



Northeast Workshop
on Regional Ocean Planning:
Summary of Workshop Discussions

Roger Williams University School of Law

Bristol, Rhode Island

March 12-13, 2012

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Executive Summary

The *Northeast Workshop on Regional Ocean Planning* was convened by the Northeast Regional Ocean Council (NROC) on March 12-13, 2012 at the Roger Williams School of Law in Bristol, Rhode Island. NROC is a state-federal agency partnership convened to implement solutions to New England's most pressing ocean and coastal issues that require a regional response. The *Northeast Workshop on Regional Ocean Planning* was an initial step in the launch of regional ocean planning in New England. Objectives of the workshop were to:

- Build a shared understanding of ocean planning in New England.
- Inform participants about progress made at the regional and national levels that lays the groundwork for successful ocean planning in New England.
- Provide meaningful engagement among participants and opportunities to provide input related to both the process and substance of ocean planning.
- Build commitment to ongoing collaboration and support among regional stakeholders for ocean planning in the region.

The workshop opened on Monday, March 12 with remarks from regional leaders who set the context for subsequent discussions among participants and a series of panel discussions through small group and plenary sessions. Topics that were discussed included opportunities and challenges in the region that ocean planning could address, feedback to NROC about its two-year workplan, and specific recommendations about science and data, stakeholder engagement, and implementation of an eventual ocean plan in the region. The results of each breakout session were summarized for panels that responded to those ideas. Participants and panelists included a diversity of stakeholders representing New England industries, government, academia, tribes, and non-governmental organizations, as well as NROC federal and state members. Major themes emerging from these discussions included stakeholder engagement, data and science, implementation issues, necessary resources for this effort in the future, the role of NROC, and the need to build on existing efforts, among others. Highlights of discussions about each of these themes are provided below and covered in further detail in the full text of this workshop summary document.

Robust and meaningful stakeholder engagement: Robust and meaningful stakeholder engagement was widely recognized as one of the essential elements for ocean planning to be successful. Specific characteristics of good engagement included reaching out to a wide range of stakeholders, that is, going beyond engagement of only the most obvious leaders of well-established interest groups. Other recommendations included providing a variety of mechanisms and forums for engagement, demonstrating to stakeholders how their input was taken into account in ocean planning and decision-making during the planning process,

building trust and confidence in ocean planning and the entities leading the process, helping stakeholders understand their interests in being engaged and how ocean planning can improve their lives and livelihoods, and tapping into existing networks, meetings, and engagement processes. Participants also recommended clear and tailored messaging and use of concrete examples of success when communicating with stakeholders about ocean planning.

High quality data and science: The need for high quality data and appropriate processes for quality control, vetting, sharing, and appropriately analyzing and using data were major topics of discussion. The Northeast Ocean Data Portal that NROC has developed was identified as an important step for data sharing, and ideas were offered about using the portal as a venue for stakeholders to provide input about information used for decision making. It was also noted that a wide range of information should be used for ocean planning, including biophysical, socioeconomic, cultural, and historical data that have both spatial and temporal dimensions. All of this data should meet certain standards and be accompanied by detailed metadata.

Implementation opportunities and challenges: Implementation of an eventual ocean plan, that is, management authorities making decisions in the context of an ocean plan, was discussed throughout the workshop. Key opportunities included more efficient permitting and decision-making processes, less conflict between and among uses and natural resources, maximization of economic and ecological value, and greater predictability for stakeholders and industry. Participants also identified a number of challenges that included: securing the commitment from states, federal agencies, and tribes to take actions consistent with an ocean plan once it is developed; the general ability of those entities to coordinate in an efficient and effective manner throughout the process; ensuring stakeholders have meaningful opportunities to provide input throughout the process.

Resources for planning: Budgetary constraints and the need to take significant new actions with existing resources were identified as challenges. It was noted that ocean planning should lead to the leveraging of resources and reduced duplication of effort across agencies in the long run, but that some additional resources would be needed at the start of the process and that those resources would be challenging to secure.

