NOAA’S OCEAN CONSERVATION ROLE

Dr. Jane Lubchenco
Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere & NOAA Administrator
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Summary

An Ecologist's Perspective
Ecosystem Approach to Management
Restoring Fisheries
Climate Change
Coastal Management
Marine Spatial Planning
Role of the National System of MPAs
NOAA's Ocean Conservation Role
What people want from our oceans and coasts

Clean Beaches
Safe and Healthy Seafood
Abundant Wildlife
Stable Fisheries
Vibrant Coastal Communities
Renewable Sources of Energy
Ecosystem Approaches to Management

Moving from traditional single-sector management toward more comprehensive approaches

Draws on multi-disciplinary science

Considers the full range of human interactions and interests

Requires integrative syntheses of scientific information
MPAs are an important component of an ecosystem approach to management.

Most US MPAs have an ecosystem-scale focus, (rather than single, focal resource).

National system can foster viable, productive ecosystems and services.

MPA FAC has made significant contributions to this goal.
NOAA’s Role in Fisheries Management

Maintain healthy stocks important to commercial, recreational, and subsistence fisheries.

Eliminate overfishing and rebuild overfished stocks important to commercial, recreational, and subsistence fisheries.

Increase long-term economic and social benefits to the nation from living marine resources.
Fisheries and MPAs

Closed areas for specific purposes are an important tool for fisheries management.

Key role of Fishery Management Councils and stakeholders in planning and management.

MPAs and Fishing Effort in New England, 2003
NOAA's Ocean Conservation Role
Climate Change

Greatest threat to ocean health in our history

Increasing concern about impacts, including:

- Ocean acidification
- Ocean warming / coral bleaching
- Loss of sea ice
- Sea level rise / coastal habitat loss
- Changes in species distribution
- Changes in currents, waves and storms
- Invasive species

Global social, economic and ecological impacts will be felt far beyond the shoreline
NOAA’s Role in Climate Change

Provide the best science to inform management decisions

Develop and implement conservation strategies that buffer and adapt to climate change

Establishing NOAA Climate Service
Climate Change and MPAs

The national system of MPA should
- build MPA capacity for adaptation
- buffer climate impacts on surrounding areas and resources
- Account for climate impacts in analyzing conservation gaps

Look forward to MPA FAC recommendations on building resilience
Coastal Management and MPAs

Development of NOAA Coastal Strategy

Priority issue areas

- Coastal Hazards & Climate Change
- Competing Coastal Uses & Habitat Loss
- Coastal Pollution & Human Health Effects

Coastal MPAs

- Affect and are affected by priority issue areas
- Account for most US MPAs
- Managed by states; importance of partnerships
Suite of ocean uses and conflicts are growing faster than our ability to manage them.

US needs a comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach to ocean planning.

Supports state-led ocean governance initiatives.

Builds on and supports NOAA’s broad place-based management mandates.
NOAA’s Role in Marine Spatial Planning

NOAA capabilities include ecosystem based science, service, and stewardship necessary for such a comprehensive task.

Provide critical spatial data on ocean resources and uses to support regional planning.

Provide decision support tools to managers.

Support emerging regional ocean governance initiatives.

NOAA has unique portfolio of place-based trustee responsibilities.
Marine Spatial Planning and MPAs

MPAs are an essential component of a marine spatial plan.

The national system of MPAs and an integrated marine spatial plan are built on the same information foundation.

MPA Federal Advisory Committee should explore how the national system can support and be integrated with broader marine spatial planning efforts.
In closing...