



**Coastal Zone Management Program Strategic Plan:  
Improving Management of the Nation's Coastal Areas  
FY 2007 – 2012**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Coastal Zone Management Program (CZMP) is a unique federal/state partnership that provides a proven basis for protecting, restoring, and responsibly developing the nation's important and diverse coastal communities and resources. This partnership was created over thirty years ago with the passage of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (CZMA), and since approval of the first state program in 1976, has resulted in remarkable achievements. Unlike many single purpose programs, the CZMP focuses its work on the complex resource management problems of the coast – the part of the nation whose resources generally are under the highest pressures. It takes a comprehensive approach to problem solving, balancing the often competing and conflicting demands of coastal resource use, economic development, and conservation. The CZMP accomplishes this by fostering an effective partnership among federal, state, and local governments that strengthens the capabilities of each partner. In addition, a critical objective of the CZMA is to address national interests, including giving priority consideration to coastal dependent uses and establishing orderly processes for siting of facilities related to national defense, energy, fishery development, recreation, ports, and transportation.

Participation in the CZMP is voluntary and NOAA recognizes that there are important cultural, economic, political, and environmental differences among the participating states and territories. Since its inception, the CZMP has encouraged and celebrated variety in the scope, focus, structure, and authorities states use to achieve the national goals of the CZMA. Issues that are national in scope such as the economic vitality of ports, fisheries, and endangered species management require an approach that effectively combines federal research, expertise, and resources with local knowledge and management approaches. Participating states and territories also address critical issues by working at local and regional scales in their coastal areas.

The CZMP recognizes that, more than ever, measurable goals are necessary to demonstrate the program's effectiveness. For this reason, the CZMP is developing a CZMA Performance Measurement System (CZMAPMS) to track indicators of effectiveness at the national level. The strategic goals of this plan are based on several of the CZMAPMS measures that are being collected and evaluated through 2008. It also is important to recognize that a "Visioning" process, underway through 2007, is identifying options to improve the CZMA. The Visioning process may result in new directions, priorities, and approaches for the CZMP. Within the context of the CZMAPMS and Visioning efforts, this plan describes the CZMP's national direction, priorities, and outcomes for the next five years.

Although they may not be expressly articulated here, this plan does not negate the importance of individual state priorities and goals.

## COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

The CZMP is administered at the federal level by NOAA's Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (OCRM). The OCRM is responsible for providing leadership in advancing national coastal management objectives and maintaining and strengthening state and territorial coastal management capabilities. It supports states through financial assistance, mediation, technical and legal services and information, and by participation in state, regional, and local forums. A particular strength of OCRM is policy and planning expertise, which is integral to coastal zone management and the development of comprehensive management tools and enforceable policies (e.g., state laws, regulations, and local codes).

The CZMP is implemented on a day-to-day basis at the state level in the 34 states and territories with federally approved coastal management programs. The coastal management programs assess emerging issues, develop policies and management approaches, undertake programs and projects in partnership with other state and local agencies, and enforce program policies to balance development and conservation. In this role, the coastal management programs are important generators and incubators of programs and policies that may be applied in other states or at the federal level. In particular, the state coastal management programs play an integral role in advising OCRM on development of national initiatives based on their local experiences.

A central tenet of the CZMP is to improve government coordination and efficiency in coastal management while supporting active stakeholder and public participation. Therefore, much of what the CZMP accomplishes involves the development and implementation of processes based on the needs and management structure of individual states. However, measurement of the resulting coordination and efficiencies across programs is not an exact science; as a result, an effort to quantify these types of results does not seem to be cost effective at the present time. Nevertheless, these processes are interwoven in every aspect of the CZMP and it is important to recognize their intrinsic value.

## COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT VISION AND MISSION

### VISION

*The nation's coasts and oceans, including the Great Lakes and island territories, are healthy and thriving for this and future generations*

### MISSION

*To ensure the conservation and responsible use of our nation's coastal and ocean resources*

## COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM STRATEGY

### CZMP Outcomes:

Healthy and productive coastal ecosystems.

Environmentally, economically, and socially vibrant and resilient coastal communities.