Role of NROC: Participants posed many questions about the role of NROC in preparing for ocean planning. In particular, they sought clarity on the relationships and responsibilities that would develop between NROC and a future Regional Planning Body to be established under the National Framework for Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning under the President's National Ocean Policy. NROC leaders responded that many of these decisions would need to be made in the future once the Regional Planning Body was established, and that in the mean time, NROC would continue to take logical next steps in building the foundational elements of

regional ocean planning and seek stakeholder input about these and other important questions. NROC also presented its desire for the ocean planning process to be transparent in decision-making and efficient to help maximize public engagement.

Building upon existing efforts: Throughout the workshop, participants offered a number of ideas for existing efforts that regional ocean planning could build upon. It was emphasized that there are many communication networks, data collection and sharing efforts, planning processes and other relevant efforts in the region that could contribute to regional ocean planning.

The workshop concluded with a request for participants to stay engaged and to help NROC build connections and provide appropriate engagement opportunities about ocean planning to the full spectrum of stakeholder communities. With regard to next steps, NROC representatives stated that NROC will develop and implement a robust stakeholder engagement strategy in the coming months that includes interest-specific and state-by-state meetings and other opportunities to provide input. NROC will also continue to gather, collect, and share new and improved data through the Northeast Ocean Data Portal, and take a number of additional actions to lay the groundwork for successful, broadly-supported regional ocean planning in New England.

About the *Northeast Workshop on Regional Ocean Planning*

The *Northeast Workshop on Regional Ocean Planning* was convened by the Northeast Regional Ocean Council (NROC) on March 12-13, 2012 at the Roger Williams School of Law in Bristol, Rhode Island. NROC is a state-federal agency partnership convened to implement solutions to New England's most pressing ocean and coastal issues that require a regional response. NROC is leading regional ocean planning in New England, in concert with a variety of partners, and has been successful in obtaining funding in support of a two-year work plan intended to provide important foundational pieces of this overall effort. More information about NROC can be found at <http://collaborate.csc.noaa.gov/nroc>.

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- Build a shared understanding of ocean planning in New England.
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- Build commitment to ongoing collaboration and support among regional stakeholders for ocean planning in the region.

Approximately 170 individuals participated in the workshop. They included a diversity of stakeholders representing New England industries, government, academia, tribes, and non-governmental organizations, as well as NROC federal and state members. NROC invited a wide range of stakeholder perspectives from each of the New England states, and while many additional important stakeholders in the region were not able to attend this initial workshop, there will be significant opportunities for people in each New England state and representing related interests to provide their ideas and feedback as the process proceeds. This workshop was facilitated by Meridian Institute, which provided process design, meeting planning, and facilitation services for the workshop. Meridian also developed this summary of workshop discussions.

About Regional Ocean Planning in New England

In New England, regional ocean planning is beginning with an NROC-led process whereby federal agencies, states, tribes, stakeholders, and the public work together to develop goals for the use and conservation of ocean resources and space, and to inform other aspects of regional

ocean planning (e.g., incorporation of data and science to inform management decisions). As part of this effort, NROC is working with various partners and the public to assemble existing data related to ocean resources and uses and to collect new data to fill priority gaps in knowledge. NROC's purpose in these initial efforts is to begin a dialog to identify issues that could benefit from the comprehensive approach provided by ocean planning. These issues would be carefully addressed in the regional ocean plan and put forward to help guide federal and state agency decision making about the management of human activity and ocean resources in New England.

The ocean planning process will not change existing authorities or create new mandates. Rather, the intent is that agencies will use the ocean plan—and the information, science and tools that are developed through the planning effort—as a guide when making decisions within existing authorities to manage ocean resources. The process of developing and sharing data, developing a regional ocean plan, and then working together to manage programs and make decisions in the context of that ocean plan should result in enhanced state and federal agency and tribal coordination and more efficient decision-making. Massachusetts and Rhode Island are already implementing ocean planning at a state level with success and have important lessons learned that can be built upon for this regional effort. In addition, there are a large number of smaller-scale and issues-specific planning and resource management efforts in the region that can be built upon to ensure ocean planning at a regional scale is conducted efficiently and effectively.

