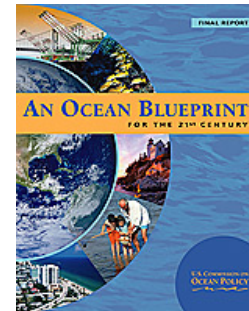


Subcommittee on Integrated Management of Ocean Resources

2008 Progress Report

Assembled by federal representatives who comprise the Subcommittee on Integrated Management of Ocean Resources, this 2008 progress report has been prepared for transmittal from the Co-chairs of the Interagency Committee on Ocean Science and Resource Management Integration to Chairman Connaughton of the Committee on Ocean Policy and Dr. Marburger of the National Science and Technology Council. The report includes: an overview of steps taken by the federal government to respond to recommendations of the Congressionally-mandated U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy; progress improving coordination and consultation on resource management activities; and general priority areas for future action.

Imperative for Change: An Ocean Blueprint for the 21st Century



Recognizing the importance of the oceans and coasts to the United States, Congress enacted the Oceans Act of 2000 creating the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy “to make recommendations for coordinated and comprehensive national ocean policy.” In September 2004, the Commission issued its final report, *An Ocean Blueprint for the 21st Century* (<http://www.oceancommission.gov>), containing 212 recommendations to Congress and the President for addressing a breadth of ocean and coastal activities and improving comprehensive national ocean policy.

**Federal Response:
Coordinated Ocean
Governance**

**Executive Order
13366: Committee
on Ocean Policy**



As required by the Oceans Act of 2000, the President responded to the Commission’s recommendations for coordinated, comprehensive, and long-term policy for the responsible use and stewardship of ocean and coastal resources. By Executive Order 13366 in December 2004 (<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2004/pdf/04-28079.pdf>), the President established the Cabinet-level Committee on Ocean Policy (COP) and declared “it shall be the policy of the United States to:

1. Coordinate the activities of executive departments and agencies regarding ocean-related matters in an integrated and effective manner to advance the environmental, economic, and security interests of present and future generations of Americans; and
2. Facilitate, as appropriate, coordination and consultation regarding ocean-related matters among Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments, the private sector, foreign governments, and international organizations.”

In addition, the President released the U.S. U.S. Ocean Action Plan (<http://ocean.ceq.gov/actionplan.pdf>) to accompany the Executive Order as an initial step toward implementation. One component of the U.S. Ocean Action Plan established a governance structure supporting the COP, including a working-level body of the COP - the Interagency Committee on Ocean Science and Resource Management Integration (ICOSRMI). The ICOSRMI is supported by two subcommittees dividing resource management issues from science and technology issues. The Subcommittee on Integrated Management of Ocean Resources (SIMOR) and the National Science and Technology Council’s Joint Subcommittee on Ocean Science and Technology (JSOST) work collaboratively to support and advise the ICOSRMI on their respective areas of expertise. The functions of these bodies within the governance structure were set forth in the U.S. Ocean Action Plan. Complementing the federal structure, the Ocean Research and Resources Advisory Panel (ORRAP), a federal advisory panel previously authorized through 10 USC Section 7903, works in close collaboration with the subcommittees to provide independent advice and guidance to ICOSRMI (<http://www.coreocean.org/Dev2Go.web?id=207773>). Figure 1. below represents these current lines of communication and reporting.

