



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
NATIONAL OCEANIC AND  
ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION



# The U.S. Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force

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# Ocean Policy Task Force - Overview



THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary

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June 11, 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

SUBJECT: NATIONAL POLICY FOR THE OCEANS, OUR COASTS,  
AND THE GREAT LAKES

The oceans, our coasts, and the Great Lakes provide jobs, food, energy resources, ecological services, recreation, and tourism opportunities, and play critical roles in our Nation's transportation, economy, and trade, as well as the global mobility of our Armed Forces and the maintenance of international peace and security. We have a stewardship responsibility to maintain healthy, resilient, and sustainable oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes resources for the benefit of this and future generations.

Yet, the oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes are subject to substantial pressures and face significant environmental challenges. Challenges include water pollution and degraded coastal water quality caused by industrial and commercial activities both onshore and offshore, habitat loss, fishing impacts, invasive species, disease, rising sea levels, and ocean acidification. Oceans both influence and are affected by climate change. They not only affect climate processes but they are also under stress from the impacts of climate change. Renewable energy, shipping, and aquaculture are also expected to place growing demands on ocean and Great Lakes resources. These resources therefore require protection through the numerous Federal, State, and local authorities with responsibility and jurisdiction over the oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes.

To succeed in protecting the oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes, the United States needs to act within a unifying framework under a clear national policy, including a comprehensive, ecosystem-based framework for the long-term conservation and use of our resources.

In order to better meet our Nation's stewardship responsibilities for the oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes, there is established an Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force (Task Force), to be led by the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality. The Task Force shall be composed of senior policy-level officials from the executive departments, Agencies, and offices represented on the Committee on Ocean Policy established by section 3 of Executive Order 13366 of December 17, 2004. This Task Force is not meant to duplicate that structure, but rather is intended to be a temporary entity with the following responsibilities:

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*"We have a stewardship responsibility to maintain healthy, resilient, and sustainable oceans, coasts and Great Lakes resources for the benefit of this and future generations."*

*"To succeed in protecting the oceans, coasts and Great Lakes, the U.S. needs to act within a unifying framework under a clear national policy, including a comprehensive, ecosystem-based framework for the long term conservation and use of our resources."*





# Ocean Policy Task Force - Overview

## Ocean Policy Task Force (OPTF) Responsibilities

- Within **90 Days** Develop Recommendations For:
  - A National Policy
  - A United States Framework for Policy Coordination
  - An Implementation Strategy
- Within **180 Days** Develop:
  - A Recommended Framework for Effective Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning (CMSP)



# Ocean Policy Task Force

- **Public Engagement Process**

- **38 Expert Roundtables**
  - Stakeholders and Interest Groups
  - State, Local, and Tribal Governments
- **6 Regional Public Meetings**
  - Anchorage, Alaska - August 21
  - San Francisco, California - September 17
  - Providence, Rhode Island - September 24
  - Honolulu, Hawaii - September 29
  - New Orleans, Louisiana - October 19
  - Cleveland, Ohio - October 29
- **30 & 60 day public comment periods**





# Ocean Policy Task Force - Proposed Vision & National Ocean Policy



THE WHITE HOUSE COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

## *Interim Report Of The Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force September 10, 2009*



### INTERIM REPORT OF THE INTERAGENCY OCEAN POLICY TASK FORCE

#### PROPOSED NATIONAL POLICY FOR THE STEWARDSHIP OF THE OCEAN, OUR COASTS, AND THE GREAT LAKES

##### I. Vision

An America whose stewardship ensures that the ocean, our coasts, and the Great Lakes are healthy and resilient, safe and productive, and understood and treasured so as to promote the well-being, prosperity, and security of present and future generations.

##### II. National Policy Context

###### The Value of the Ocean, Our Coasts, and the Great Lakes

America is intricately connected to and directly reliant on the ocean, our coasts, and the Great Lakes. Each of us – whether living and working in the country’s heartland or along its coasts – affects and is affected by these places. Their beauty inspires us, and their bounty contributes to our national well-being and security. Nearly half of our population is located in coastal counties. Our rich and productive coastal regions and waters account for the great majority of the national economy, totaling trillions of dollars each year, and support distant communities that may not even be aware of the connection between the land and sea. Millions of visitors enjoy our Nation’s seashores each year, contributing not only to the economy, but also to personal and communal satisfaction and fulfillment. The sea is both a refuge for spiritual reflection and a powerhouse of excitement for educating students of all ages and interests.