It is important to note that the New England region is still in the early stages of formulating this approach. The timing of the workshop was deliberately intended to enable NROC to obtain input on its work plan prior to its implementation, and to convene a more diverse group to discuss issues appropriate for ocean planning to address. Input and feedback from stakeholders at the workshop, since that time, and throughout the ocean planning process will be critical to moving forward in a way that addresses the major opportunities and challenges the region faces and does so in an efficient and transparent manner.

NROC is currently moving forward with a two-year workplan focused on laying the groundwork for regional ocean planning in New England. NROC has not established regional ocean planning goals for the region, but is developing a strategy to engage stakeholders across the region to do so. NROC also wishes to engage stakeholders in helping to design the ocean planning process itself, taking into account diverse viewpoints and determining as a region how to meet the goals that the region establishes for itself. NROC is also currently developing a robust stakeholder engagement strategy and recognizes that it is essential to engage stakeholder feedback at every step of the planning process.

National efforts

There are efforts underway at the national level, and in other regions as well, to implement a more coordinated approach to ocean management. President Obama issued an Executive Order in July of 2010 that established our nation's first National Ocean Policy. The policy clarifies the importance of our oceans to this nation and makes it the policy of the United States to provide for sustainable use of our ocean resources, to ensure ocean ecosystems can sustain the goods and services on which our economy and quality of life depend. Establishment of a national ocean policy has been advocated for by leaders representing a diversity of interests and political affiliations for many decades. It is the next step in a series of actions that have been taken across a number of Presidential administrations to better focus and coordinate agencies that manage ocean resources.

A cornerstone for carrying out the National Ocean Policy is federal support for regional efforts to better manage ocean resources. Among a number of strategic priorities related to the policy is what the Administration calls "coastal and marine spatial planning." The coastal and marine spatial planning process established at the national level includes creation of a Regional Planning Body (RPB) in each coastal region of the United States. Each RPB would be composed of state, federal, and tribal representatives, including a representative of each region's Fishery Management Council. For more information about the National Ocean Policy and related activities, please visit www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/oceans/policy.

The RPB in New England has not yet been established, but it is anticipated that it will be created in 2012. Many of the entities represented on NROC will also be represented on the RPB—there will be extensive overlap between the two organizations. For this reason, while an eventual RPB may develop the regional ocean plan, it is logical for NROC to lay the groundwork now for successful regional ocean planning with the resources it has available. The exact details of the relationship between NROC and a future RPB was the subject of much conversation at the regional workshop—again, purposefully, since NROC was eager to obtain input on this issue.

About this Document

This document summarizes presentations and discussions at the *Northeast Workshop on Regional Ocean Planning*. It is organized according to the workshop agenda and major themes covered in each session. It is a best effort by Meridian Institute, which assisted NROC in planning and convening the workshop, to capture the major insights, recommendations, and questions provided to NROC for consideration by participants and panelists during each session. Supplementary materials, including presentations used during the workshop and workshop materials, such as the agenda and participant list, are included as appendices.

Monday, March 12, 2012

The two-day workshop began with opening remarks from key leaders who set the context for discussions. Then participants worked in small groups to consider major opportunities and challenges in the region that ocean planning could address. A diverse panel then responded to participant input.

Welcome

Donald J. Farish, Ph.D., J.D., President, Roger Williams University

President Farish opened the workshop by welcoming the participants to Roger Williams University. He praised workshop attendees for coming together from across a wide range of interests to work together and highlighted the importance of stakeholder engagement in the decision making process. He charged participants to model this form of engagement for the rest of the nation.

