



# Ecosystem Assessment Program (EAP)

Providing trusted scientific information to foster healthy marine ecosystems for current and future generations

*The environment was long studied and managed as if it had individual parts to it.*

*We now know that everything is connected.*

7/10th of the planet is covered by water. About 53 percent of the nation's total population lives in coastal areas. These facts help to elucidate the importance of the marine ecosystem on our economy, our environment, our culture, and our overall human well-being. EAP was designed to take an integrated approach when monitoring and as-



sessing Marine Ecosystems and their associated Living Marine Resources. To do this, EAP works with NOAA programs and partners, conducting extensive At-Sea monitoring, and observing activities throughout the world. These data are then

used to provide the assessments and forecast necessary to adequately manage the Nations Living Marine Resources. By providing an Integrated Ecosystem Assessment, EAP ensures that our nations Living Marine Resources are being managed using an Ecosystem Approach to Management.

## ***Ecosystem Approach to Management (EAM)***

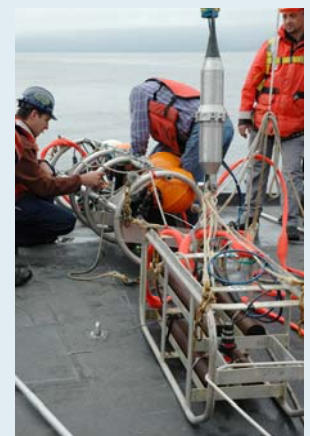
***Taking an EAM ensures that the management of marine resources is based on the "entire ecosystem" instead of only certain***

## **Why is EAP Important?**

EAP is the observational backbone for all Living Marine Resource (LMR) related activities within NOAA, and provides the necessary monitoring and assessment data to support NOAA's Ecosystem Mission Goal: "Protect, Restore and Manage the Use of Coastal and Ocean Resources through an Ecosystem Approach to Management."



As such, EAP provides collaborative linkages between all of NOAA's Ecosystem Goal Programs (Corals, Habitat, Coastal & Marine Resources, Protected Species, Fisheries Management, Enforcement, Ecosystem Research, Aquaculture), other Goal Teams (Climate, Weather & Water), and NOAA



EAP's observation data, assessments and forecasts provide NOAA and its external partners with vital information to better respond to societal needs and to make sound management decisions based on the best available scientific knowledge.

## Structure

EAP is a partnership between four NOAA line offices:

- NOAA Fisheries Service (NMFS)
- NOAA Research (OAR)
- NOAA Oceans and Coasts (NOS)
- NOAA Satellites and Information (NESDIS)

## Six Capabilities

EAP works within six areas of expertise, or “capabilities”:

- Fisheries Monitoring and Assessment
- Protected Species Monitoring and Assessment
- Ecosystem Monitoring, Assessments and Forecasting
- Economic and Socio-cultural Monitoring and Assessments
- Data Management, Technology Transfer, Education and Outreach
- Habitat Monitoring and Assessments



*Every year, EAP continues to work towards maintaining*

*1) Healthy, productive coastal and marine ecosystems that benefit society*

*2) A well-informed public that acts as a steward of coastal and marine ecosystems*



## Mandates

EAP is driven by multiple mandates to ensure the long-term health, quality and sustainability of living coastal and marine resource populations and their habitats. Some of the overarching mandates include:

- Magnuson Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act (MSRA)
- Ocean Action Plan
- Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA)
- Endangered Species Act (ESA)
- National Coastal Monitoring Act (NCMA)



**For More Information:**

Website: <http://ecoassess.noaa.gov>