## Ocean Policy Task Force - Proposed Policy Coordination Framework

- CEQ and OSTP would lead an interagency National Ocean Council to coordinate ocean-related issues across the Federal Government and to implement the National Ocean Policy
- Establishes Interagency Policy Committees for Ocean Resource Mgmt. and Ocean Science and Technology
- Creation of a Governance Advisory Committee of the National Ocean Council to improve coordination and collaboration with State, tribal, and local authorities, and regional governance structures



# Ocean Policy Task Force - Proposed Nine Priority Objectives

## How we do business:

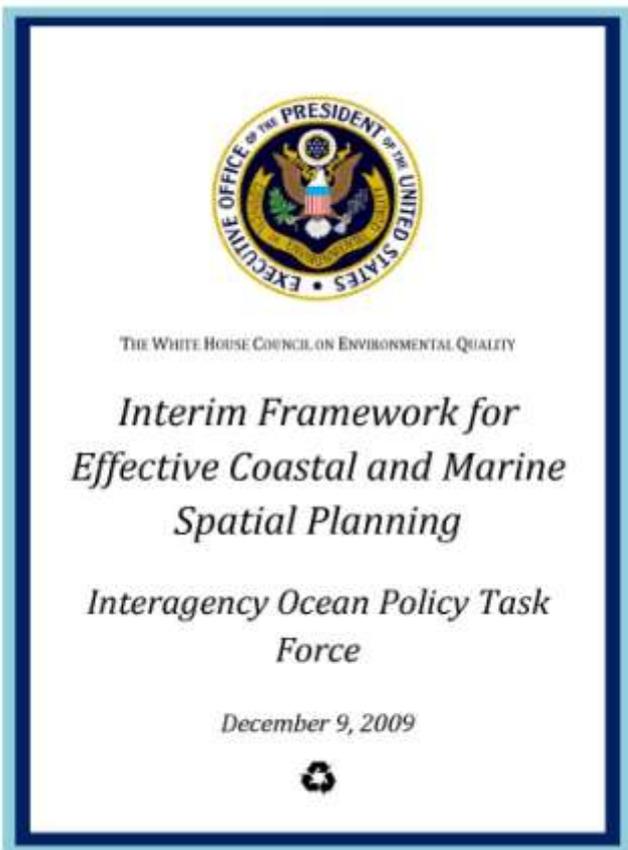
1. *Ecosystem-Based Management*
2. *Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning*
3. *Inform Decisions and Improve Understanding*
4. *Coordinate and Support*

## Areas of Special Emphasis:

1. *Resiliency and Adaptation to Climate Change and Ocean Acidification*
2. *Regional Ecosystem Protection and Restoration*
3. *Water Quality and Sustainable Practices on Land*
4. *Changing Conditions in the Arctic*
5. *Ocean, Coastal, and Great Lakes Observations and Infrastructure*



# Ocean Policy Task Force Interim CMSP Framework



## Definition of CMSP:

*A comprehensive, adaptive, integrated, ecosystem-based, and transparent spatial planning process, based on sound science, for analyzing current and anticipated uses of ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes areas.*

## The CMSP Process:

*Identifies areas most suitable for various types or classes of activities in order to reduce conflicts among uses, reduce environmental impacts, facilitate compatible uses, and preserve critical ecosystem services to meet economic, environmental, security, and social objectives.*



# Ocean Policy Task Force Interim CMSP Framework

## Outlines 7 national goals for CMSP that link back to the National Ocean Policy goals with a focus on:

- Promoting compatibility among uses and reducing user conflicts
- Streamlining and improving the rigor and consistency of decision-making and regulatory processes
- Increasing certainty and predictability in planning

## Lists 12 Guiding Principles for CMSP that include:

- Ecosystem-based management
- Stakeholder and public engagement
- Informed by best available science
- Flexibility to accommodate changing conditions (environment, science, policy, technology)