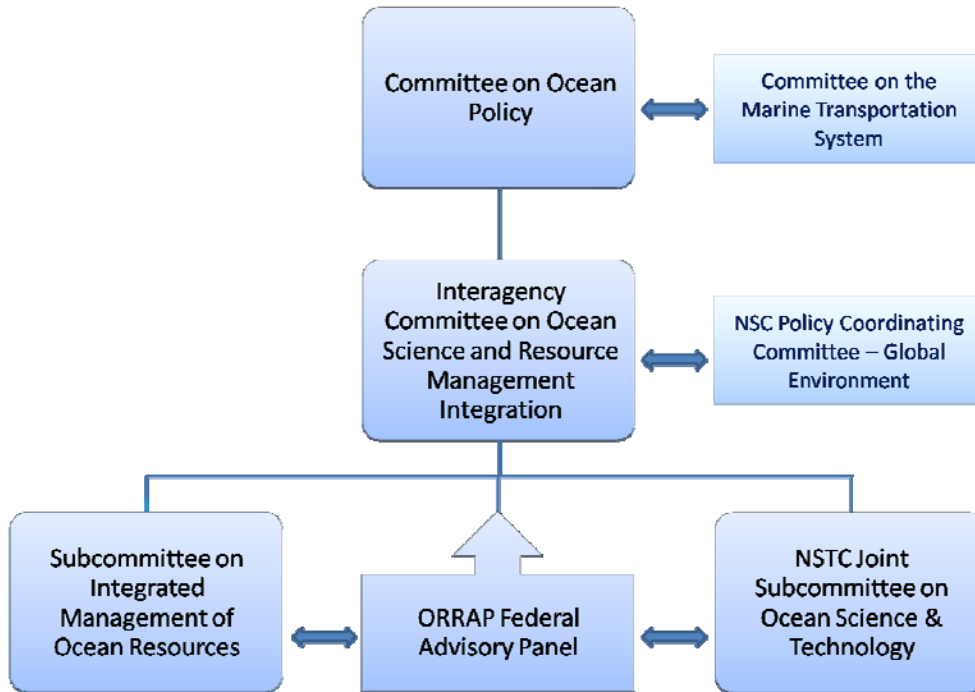


Figure 1: Federal Ocean Governance Structure

In parallel to this structure, the President also established a cabinet-level interagency Committee on the Marine Transportation System (CMTS) through the U.S. Ocean Action Plan. CMTS is directed by the President to advance Federal MTS coordination and policies, and recommend strategies and plans to maintain and improve the U.S. marine transportation system. Consistent with the intent of Executive Order 13366, the COP and CMTS each seek to maintain communication and coordination with one another on an ongoing basis, as well as with other interagency bodies such as the National Security Council Global Environment Policy Coordinating Committee.

Subcommittee on Integrated Management of Ocean Resources

Co-Chairs and Membership

SIMOR is co-chaired by representatives of the Council on Environmental Quality, Environmental Protection Agency, Department of the Interior, and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The members consist of representatives from the Executive branch agencies and departments on the Committee on Ocean Policy and other entities of the Federal government. The Co-Chairs of the JSOST, Chair of the Subcommittee on Oceans Policy (a subgroup of the National Security Council Global Environment Policy Coordinating Committee), Director of the CMTS Executive Secretariat, and Executive Director of the Coastal America Partnership currently serve as *ex officio* members of the SIMOR to encourage strong

coordination on ocean resource management issues
(http://ocean.ceq.gov/about/docs/SIMOR_Membership_9.2.08.pdf).

Functions, Purpose, and Scope

The U.S. Ocean Action Plan identified a set of broad functions for SIMOR in support of implementing Executive Order 13366 (<http://ocean.ceq.gov/about/simor.html>). SIMOR later adopted a Statement of Purpose, which refined the scope of SIMOR's role: SIMOR "seeks to:

- Work toward long-term strategies for ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes resource management;
- Evaluate the effectiveness of interagency efforts in the implementation of ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes resource management initiatives and make recommendations for improvement;
- Continue to work toward an ecosystem-based approach in making decisions related to water, land and resource management in ways consistent with maintaining local and State authorities and jurisdictions;
- Enhance collaboration with local and State authorities to address local conditions and provide a forum for exchange of information, plans, and best practices among Federal agencies for the development and application of management strategies;
- Facilitate dialogue and strengthen partnerships among Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments, the private sector, international partners, and others interested parties involved in ocean, coastal and Great Lakes resource management;
- Foster the effective development and application of management tools, strategies, and information based on the best available science and technology; and
- Promote stewardship of our ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes resources by all Americans through enhanced ocean literacy, outreach, education, and capacity building."

Since 2005, SIMOR's coordination efforts have been primarily focused in four areas: facilitating a common resource management viewpoint across federal agencies; improving communication and coordination across interagency resource management activities; providing a common federal framework for engaging regional governance initiatives; and initiating new activities where needs are identified. A report of progress on SIMOR's 2006 Work Plan of new collaborative activities is included as the Appendix to this report.