## **GOALS:**

### ***1. Protect, restore, and enhance coastal ecosystems.***

The nation's coastal zone supports diverse and productive coastal ecosystems, including wetlands, floodplains, estuaries, beaches, dunes, barrier islands, coral reefs. They provide significant ecological, cultural, and economic benefits to communities and the nation. Natural coastal areas provide ecosystem services such as filtering polluted runoff, reducing the impacts of storms on coastal areas, offering recreational opportunities, and providing mineral and energy sources. As a focal point for development, transportation, and commerce throughout history, the nation's oceans and coasts have contributed to economic growth and to a rich cultural history.

However, coastal ecosystems are being subjected to ever increasing pressures. Currently, the coast is ten times more densely populated than inland areas — a trend that is projected to increase. Population growth leads to increasing threats to coastal ecosystems, including habitat loss and pollution. For example, the National Coastal Condition report states a loss of approximately 13,210 acres of coastal wetlands from 1990-2000. Because over 90% of coastal pollution is generated by land-based sources, the protection of coastal ecosystems involves land use decisions at the local, state, and federal levels.

Protecting and restoring coastal ecosystems will require coordinated multi-disciplinary efforts involving all levels of government, the private sector, and the public. The CZMP plays an important role in shaping coastal ecosystem management policies, as well as improving, coordinating, and funding state and local activities in this arena.

### **Objectives:**

- Acquire coastal habitats that are important for conserving natural resources of national and state concern.
- Restore and create key coastal habitats that are essential habitat for fish and wildlife and that will lead to the re-establishment of healthy natural communities.

### **Strategies:**

- Acquire land or conservation easements from willing sellers to protect key coastal habitat.
- Support state and local actions to protect, restore, and create key coastal habitat through comprehensive planning, habitat identification, technical assistance, education and outreach, and funding.
- Require habitat mitigation for permitted activities that disturb habitat, to offset unavoidable habitat loss.

**Performance Goal 1A:** Increase the total acreage of key coastal habitats acquired.

**Performance Measure 1A:** Number of acres of key coastal habitat acquired.

**Performance Goal 1B:** Increase the total acreage of key coastal habitats restored, enhanced, and created.

**Performance Measure 1B:** Number of acres of key coastal habitats restored, enhanced, and created.

## *2. Enable the development of vibrant and resilient coastal communities.*

Coastal communities are essential components of a strong national economy. The Nation's coastal population is expected to increase by more than 7 million by 2008. Population growth continues to place significantly increased pressure on coastal regions. The sheer density of population in coastal areas is two to three times higher than in the nation as a whole, reflecting people's attraction to the coast. Coastal states account for more than three-quarters of U.S. domestic economic activity. Several sectors of the U.S. economy are closely linked to the health and vitality of coastal areas including:

- Waterborne cargo, which contributes more than \$742 billion to the U.S. GDP and creates employment for more than 13 million people;
- Marine recreational fishing, which generated over \$30.5 billion in sales and \$12 billion in income in 2000 supporting nearly 350,000 jobs; and
- Beach tourism reflects the importance of coastal states and their role in earning 85 percent of all U.S. tourism revenues.

However, the nation's coastal areas are subject to numerous natural hazards, ranging from hurricanes, which produce damaging floods and winds, to chronic threats such as sea level rise, which can increase vulnerabilities to storms and impact development along the coast. In the past decade alone, hurricanes have resulted in tens of billions of dollars in economic damage and tragic losses of life. All levels of government have the responsibility to minimize harm to developed areas already vulnerable, and to reduce vulnerability in areas not yet developed. There are growing concerns about how and whether to rebuild coastal communities after major hazard events, and how to mitigate future hazard events.

With so much of our nation's growth and economic activity occurring in our coastal zone, it is vitally important to ensure that our coastal communities are sustainable and resilient to natural hazards. The CZMP has a critical role in implementing state and local approaches to growth and redevelopment.

### **Objectives**

- Improve the capacity of state and local governments to make decisions that balance coastal growth and development with protection of ecosystems and quality of life.
- Reduce the loss of life and property from coastal hazards and enhance the ability of state and local governments to respond to hazard events.
- Increase and enhance public access to the coast for recreational purposes.
- Improve state and local processes to redevelop port or waterfront areas, giving priority consideration to coastal dependent uses.