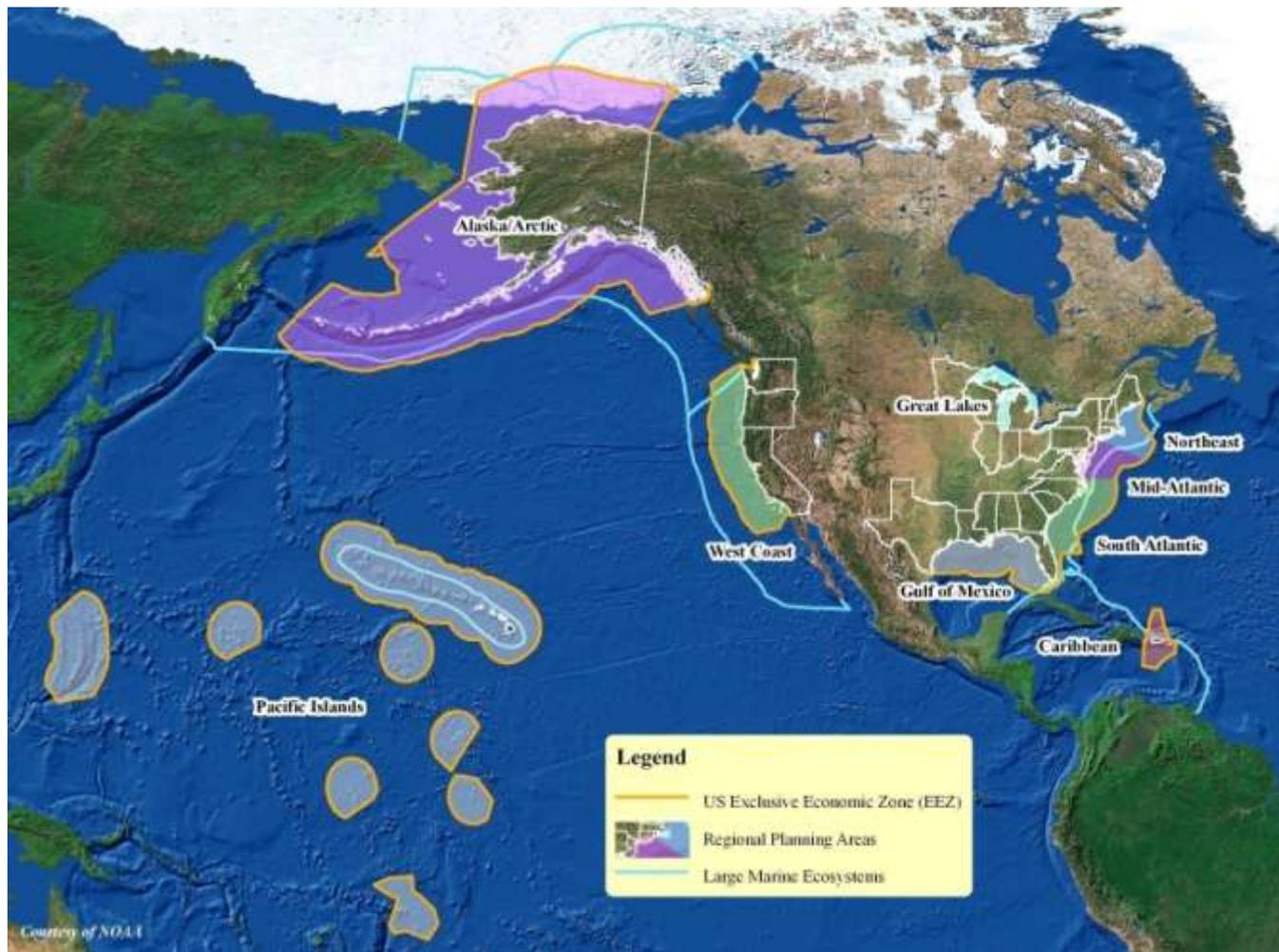
# Ocean Policy Task Force

## Benefits of CMSP

- Aims to maximize benefits of existing and emerging uses while minimizing conflicts and sustaining ecosystem services
- Ensures all uses and stakeholders have 'seat at the table'
- Creates a greater degree of certainty for investment and development
- Streamlines permitting, regulation + governance
- Makes decision-making transparent to all



# Large Marine Ecosystems & Regional Planning Areas





# Ocean Policy Task Force - Interim CMSP Framework

## Authority for Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning:

- Existing federal and state statutes authorize agency planning efforts and provide a legal basis to implement CMS plans within these authorities.

## Development Agreement:

- An express commitment signed by agencies to work cooperatively to engage in CMSP and develop CMS plans.

## Adherence and Compliance:

- Signatories would be expected to adhere to CMS plans within the limits of their statutory and regulatory authorities. If an agency deviates from the plan, it would need to provide advance notice and justification.