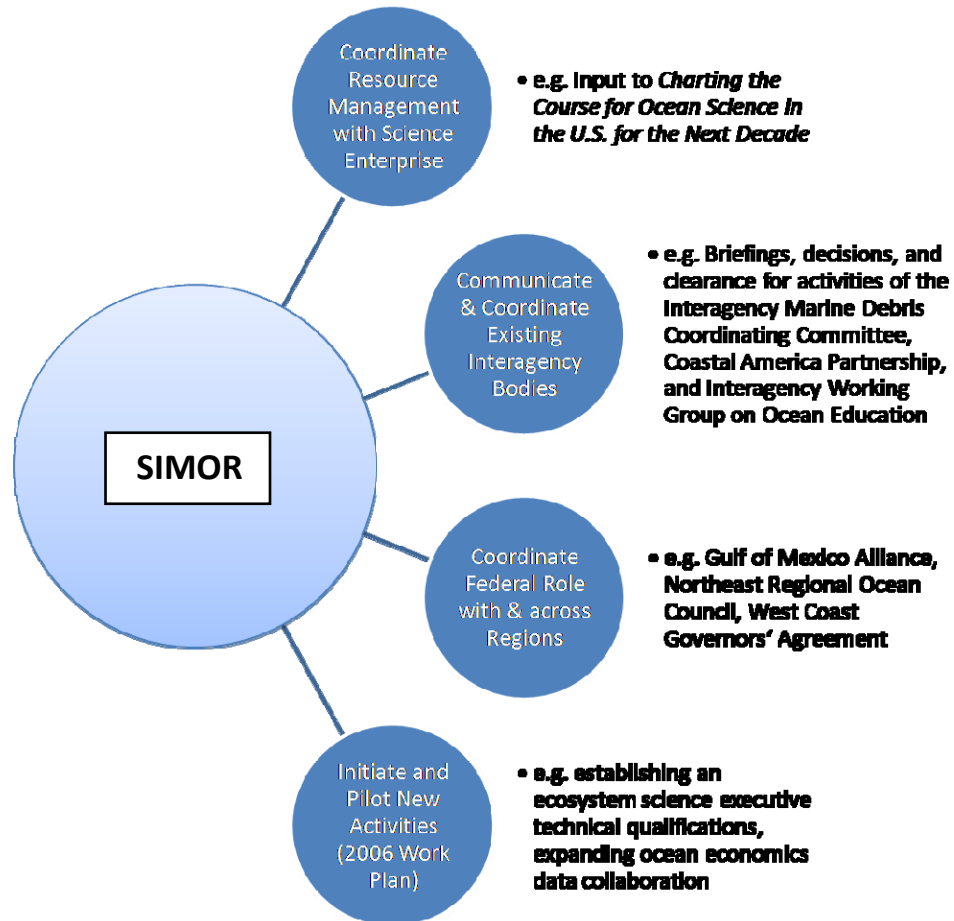


Figure 2: Examples of SIMOR Activities

Progress on Resource Management Coordination

Improvements to resource management communication and coordination

Currently, SIMOR provides an important forum for broad interagency communication and coordination of a variety of pre-existing and new resource management activities. Unlike the U.S. ocean science and technology community, the resource management community previously maintained few mechanisms for coordination across Executive departments and agencies. Those that previously existed were primarily focused on specific resources, specific challenges, or specific regions. Thus, SIMOR provides a new and important role in fostering professional relationships across agencies, overcoming long-established institutional differences, and providing a forum for cross-cutting coordination of activities previously lacking from federal ocean governance.

Improvements to multi-sector communication and coordination

In addition to coordination of resource management, SIMOR also provides a common federal “voice” to resource management issues with other federal coordination bodies, both within and outside the COP governance structure. For example, SIMOR facilitates the communication of science needs of resource managers to the ocean science and technology enterprise. This was demonstrated during development of the *Ocean Research Priorities Plan: Charting the Course for Ocean Science in the United States for the Next Decade*. Concurrently, SIMOR promotes communication and integration of science and technology research into ocean and coastal resource management, a critical and ongoing need to improve resource management. While coordination mechanisms between all of the COP ocean governance bodies are still evolving, SIMOR and its sister bodies have greatly improved communication and now provide a clear opportunity to address needed improvements.

Federal framework to support regional governance consultation and coordination

With the expansion of existing regional activities and the recent growth in regional governance initiatives, federal agencies are experiencing an increased call to support regional priorities. As a result, agencies have realized the need for, and benefits of, coordinating the federal response across agencies and across regions. SIMOR has provided a forum to facilitate the establishment of federal interagency coordination at the regional level to engage with, or within, regional governance initiatives. SIMOR has sought to provide the nexus for federal dialog about regional activities, unify federal support for meeting regional needs, and facilitate communication across the federal coordination teams. One result of this role is a single interagency body that can look across regional governance initiatives to assess common national challenges. SIMOR now maintains an active role in facilitating coordination and consultation with several regional initiatives, and continues to seek out coordination with other pre-existing regional activities.

Future Interagency Resource Management Priorities

Future interagency coordination on resource management will be necessary to meet growing and emerging needs. Future federal coordination efforts should seek to improve strategic and functional collaboration among resource management, marine transportation, and research communities, as well as with international and regional governance bodies. The recent expansion of regional governance initiatives highlight the growing need for mechanisms to: coordinate federal responses, facilitate federal communication across regions, and provide an entry point for States and regions seeking federal engagement. Future federal coordination should: focus on a limited set of the highest national priorities; be developed in collaboration with non-federal partners when possible; and emphasize providing guidance for individual agency actions, while limiting SIMOR-initiated activities.

