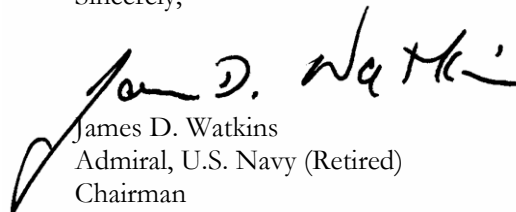
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Sincerely,



James D. Watkins
Admiral, U.S. Navy (Retired)
Chairman

cc: The Honorable Tom Daschle

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September 2004

The Honorable J. Dennis Hastert
Speaker of the House of
Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker:

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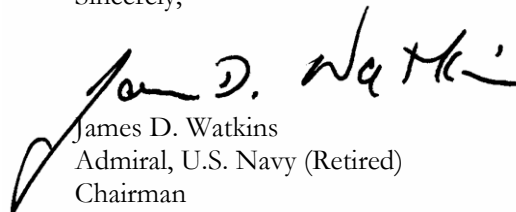
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Sincerely,



James D. Watkins
Admiral, U.S. Navy (Retired)
Chairman

cc: The Honorable Nancy Pelosi

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Deborah Trefts
Jennifer Welch
CAPT George White, NOAA Corps

U.S. COMMISSION ON OCEAN POLICY



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

An effort of this magnitude could not have been completed without the help of many dedicated people. The Commission is deeply grateful to the scores of individuals who provided testimony, technical input, insightful comments, figures and photographs, production help, and many other forms of assistance in completing this momentous task.

A complete record of testimony presented to the Commission can be found in Appendices 1 and 2, and on the Commission's Web site at www.oceancommission.gov. These presentations were invaluable in communicating the problems facing our oceans and coasts—and suggesting positive solutions.

A number of consultants were instrumental in helping the Commission conduct its meetings and complete its report, particularly in the following areas:

Meeting facilitation, strategy, and advice—John Ehrmann and Jay West of the Meridian Institute, and Philip Angell.

Research, writing, and editing—Charles Colgan, M. Richard DeVoe, Peter Fippinger, Jeremy Firestone, Gabriela Goldfarb, Montserrat Gorina-Ysern, Ray Kammer, Fredrika Moser, Joan O'Callaghan, Ellen Prager, Robert Wayland III, and Bill Woodward.

Public relations—Scott Treibitz, David Roscow, Victoria Sackett, and Dean Tinnin of Tricom Associates, and Herb Rosen.

Report design and production—Cynthia Cliff, James Durham, and Lisa Wells of Janin/Cliff Design, Inc.

Web site development and maintenance—Tom LaPoint, Jerry Lau, and Davida Remer of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Ocean Service.

The members of the Commission's Science Advisory Panel (listed in the preceding pages) were at our side from start to finish, answering questions, clarifying technical points, preparing and reviewing written materials, and generally sharing their decades of collective wisdom. In addition, we extend our thanks to the following individuals who served as researchers, reviewers, and wise advisors, or helped in dozens of other ways:

Craig Allen, Donald Anderson, Anthony Andrady, Lori Arguellas, Stefano Belfiore, Joan Myers Bondareff, Nicole Breznock, Richard Brill, David Brower, R. Steven Brown, Joedy Cambridge, James Carlton, Thomas Chase, David Colson, James Corbett, Barry Costa-Pierce, Penelope Dalton, Shelley Dawicki, Richard Delaney, Jessica Demian, Alex Echols, Carolyn Elefant, Amanda Enser, Karen Foerstel, Kim Fulton-Bennett, Marc Gaden, Joseph Geraci, Roger Germann, W. Rockwell Geyer, Suzanne Giles, David Godschalk, James Good, Shannon Gordon, Dale Green, Karl Gustavson, Kathryn Hayes, Amy Heywood, Barbara Hinthorn, Robert Hofman, Edward Houde, John Justus, Geri Kantor, Jill Karsten, David Keeley, Jim Kent, Joanna Knight, Robert Knox, Kei Koizumi, Jennie Kopelson, Judith Krauthamer, Stephen Leatherman, James R. Lyons, Tony MacDonald,

Elizabeth Martin, Emily McBride, Tom McCann, Shannon McCoy, David McGrath, James Murley, Savithri Narayanan, Scott Newsham, John Ogden, Rafael Olivieri, Joan Oltman-Shay, John O'Shea, Edward Page, Richard Pittenger, Eugene Proulx, Timothy Ragen, Andrew Read, Robert Richmond, Robert Ross, Amy Schick, Sarah Schoedinger, Gerry Schubel, Richard Seymour, Seba Sheavly, Rexford Sherman, Andrea Sanico, Judson Starr, Denise Stephenson-Hawk, Robert Stickney, Maurice Tarares, Joanne Tromp, Nicole Vickey, Daniel Walker, Ferris Webster, Robert Weller, and Art Wong.

The members and staff of the Pew Oceans Commission, led by the Honorable Leon Panetta, also deserve our recognition and thanks for their contributions to the development of a new national ocean policy and their steadfast support for the work of this Commission.

Input from Governors and other state-level representatives and groups were invaluable to the development of this report. The official comments from forty-two state and territorial Governors and tribal leaders can be found in the Special Addendum to this report, and on the Commission's Web site at www.oceancommission.gov. Special thanks go to the members and staff of the Coastal States Organization and the National Governors Association for their ongoing interest and critical roles in conveying state level interests and perspectives.

Although too numerous to list by name, the Commission extends its heartfelt appreciation to the many knowledgeable and dedicated federal agency employees who supplied detailed information, answered a barrage of questions, and offered excellent advice. Special thanks go to the Council on Environmental Quality for its role as the Administration's chief liaison to the Commission.

We also appreciate the support provided to the Commission by the Members of Congress and their staffs, in particular those who serve on committees with key jurisdiction over ocean and coastal issues and who have closely followed the progress of the Commission's work. This includes the Members and staff of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, and the Committee on Appropriations, as well as the House Committees on Science, Resources, and Transportation and Infrastructure. Additional thanks are extended to the Members of the House Oceans Caucus and their staff.

Finally, the work reflected in this report would simply not have been possible without the support and dedication of a talented group of professionals, the members of the Commission staff, to whom we extend our deepest gratitude for their tireless effort on behalf of a new national ocean policy.