# Ocean Policy Task Force - Interim CMSP Framework

## Essential Elements of the CMSP Process:

- Identify Regional Objectives
- Identify Existing Efforts that Should Help Shape the Plan throughout the Process
- Engage Stakeholders and the Public at Key Points throughout Process
- Consult Scientists and Other Experts
- Analyze Data, Uses, Services, and Impacts
- Develop and Evaluate Alternative Future Use Scenarios and Tradeoffs
- Prepare and Release a Draft CMS Plan with Supporting Environmental Impact Analysis Documentation for Public Comment
- Create a Final CMS Plan and Submit for National Ocean Council (NOC) Review
- Implement, Monitor, Evaluate, and Modify the NOC-certified CMS Plan



## Ocean Policy Task Force - Interim CMSP Framework

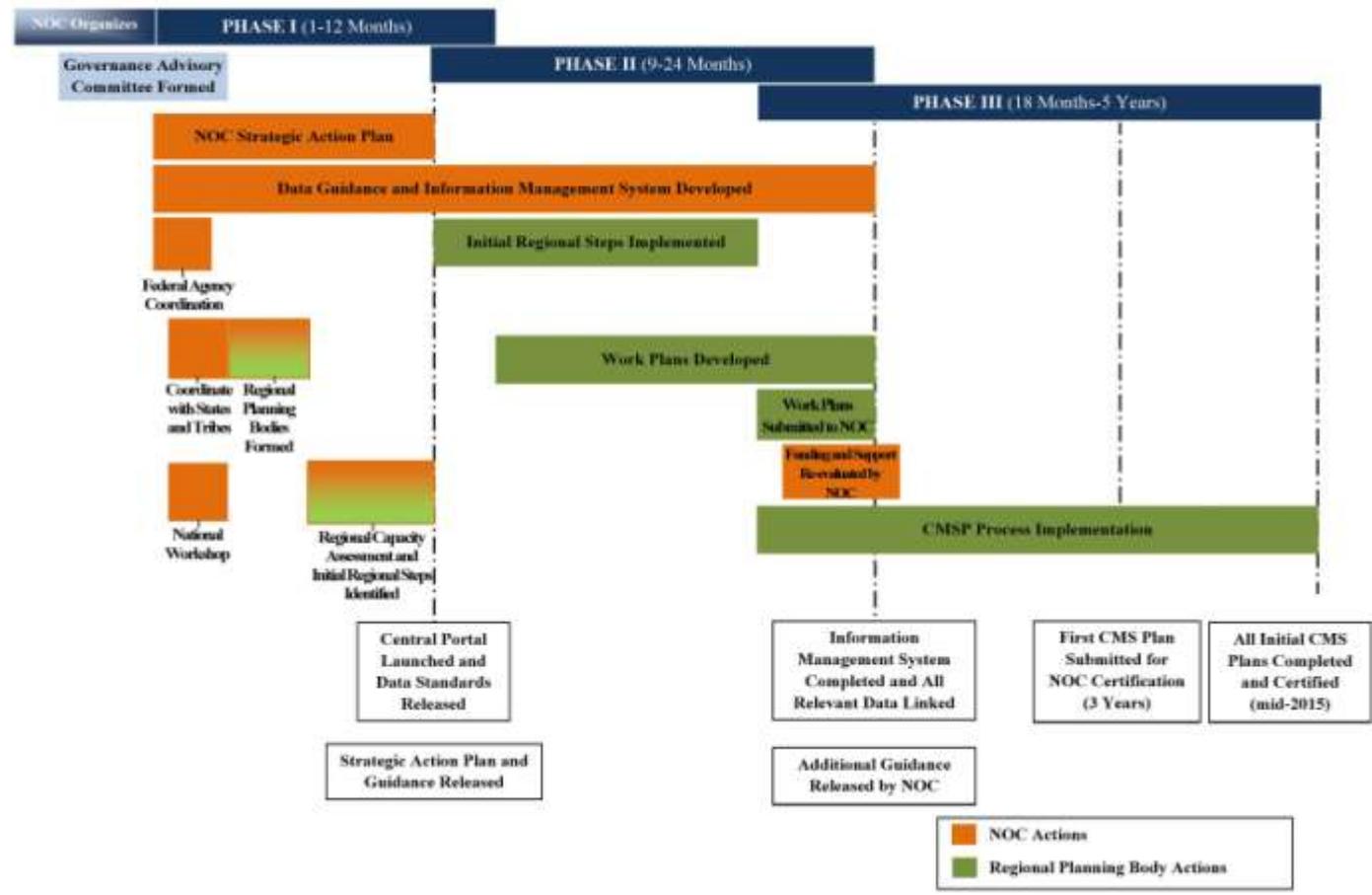
### Scientific Knowledge & Data Integration, Research, Management and Access:

- Acknowledges that CMSP is fundamentally science-based and that existing scientific data and knowledge must be supplemented by additional research.
- Calls for mechanisms to identify priority research needs.
- Directs development of a national information management system with a central or regional portals to connect CMSP information.
- Nationally consistent derived data products to be developed to provide a consistent framework for regional assessments.



# Ocean Policy Task Force - Interim CMSP Framework

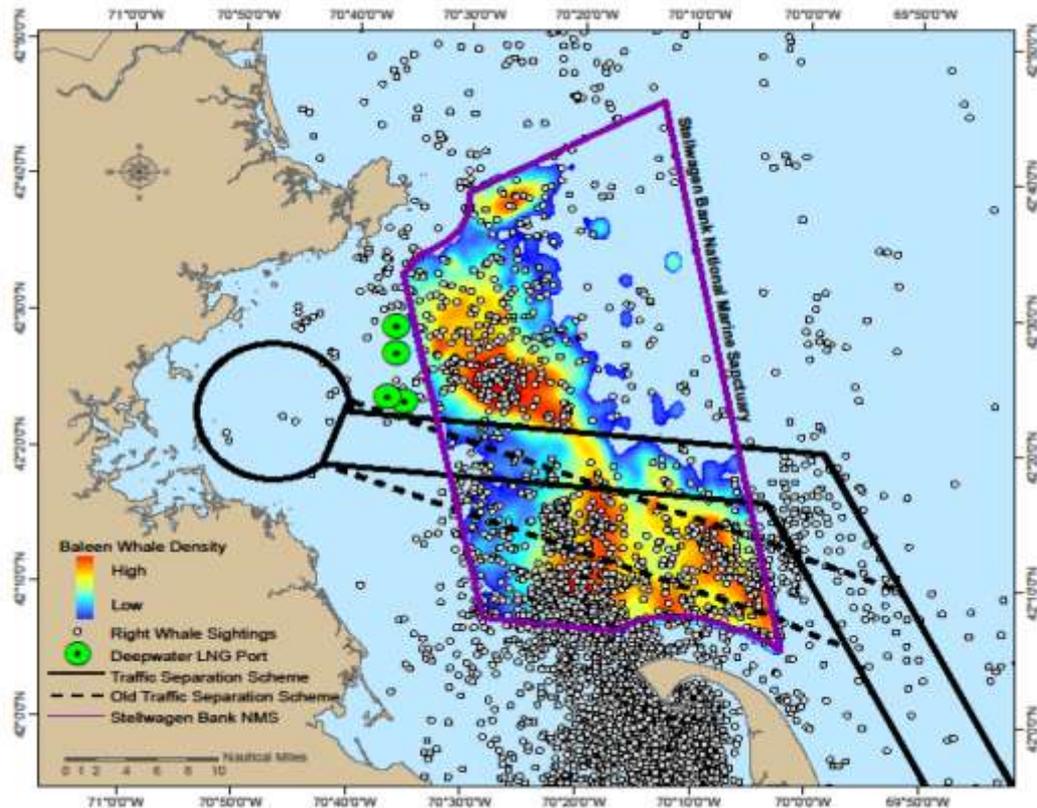
COASTAL AND MARINE SPATIAL PLANNING PHASED IMPLEMENTATION





# Example of Multiple Sector Approach

## Reconfiguration of Boston Traffic Separation Scheme through Stellwagen Bank NMS





# NOAA's FY2011 Budget Request

## FY2011 Proposed Initiatives for CMSP:

- \$6.77M for NOAA capability to support CMSP
- \$20M for Regional Ocean Partnership Grants
- \$2M for Gulf of Mexico Elevation Pilot
- \$5.4M to expedite Integrated Ecosystem Assessments



# Next Steps

- 60 Day Public Comment Period on CMSP Framework Closed February 12, 2010

[www.whitehouse.gov/oceans](http://www.whitehouse.gov/oceans)

- Finalize Reports and Submit to President in Early 2010
- Presidential Action (?)