

# THE BUREAU OF OCEAN ENERGY MANAGEMENT, REGULATION AND ENFORCEMENT

## FACT SHEET

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### **Environmental Studies Program**

#### *Applied Science for Informing Decisions on Ocean Energy*

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement (BOEMRE) is the federal bureau responsible for overseeing the safe and environmentally responsible development of energy and mineral resources on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). This includes oil and natural gas, renewable energy and marine minerals. BOEMRE's stewardship of the nation's offshore resources is guided by the National Ocean Policy vision of a "healthy and resilient, safe and productive, understood and treasured" OCS.

BOEMRE is one of the leading contributors to the growing body of scientific knowledge about the nation's marine and coastal environments. The bureau's Environmental Studies Program (ESP), which was established in 1973, funds on average \$30 million per year for scientific studies in the Gulf of Mexico, the Atlantic, the Pacific and the Arctic. Data gained from these studies inform policy decisions regarding leasing and development of OCS energy and mineral resources. The information is also used by other federal, state and local agencies, by researchers in the nation's universities, and by the private sector.

The studies gather information in many areas: physical oceanography, atmospheric sciences, biology, protected species, social sciences and economics, submerged cultural resources, and fates and effects (which refers to understanding and reducing the environmental impacts of energy development projects).

BOEMRE oversees scientific research conducted through contracts, cooperative agreements with state institutions or universities and inter/intra-agency agreements. These arrangements, such as through the National Oceanographic Partnership Program, allow the bureau to leverage federal resources, meet national priorities, satisfy common needs for robust scientific information and contribute to the global effort of better understanding the marine and coastal environment.

BOEMRE's OCS Scientific Committee, a federal advisory committee, advises the bureau on the feasibility, appropriateness and scientific value of the studies proposed for the Environmental Studies Program. For more information, see:

<http://www.boemre.gov/mmab/scientificcommittee/ocssc.htm>.

In 2011, the Department of the Interior established a Scientific Integrity Policy to ensure that leasing and plan approval activities are properly informed by independent peer-reviewed environmental research, which is considered during every stage of the decision-making process. This policy is available at: <http://www.doi.gov/news/pressreleases/Salazar-Announces-New-Scientific-Integrity-Policy-and-Designation-of-Departmental-Science-Integrity-Officer.cfm>.

## Environmental Studies Plan – New and Ongoing Studies FY 2011

In Fiscal Year 2011, BOEMRE's budget to support new and ongoing studies is approximately \$35 million. For the most up-to-date information on current studies, please visit:

<http://www.boemre.gov/eppd/sciences/esp/HappeningNow.htm>.

Completed studies are available to the public through the Environmental Studies Program Information System (ESPIS) at:

<http://www.gomr.boemre.gov/homepg/espis/espismaster.asp?appid=1>. Technical summaries of more than 700 BOEMRE-sponsored environmental research projects, as well as copies of more than 2,000 research reports, are available for online full-text search.

BOEMRE supports new and ongoing studies from its headquarters in Washington, D.C., as well as through regional offices in Anchorage, Alaska; Camarillo, Calif.; and New Orleans, La.:

- BOEMRE is sponsoring more than 20 ongoing **national** studies. For more information, go to: <http://www.boemre.gov/eppd/sciences/esp/NationalOngoingStudies.htm>
- To review the more than 40 BOEMRE studies that specifically apply to our **renewable energy programs**, go to: <http://www.boemre.gov/eppd/sciences/esp/RenewableEnergyResearch.htm>.
- BOEMRE is currently supporting more than 50 ongoing environmental studies in **Alaska**. For more information, go to: [http://alaska.boemre.gov/ess/ongoingStudies/Ongoing\\_studies.pdf](http://alaska.boemre.gov/ess/ongoingStudies/Ongoing_studies.pdf)
- There are nearly 80 ongoing environmental studies in the **Gulf of Mexico**. For more information, go to: [http://www.gomr.boemre.gov/homepg/regulate/environ/ongoing\\_studies/gom.html](http://www.gomr.boemre.gov/homepg/regulate/environ/ongoing_studies/gom.html)
- For more information on the ten studies specific to the **Atlantic**, go to: <http://www.boemre.gov/eppd/sciences/esp/AtlanticOngoingStudies.htm>
- BOEMRE has more than 20 ongoing environmental studies in the **Pacific**. For more information, go to: [http://www.boemre.gov/omm/pacific/enviro/enviro\\_studies.htm](http://www.boemre.gov/omm/pacific/enviro/enviro_studies.htm)

To learn more about BOEMRE's ongoing work to further environmental studies, go to: <http://www.boemre.gov/eppd/sciences/esp/index.htm>.

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