

ABSTRACT

Managing Change: Developing Community-Based Ocean and Coastal Regional Resource Management of the U.S. Arctic

The Alaska Native community and other Arctic residents play a strong and important role in the Arctic. Confronted by environmental, social, and industry changes that ultimately stem from climate change, there is a need to preserve Arctic communities' rights, culture, and traditions. The time is ripe to work with these communities, so that local residents can develop their long-term vision for the Arctic environment and help develop ways to achieve a vision that incorporates state and federal management programs. The project team has launched an initiative designed to empower local communities to build grassroots regional ocean and coastal resource management in the U.S. Arctic. The project is partially supported by the Oak Foundation; additional support is needed to carry out the program. Our approach focuses on understanding the needs of the Arctic communities and working with them so that they can establish their own vision of a healthy and resilient Arctic ecosystem within the context of the growing climate change challenges. It is designed to advance the development and utilization of ecosystem research that can address management needs. With support from NOAA, the interdisciplinary partnership, which combines scientific, legal, and local expertise, will:

1. Develop a survey instrument to obtain feedback from the decision-makers, scientists, and stakeholders about climate change challenges, priority responses, and research needed to address climate change impacts.
2. Analyze the survey responses by digitizing information and utilizing software such as Excel and online survey analysis tools.
3. Share our findings and conduct in-depth interviews with scientists, decision-makers, and stakeholders to flesh out key findings.
4. Work with the scientists, decision-makers, and stakeholders to develop recommendations for research activities that can help address priority challenges. We will disseminate our findings to the community, federal and state government, and others working in the region through academic publications, a management handbook, workshops, and seminars. The results of this project will help us develop recommendations for on-the-ground ecosystem-based planning and management that can help Arctic ocean and coastal decisionmakers prepare for climate change impacts.