Criteria for prioritization

Given the progress and experience of SIMOR in fulfilling its functions to guide implementation of Executive Order 13366, important criteria that could guide future investments include:

- 1) Requirement for, or significant benefit from, federal coordination
- 2) Significant benefit from coordinated federal engagement with non-federal partners
- 3) Significant benefit from multidisciplinary or multisectoral approaches
- 4) Broad public safety, security, economic, or environmental significance

High priority resource management needs

Future federal coordination on resources management should focus on a limited set of high national priorities. Given the recent progress and experience, some example of current high priority national needs include:

- 1) Providing a federal coordination mechanism to respond to priorities of state and regional governance partnerships, including emerging issues of national significance such as climate change adaptation and ocean energy development
- 2) Seeking to ensure that research needs for effective resource management and policy are met, and that research results can, and are, applied by resource managers
- 3) Facilitating improved understanding of climate change impacts on resources, implications for management, and adaptive strategies for the Nation
- 4) Supporting ocean education, outreach and capacity building necessary for public understanding and support of science, and science-based resource management aligned with resource management priorities such as those above

Appendix: March 2006 Work Plan Status

Cooperative Conservation

Description: SIMOR will promote the development of cooperative conservation lessons learned and initiate discussion among appropriate departments/agencies to share examples of cooperative conservation in the ocean/coastal context and identify new examples of cooperative conservation efforts.

Outputs/Outcome: Building on previous efforts, such as the 2005 White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation, SIMOR produced *Top 10 Marine and Coastal Cooperative Conservation Lessons Learned*, which explores existing partnerships and collaborations in marine and coastal areas and identifies important lessons that could be applied to future partnerships. The resulting document can be found at:
http://cooperativeconservation.gov/library/SIMORCoopConsLessons_031907.pdf

Status: Complete

Gulf of Mexico Initiative & Lessons Learned/ Best Practices

Description: SIMOR will support the Gulf of Mexico Regional Initiative by increasing federal participation where appropriate; addressing interagency coordination needs and identifying opportunities to streamline intra- and inter-agency functions; guiding the development of environmental and socioeconomic indicators in coordination with the broader national indicator effort to aid in measuring success; and assisting with the identification of needs for observation and management tools in the region.

Outputs/Outcome: Federal agencies have supported the Gulf States in implementation of the *Governor's Action Plan for Healthy and Resilient Coasts*. Within the first two years of implementing the three year action plan, nearly 95% of all activities were completed and the remaining activities are on schedule for completion within the three year window. Building on the lessons learned during implementation of the plan, Federal agencies have continued to improve support the Gulf States as they work to develop a second Action Plan, expected to be delivered on or about March/April 2009. Further information on the Gulf of Mexico Alliance can be found at: <http://www.gulfofmexicoalliance.org/>

Status: Ongoing

Leaders:

[Margaret Davidson \(NOAA\)](#)
[Byron Griffith \(EPA\)](#)
[Jess Weaver \(USGS\)](#)

Clean Marinas Initiative

Description: The Clean Marina Program is a voluntary, state-based program that encourages marina operators and recreational boaters to protect coastal water quality and habitat by engaging in environmentally sound operating and maintenance procedures such as pollution prevention and waste management. Each participating state certifies the marinas implementing these environmentally friendly measures (<http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/marinas.html>). SIMOR will assist the federal government with coordinating with states and private marinas to work toward achieving Clean Marina certification for all marinas that are currently operating in national parks, national wildlife refuges, national forests, and military bases in coastal states that participate in the program.

Outputs/Outcome: Through the Clean Marina Challenge, Administration leaders in September 2008 have committed the federal government to provide advice, assistance, and support to help federally-owned marinas set an example for all marine operators. The Challenge asks all federal agencies to ensure that federally-owned marinas not currently certified to take steps to implement the measures outlined in the Clean Marina Program and achieve certification from the participating states. Additionally, federal agencies are encouraged to achieve similar performance in states that do not currently participate in the program and work constructively with states seeking to adopt the program.

Status: Complete

Best Practices in Dredging & Sediment Management

Description: SIMOR will work with the federal interagency National Dredging Team (NDT) and the relevant subcommittee on the Committee on Marine Transportation System (CMTS) to support the development of best practices in the area of management of dredged material/sediment using the watershed approach. SIMOR will also co-host a dredged material conference in 2006 to address improved coordination in watershed sediment management and development of best practices in dredged material management.