## **Strategies:**

- Assist coastal communities in directing development to appropriate areas, identifying compatible land uses, and ensuring comprehensive planning for economic development.
- Support local communities by providing management tools, information, and technical assistance to incorporate available scientific and socioeconomic information into comprehensive planning and land use decisions.
- Support communities in conducting storm preparedness, mitigation, and post-storm planning for hazardous coastal areas.
- Increase public awareness of coastal hazards and activities they can undertake to reduce loss of life and property.
- Support planning to improve land use in hazardous coastal areas.
- Identify and map natural protective features that can reduce damage from coastal hazards.
- Support activities at the state and local level to protect natural features that reduce the impacts of natural hazards in the coastal zone.
- Acquire new public recreational sites in the coastal zone.
- Add or improve facilities to support public recreation in the coastal zone.
- Create new public access sites through implementation of state CZM policies and regulations.
- Update program plans to prioritize redevelopment of port or waterfront areas, with an emphasis on coastal dependent uses.
- Provide funding, guidance, and/or technical assistance to communities for port or waterfront redevelopment projects.

**Performance Goal 2A:** Increase the percentage of communities in the coastal zone implementing sustainable coastal management practices.

**Performance Measure 2A:** Percent of communities in the coastal zone implementing sustainable coastal management practices.

**Performance Goal 2B:** Increase the percentage of communities in the coastal zone implementing management practices to improve resilience to natural hazards.

**Performance Measure 2B:** Percentage of communities in the coastal zone implementing practices to improve resilience to natural hazards.

**Performance Goal 2C:** Increase public access to the coastal zone for recreation relative to the coastal population.

**Performance Measure 2C:** Percentage increase in public access relative to coastal population.

**Performance Goal 2D:** Increase the total number of coastal communities implementing projects to redevelop port and waterfront areas.

**Performance Measure 2D:** Number of coastal communities implementing projects to redevelop port or waterfront areas.

## APPENDIX 1

### CONTEXT

There are four major sets of drivers for the CZMP:

1. Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended, our primary requirement driver.

As described in the CZMA, the national policy emphasizes the balance between protection, restoration, and development, as well as the federal/state government partnership created to implement coastal zone management. The policy also underscores the breadth of issues to be addressed in coastal management, directing the program towards a comprehensive approach with an emphasis on improving government coordination and planning. Established in 2002 as an adjunct of the CZMA, the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP) focuses on the protection of coastal and estuarine lands. Additionally, Section 6217 of the Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments of 1990 requires states with approved coastal zone management programs to develop Coastal Nonpoint Pollution (CNP) Control Programs. In this context, the CZMA, combined with CELCP and CNP, has two overarching goals:

- Sustain coastal ecosystems; and
- Develop sustainable coastal communities.

2. Vision, Mission, and Goals of our parent organization, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

The CMP primarily supports the NOAA goal to: Protect, Restore, and Manage the Use of Coastal and Ocean Resources through an Ecosystem Approach to Management. The CMP also supports the Weather and Water goal through coastal hazard-related activities and the Commerce and Transportation goal through port activities.

3. Recent ocean studies and the resulting reports: the administration's Ocean Action Plan, and reports by the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and Pew Oceans Commission

From 2003 through 2004, the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and the Pew Oceans Commission issued reports on the nation's ocean governance. Both reports state that further improvements to coastal management are urgently needed. Specific recommendations include incorporating ecosystem-based approaches into management, focusing on watersheds, and taking environmental, economic, and social concerns into consideration for long-term sustainability.

In response to these reports, the Administration released the U.S. Ocean Action Plan in December 2004. The plan focused on "...achieving meaningful results - making our oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes cleaner, healthier, and more productive." The plan stressed the importance of taking a comprehensive, watershed-based management approach, and addressing the issues of coastal and watershed management, including

conserving and restoring coastal habitat, controlling invasive species, coastal water pollution, and mitigating natural hazards.

4. The President's Management Agenda and the Government Performance and Results Act requirements for measurable performance objectives.

Under the President's Management Agenda, agencies are increasingly expected to identify high quality outcome measures, accurately monitor the performance of programs, and begin integrating these with the associated costs. Based on this information, high performing activities are to be rewarded, while non-performing activities will be reformed or terminated. The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) requires agencies to write strategic plans and annual performance plans with performance measures that show agency results over time.