

Joint Subcommittee on Ocean Science and Technology (JSOST)
Constituent Listening Session
October 28, 2008
American Geophysical Union Headquarters
Washington, DC

Attendees:

Rick Spinrad (Co-chair, NOAA), Tim Killeen (Co-chair, NSF), Dan Walker (Co-chair, OSTP), Lori Arguelles (National Marine Sanctuary Foundation), David Blockstein (National Council for Science and the Environment), Sarah Bobby (DOI), Todd Capsan (DOS), Ben Chicoksi (Consortium for Ocean Leadership), Paul Doremus (NOAA), Jack Dunnigan (NOAA), Peter Hill (Consortium for Ocean Leadership), Polly Endreny Holmberg (Co-Executive Secretary, NOAA), Lara Hutto (Co-Executive Secretary, NSF), Jon Kolak (OSTP), Eric Lindstrom (NASA), Jerry Miller (U.S. CLIVAR), Julie Morris (NSF), Wendy Naus (Lewis-Burke Associates), Roxanne Nikolaus (NSF), Kathleen Reaugh (SeaWeb), Susan Roberts (National Research Council), Lisa Rom (NSF), Brad Spear (Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission), Leigh Zimmerman (Consortium for Ocean Leadership)

Introduction

The Joint Subcommittee on Ocean Science and Technology (JSOST) co-chairs provided an opening summary of JSOST's past, present, and future. R. Spinrad reviewed the history of JSOST, the establishment of the National Oceanographic Partnership Program through legislation, and the creation of the original Joint Subcommittee on Oceans. When JSOST was created, a sister committee was also created to focus on ocean resource management: the Subcommittee for Integrated Management of Ocean Resources. In 2007, the JSOST published *Charting the Course for Ocean Science in the United States for the Next Decade: An Ocean Research Priorities Plan and Implementation Strategy* (referred to as the ORPP). The ORPP is the first document developed on ocean priorities by the nation. JSOST has brought a variety of agencies together effectively on ocean issues and has established Interagency Working Groups (IWGs) to focus on specific topics.

D. Walker noted that JSOST's accomplishments serve as a model for other interagency committees. During this Administration transition, JSOST is focusing on the principles of interagency collaboration that are most important to preserve. The coherency of the interagency process that has been established to date is essential to maintain even if the structure changes over time.

T. Killeen stated that the co-chairs and the IWGs are actively engaged and well prepared to move into the future. Infrastructure is a big question in ocean sciences and JSOST is launching a National Research Council study on infrastructure. The IWG on Facilities is also working on a federal infrastructure inventory. JSOST continues to hold outreach activities, such as this listening session and town halls, and plans to increase interaction with members of Congress through briefings and seminars.

Constituent Comments by Topic:

The constituents were given a few framing questions on ocean S&T coordination and ORPP progress to spur discussion on what works and where improvements are needed. The following overarching themes emerged from the constituents' input.

• Communications

- The ocean community needs a focused communication message. This may include creating a communication strategy that defines roles for stakeholders. A communication strategy should not only look at the message we want to put forward, but also what the audience is interested in learning about. Communication is a two-way street.
- Successes should be identified and broadcasted widely. The ORPP is a strong, national document and we must make sure it gets broadcast well outside of the DC beltway.
- Part of what we need to communicate is the economic argument for investing in ocean science and how ocean sciences can be used to make good economic decisions. Industry should be educated on why they need the ocean sciences and ocean scientists.
- We need to educate the next generation work force on the importance of oceans as part of the earth system and the oceans role in our economy.

• Interagency Process

- What should be the role of the Ocean Research and Resources Advisory Panel (ORRAP) in advising JSOST? Perhaps the ORRAP meetings should be broadcast to a wider audience to engage more community members.
- There has been a decline in participation in some of the IWGs. JSOST needs to increase the relevancy of the IWGs to ensure continued success of these groups.
- There may be too many IWGs. Their goals should be clear, with a focus on products rather than reports (i.e., implementation).
- JSOST should have a clear plan of engagement with the new agency directors that will arrive after the Administration transition.
- Interagency Priorities Memorandums need to be moving through the federal system in a timely manner to have the most impact.
- There is a lot of process already in place, and we need to show what is unique about the ocean community that requires these mechanisms, especially during the transition period.
- New near-term priorities (NTPs) should be created, but the community needs time to act on the current NTPs.
- Many within the community have embraced the ORPP and are aligning their priorities with the document.

• Partnerships

- JSOST needs to make their products useful to a broader community. How do you harmonize a diverse group of players?
- Focusing on local partnerships is important.

- Expand the ocean community to include partners in industry, and the life and social sciences. Work on strengthening the ocean science connection to resource management.
- JSOST needs to lead the ocean community to be on the forefront of technology development, which could be done in partnership with industry.
- JSOST should be fostering collaboration through facilitation.
- Partnerships can be created to help leverage funding and limited infrastructure resources (i.e., sharing ships and using ocean observations for multiple purposes).
- **Energy, Climate, Environment, and Sustainability**
 - There are many ocean energy opportunities, and these should be woven into the agency missions. Energy issues are a good way to bring ocean science and technology to the forefront.
 - Climate change is driving many new economic and governance arrangements; we should make sure that ocean issues are recognized in this arena.
 - There is a real intersection between academic research and resource conservation; this intersection should be emphasized.
 - The ocean sciences are very relevant to the new green economy and we need to clearly make this case.
- **Funding**
 - Funding for the NTPs needs to be realized in federal budgets. The non-governmental community should be engaged in the process of putting funding priorities forward.
 - Use innovative partnerships to leverage funding.

Closing Remarks

The JSOST co-chairs thanked the participants for their time and noted that they have received very valuable feedback and hope to continue this dialogue.