Outputs/Outcome: SIMOR reviewed the National Dredging Policy for CMTS and reviewed of NDT Action Agenda. SIMOR also co-hosted the dredged material conference in 2006 *Conference on Managing Sediments in the Watershed: Bringing Dredged Material and Watershed Managers Together*. Follow-on efforts to the workshop are being pursued in different regions, such as the Southeast where regional stakeholder workshops have been held and a Mobile Basin sediment management effort has been initiated, and the Northeast where efforts are underway to develop a regional sediment management plan for the New York-New Jersey Harbor Estuary Program. Additionally, a Declaration for Regional Sediment Management Planning has been signed for the Lower Columbia River, and the marketing of recyclable dredged material has been initiated in the Great Lakes region. Future activities will continue under the NDT, including support for best practices through regional governance initiatives, exploring potential collaborative efforts with National Estuary Programs and National Estuary Research Reserves, and suggesting relevant Ocean Education initiatives on “sediment as a resource.”

Status: Ongoing

Leader: [Molly Madden \(EPA\)](#)

Northeast Regional Ocean Council

Description: SIMOR will support the interest and efforts of the New England states in their establishment of a Northeast Regional Oceans Council (NROC), by identifying possible geographic areas that could benefit from improved federal coordination. NROC will serve as an umbrella ocean governance structure to raise the visibility of ocean management priorities for our two sub-regions: the Gulf of Maine and the southern New England sounds.

Outputs/Outcome: In collaboration with State partners, a SIMOR workgroup delivered a 2007 NROC Report to the New England Governors at the annual NEGC meeting that contains an issue description and potential NROC actions for each of the following priority issues: energy siting and planning, ocean and ecosystem health, and hazard resilience. The Council maintains a roster of federal and state members and alternates, and is in the process of developing rosters for each priority issue area committee with broad representation from many sectors. NROC has developed a Terms of Reference, which describes NROC form and function, relationship with partners, and expectations from NROC leadership and members. NROC provided a progress report in January of 2008 on the priority issue areas and responses listed in the 2007 NROC Report to the New England Governors. As a result, NROC created a 2008 work plan with four tasks, including 1) Ensure support for NROC, 2) Action Plan Implementation, 3) Develop and implement a communication and outreach strategy, and 4) Scope the need and requirements of an ocean atlas for the northeast. By October 2008, each Issue Area Committee will have developed a 2009 work plan, outlining concrete actions to be taken in the coming year. The Northeast federal partners work group represents all SIMOR agencies and will continue support NROC in future activities. Further information on the Northeast Regional Ocean Council and its products can be found at: <http://community.csc.noaa.gov/nroc/>.

Status: Ongoing

Leaders:

[Nancy Thompson \(NOAA Fisheries\)](#)

[Betsy Nicholson \(NOAA Ocean Service\)](#)

[Marvin Moriarty \(FWS\)](#)

[Robert LaBelle \(MMS\)](#)

[David Russ \(USGS\)](#)

[David Reynolds \(NPS\)](#)

[Mel Cote \(EPA\)](#)

Community Workshops

Description: SIMOR will conduct community workshops to improve watershed protection through integration of Coastal Zone Management Act, Clean Water Act, and other Federal programs in order to assist States, Tribes, and local governments in addressing nonpoint source pollution and land use issues in coastal watersheds.

Outputs/Outcome: Federal assistance was provided through existing place-based programs - EPA's National Estuary Program in Puget Sound and NOAA's National Estuarine Research Reserve in Alabama - to conduct two workshops. The workshops were intended to address locally identified issues of high importance that were also relevant at regional and national scales. In Alabama, the workshop focused on sediment and erosion control management, a crucial non-point source of pollution throughout the Gulf of Mexico region. In Washington, stakeholders embarked on a new way of characterizing watershed information such that natural resource issues can be fully integrated into land use decision making. Additional workshops sponsored by the Interagency Coral Reef Task Force and the Urban Coastal Institute at Monmouth University were acknowledged by SIMOR. A summary report of the common findings and recommendations across all of these community workshops has been prepared.

Status: Complete

Regional & Local Workshops on Ecosystem-based Management

Description: SIMOR will bring together state and federal officials from agencies involved in pollution control and national resource conservation and restoration activities, targeting those agencies not typically involved in such discussions, in order to highlight and discuss various examples of successes and challenges surrounding ecosystem-based approaches to management.

Status: Discontinued – agreement on implementation approach not reached

Ecosystem Science Executive Technical Qualifications

Description: In order to ensure a basic level of ecosystem science knowledge among appropriate federal senior leaders, SIMOR will help to develop a definition for an "ecosystem science executive technical qualification", and determine the procedure for integrating such a qualification into the federal hiring process.

Outputs/Outcome: A SIMOR workgroup has developed sample evaluation criteria that an applicant for Senior Executive Service should demonstrate through expertise, experience, and/or accomplishment. The workgroup will propose methods for effectively delivering this information and encouraging the application of these executive technical qualifications to relevant Senior Executive Service positions.

Status: Ongoing

Leaders:

[Dan Ashe \(FWS\)](#)

[Joe Piotrowski \(EPA\)](#)

Expanding Ocean & Coastal Economics Data & Analysis

Description: The purpose of this initiative is to improve coordination among federal agencies and state and local governments of economic data collection, modeling and research that supports ocean and coastal management. Management issues addressed by the partner agencies include ocean and coastal transportation and infrastructure issues; marine energy and minerals management; fisheries management and habitat conservation; seafood markets and trade; and understanding of tourism and recreation at the state and local level.

Outputs/Outcome: A SIMOR workgroup has held one interagency workshop to develop an inventory of coastal and ocean economic data holdings across federal, state, and local governments and to identify gaps in data availability. A second workshop will be held in 2009 on modeling and research activities. A summary report of both workshops will be produced.

Status: Ongoing

Leaders:

[Jeff Adkins \(NOAA\)](#)

[Rita Curtis \(NOAA\)](#)

Strengthen Coordination of Federal Activities In Urban Estuaries

Description: SIMOR will support the development of a program to enhance federal coordination and services for regional protection and restoration of urban estuaries and habitats that would assist local communities in these areas manage their growth and redevelopment while sustaining ecosystems.

Outputs/Outcome: SIMOR produced the report, *Urban Estuary Protection and Restoration: A Report Highlighting Tools to Enhance Federal Coordination*, which outlines tools to enhance federal coordination and services targeting habitat protection and restoration of urban estuaries. The report examines strategies that have been successful in reversing loss of estuarine species and habitats and includes a variety of case studies on regional/local scenarios where federal agencies are coordinating protection and restoration efforts well. These case studies address the effects of urbanization on estuaries at diverse locations including Chesapeake Bay and the Great Lakes, and offer lessons learned for other regions/localities. A copy of the report may be found at:

http://ocean.ceq.gov/about/docs/SIMOR_Urban_Estuaries.pdf.

Status: Complete

Federal-State Research Priorities Task Team

Description: SIMOR will establish a task team of resource managers from state and federal agencies to provide input on high priority basic, and applied, research needs to the JSOST Ocean Research Priorities Plan and Implementation Strategy to be finalized by December 31, 2006.

Outputs/Outcome: SIMOR engaged a respected group of federal and state resource managers to provide the Joint Subcommittee on Ocean Science and Technology with multiple sets of clear and concise input in support of the development of the ocean research priorities plan and implementation strategy, *Charting the Course for Ocean Science in the United States for the Next Decade*. A copy of the final report may be found at: <http://ocean.ceq.gov/about/docs/orppfinal.pdf>.

Status: Complete

Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS): Regional Associations & Resource Management Needs

Description: SIMOR, in consultation with JSOST, will work with Ocean.US to implement approaches for ensuring that state and local resource managers are engaged with, and presenting their needs and views to, IOOS Regional Associations and that the Associations are responsive to the needs of state and local resource managers, as well as relevant voluntary resource partnerships.

Outputs/Outcome: SIMOR representatives to the JSOST IWG on Ocean Observations contributed resource management perspectives to the IOOS strategic plan, reviewed by the public and later adopted by ICOSRMI. Through implementation of the IOOS strategic Plan, the JSOST IWG on Ocean Observation will continue to ensure the engagement of state and local resource managers on an ongoing basis, and that their needs are reflected in ocean observing requirements.

Status: Complete – ongoing role assumed by JSOST IWG on Ocean Observations

Regional Science Planning to Support Resource Management

Description: SIMOR and JSOST, working with NOAA Sea Grant, will seek to implement an interagency approach to establishing regional science planning efforts that are designed to support regional management activities for all regions of the country.

Outputs/Outcome: SIMOR and JSOST, working with NOAA Sea Grant, established regional planning efforts throughout the country designed to support regional management activities.

Eight regional planning efforts were initiated in FY06: Alaska, Pacific Northwest and Southwest, Insular Pacific, Great Lakes, Gulf of Mexico, South Atlantic, and Gulf of Maine. Three additional planning efforts were initiated in FY08: Mid-Atlantic, Caribbean, and New York Bight.

Status: Ongoing

Leaders:

[Leon Cammen \(NOAA\)](#)

[Dan Ashe \(FWS\)](#)

Federal-State Science & Management Integration Task Team

Description: SIMOR and JSOST will establish a joint task team of federal and state resource managers and researchers to address steps that they can take to improve communication between the scientific community and resource managers.

Outputs/Outcome: Intended as a SIMOR action during the implementation phase of the ocean research priorities plan and implementation strategy, this activity is still in the developmental phase. In partnership with JSOST and appropriate advisory bodies, SIMOR has addressed communication needs in an ad hoc manner in the interim. SIMOR recognizes a continued communication need at the vital intersection between the scientific and resource management communities, and agencies will determine appropriate approaches aligned with future priorities.

Status: Ongoing

Northern Gulf of Mexico Ecosystem Data Services Pilot

Description: Coordinating with the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources SIMOR will assist with the implementation of an internet-based data access and delivery service by tailoring information to the needs of state-level coastal and marine resource managers, and drawing on existing data within SIMOR agencies and among state partners.

Outputs/Outcome: Several SIMOR agencies (NOAA, NASA, EPA Gulf of Mexico Program, Naval Research Laboratory-Stennis (NRL), and USGS) worked with state and academic partners in the Gulf to provide access to ecosystem metadata, data and data services through a common portal. A joint venture between NOAA NESDIS and Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) was used to provide ecosystem data services and to expand integrated ecosystem data management into Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, and Texas. The data pilot integrated Essential Fish Habitat (EFH), Critical Habitat, Regulatory Boundaries, Commercial and Recreational Catch and Landing data (Southeast Fisheries Science Center); Water Quality and Nutrients Data (EPA Gulf of Mexico Program); the Coastal Change and Analysis Program products and services for the Gulf of Mexico and National Elevation Data (USGS-NOAA/CSC); Oyster Habitat data (MDMR);

Methyl Mercury data (LSU); Observational data streams from the Gulf of Mexico Coastal and Ocean Observing System (GCOOS); and Optical Water Properties and Modeling Products (NRL). The five data themes identified by SIMOR were 1) water quality 2) nutrients 3) education and outreach 4) habitat and 5) coastal restoration. The SIMOR datasets and information compiled is now available at: <http://ecowatch.ncddc.noaa.gov/>. To search the Semantic Catalog for specific records with SIMOR data themes, users can search on the keywords 'SIMOR,' or the user can search using the data theme terms: 'water quality' 'nutrients', 'education and outreach', 'habitat' and 'coastal restoration'. These keywords can also be searched in particular Ecosystems, Region or System Type.

Status: Complete

Convene Interagency Team to Enhance Coordination on Use & Conservation of Marine Resources; & Develop an Interagency Mechanism on Use & Conservation of Marine Resources

Description: SIMOR will bring together an interagency team to identify major medium and long term trends and interest areas involving issues of common interest and/or responsibility amongst agencies, while also looking at current major interagency activities to use as potential models for broader application, areas where gaps may exist, and places where coordination can be improved. SIMOR will develop an inter-agency mechanism, covering all agencies involved in SIMOR, JSOST, etc., identifying the means for informing other agencies of any proposed activities to be sited in the oceans. The mechanism will also provide a process for updating any 'lead' agency involved in these activities with information on the interests of other agencies as reviews proceed.

Status: Discontinued – agreement on implementation approach not reached

Develop Interagency Shellfish Data & Information Management Program

Description: SIMOR will encourage the development of an interagency data and information management program to efficiently collect and disseminate data to local managers on chemical, pathogenic, and toxic constituents found within shellfish and other seafood that poses risks to human health.

Outputs/Outcome: FDA, NOAA, and EPA have developed a memorandum of understanding concept to increase: (1) the availability and utility of information on the chemical, pathogenic, and toxin constituents that affect the risks to human health of eating shellfish and other seafood; and (2) the efficiency with which the information can be assessed by local managers through use of comparable methods and compatible databases. Such work will continue where necessary through modifying the system concept of the Shellfish Information Management System.

Status: Ongoing

Leaders:

[Spencer Garrett \(NOAA\)](#)

[Russell Callender \(NOAA\)](#)

[Bill Kramer \(EPA\)](#)

Working with the States, Evaluate & Recommend Ways to Improve Water Quality Programs

Description: SIMOR will engage federal and state managers with the objective of developing a model for improved collaboration among relevant federal and state coastal and water quality programs.

Status: Discontinued – agreement on implementation approach not reached

Establish Interagency Working Group on Ocean Education

Description: The JSOST and SIMOR will establish a permanent interagency working group on ocean education to improve coordination of Federal programs focused on ocean education and outreach so these programs effectively reflect priorities at the regional, State, and local levels, while maintaining consistency with broad national goals.

Outputs/Outcome: The Interagency Working Group on Ocean Education (IWG-OE) was established in 2006 and jointly coordinates activities with SIMOR and JSOST. Initially focused on implementing actions of the *U.S. Ocean Action Plan*, the IWG has since been particularly focused on coordinating formal and informal education programs, develop a coordinated ocean message, promoting the use of ocean observation data in education, and attracting a future workforce to marine science, technology, and management. Examples of some of this work include:

- conducted an inventory of Federal ocean Education programs;
- coordinated interagency funding for the National Ocean Science Bowl (2006-2007);
- initiated and funded a regional meeting of Hawaii ocean educators (2007);
- coordinated the use of “Thank You Ocean” messaging by marine parks (2008);
- coordinated development of education bench marks for climate change (2008);
- coordinated development of innovative visualization products for use in the Smithsonian Ocean Hall; and
- coordinated sessions on ocean observing education at conferences of the National Marine Educators Association, American Geophysical Union, and American Society of Lymnology and Oceanography.

The IWG-OE released its FY 2007-2008 Implementation Plan, *Toward an Ocean Literate Society*, in June 2007. A copy of this report may be found at:

http://ocean.ceq.gov/about/docs/SIMOR_IWGOE_Implement.pdf.

The IWG will continue to support interagency collaboration in ocean education and plans to produce an updated implementation plan in early 2009.

Status: Ongoing – as the JSOST-SIMOR IWG on Ocean Education

Leaders:

[Lisa Rom \(NSF\)](#)

[Marlene Kaplan \(NOAA\)](#)

Status of Additional Activities (not from 2006 Work Plan)

Interagency Marine Debris Coordinating Committee

Description: The Interagency Marine Debris Coordinating Committee (IMDCC) is an interagency body responsible for developing and recommending comprehensive and multi-disciplinary approaches to reduce the sources and impacts of marine debris to the nation's marine environment, natural resources, public safety, and economy. The IMDCC, co-chaired by NOAA and EPA, promotes the coordination of Federal agency marine debris activities both nationally and internationally, as well as recommends research priorities, monitoring techniques, educational programs, and regulatory action. A copy of the Committee description can be found at: http://ocean.ceq.gov/about/docs/SIMOR_IMDCC.pdf.

Outputs/Outcomes: In August 2008, the Committee submitted the "Interagency Report on Marine Debris Sources, Impacts, Strategies and Recommendation" to Congress, which contains 25 recommendations, intended to guide the Federal government's strategies on marine debris (http://ocean.ceq.gov/about/docs/SIMOR_IMDCC_Report.pdf). The report also describes sources and impacts of marine debris, the challenges associated with their characterization, and current activities. The Committee is currently developing an action plan to address the recommendations.

Status: Ongoing

Leaders:

[Holly Bamford \(NOAA\)](#)

[Molly Madden \(EPA\)](#)

West Coast Governors Agreement on Ocean Health

Description: On September 18, 2006, the Governors of Washington, Oregon, and California entered a landmark partnership by signing the West Coast Governors' Agreement on Ocean Health. In the agreement, the Governors identified seven issues of regional significance that can be more effectively addressed through collaborative efforts by all three states. In July 2008, the

states released a final Action Plan to address those issues after a year- long effort to obtain public and expert input.

Outputs/Outcomes: In developing the plan, the states collaborated closely with a SIMOR working group of federal agencies co-led by appointed representatives from DOC, EPA and DOI. Using input provided by the federal co-leads, a draft Action Plan was developed and released by the states for public review in October 2007. With feedback from these federal partners and considering the extensive public input received, the states selected and refined the proposed actions to formulate the final Action Plan. The activities in the final Action Plan will be initiated within eighteen months of the plan's release, and some of these activities will be completed during that time. A joint working meeting was held by the states and federal partners in October 2008 to review progress and specific plans required to implement each action, and identify any additional resources and steps necessary for implementation. To download a copy of the final WCGA Action Plan and to obtain updates on progress, please visit the website: <http://westcoastoceans.gov>.

Status: Ongoing

Leaders:

[Usha Varanasi \(NOAA\)](#)

[Fred Piltz \(DOI/MMS\)](#)

[Alexis Strauss \(EPA\)](#)