Keynote speaker

Senator Jack Reed (D-RI)

Senator Reed began by thanking those involved in making this workshop possible. He then gave special mention to Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) for his efforts to secure funding for a National Endowment for the Oceans (NEO). Senator Reed encouraged workshop attendees to take advantage of the great opportunities presented by the the NROC planning effort, urging that a collaborative effort to address important ocean issues could be very successful. He pointed to the Rhode Island Ocean Special Area Management Plan (OSAMP) as an example of to the nation of how to successfully conduct ocean planning, emphasizing the importance of going to stakeholders early to create a comprehensive process with open and public dialogue. He explained that the OSAMP balances environmental concerns while protecting established industries and enabling the siting of new uses. Senator Reed pointed to a process in which the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) sited a location for wind farms off the Rhode Island coast last year, using the OSAMP as a basis, as an example of the plan's efficacy and reliability. The Senator concluded his remarks by congratulating participants on their efforts, saying that he looks forward to hearing results from the meeting and advice from stakeholders about how to proceed with improving ocean management.

Opening remarks

NROC Co-Chairs welcomed workshop participants and provided context for the meeting, as well as a brief overview of NROC.

Bruce Carlisle, Co-Chair, Northeast Regional Ocean Council

On behalf of NROC, Mr. Carlisle welcomed participants to the meeting. He set the stage for the meeting by giving a brief background of NROC, explaining that it was formed in 2005 by the six Northeastern governors in order to coordinate on regional ocean issues. In 2006, NROC expanded to include federal agencies as full partners, and involves many other partners in its committee work. Since 2008, ocean planning has been a priority for NROC. He concluded by explaining that NROC has become a platform for states and federal agencies to discuss and share ideas, needs, and provide access to resources.

Bob LaBelle, Co-Chair, Northeast Regional Ocean Council

Mr. LaBelle added that the federal role in NROC is a unique opportunity for federal agencies to work together with states in the region. He emphasized that, from a national perspective, a regional approach to ocean planning is appropriate because policy needs to be informed by actors that know the affected areas best. He explained that this knowledge will help in good planning and will inform the RPBs called for in the National Ocean Policy.

Presentation: Ocean Planning in New England

Richard Delaney, Executive Director, Provincetown Center for Coastal Studies

Mr. Delaney explained that creating an ocean plan is an important opportunity to take positive action for better management of our oceans. He recognized that ocean planning seems challenging in light of the complexity of ocean ecosystems, the number of users of the ocean, and the political considerations, and he thanked participants in advance for their robust discussion and innovative thinking about how to move forward. Mr. Delaney explained that there needs to be more clarity in messaging about ocean planning so that ocean users and the general public can understand it, stressing the importance of the nomenclature used to describe ocean planning. The oceans are extremely important economically and ecologically, but there are lots of misconceptions about ocean planning in Congress, for example. He explained that there is now much better data, more sophisticated process approaches, and more sophisticated tools to communicate our messages than ever before, and the ocean community needs to take advantage of these resources and this opportunity. Mr. Delaney concluded with a quote by George Campbell: “there may be issues more important than the health of our oceans, but surely they are few.”

Panel: Setting the stage for regional ocean planning in the Northeast

In this panel, state and federal representatives and ocean stakeholders provided an overview of progress at the state, regional, and national levels to help frame the topic of ocean planning in the Northeast. This session included facilitated dialogue with plenary participants and the opportunity to ask questions of the panel. Slides that accompanied Grover Fugate's remarks are included in Appendix A.1.

- *Grover Fugate, Executive Director, Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council*
- *Michael Weiss, Deputy Director, National Ocean Council Office*
- *John Weber, Ocean Planning Director, Northeast Regional Ocean Council*
- *John Bullard, President, Sea Education Association*

Grover Fugate

Mr. Fugate opened the panel by explaining that a good ocean plan first identifies resources and their uses, and then evaluates the compatibility of those uses while taking into account current status and trends and providing protection for important resources. By amassing data and adding clarity, ocean planning can reduce uncertainty in the decision making process for regulators. Ocean planning forms the basis for ecosystem-based management, can improve implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and speeds up permitting processes. Mr. Fugate provided examples of on-the-ground benefits that have resulted from the Rhode Island OSAMP.

Michael Weiss

Mr. Weiss began by highlighting the importance of the oceans to local and national economies, stating that we are all stewards of ocean resources. He then explained that, in 2010, the National Ocean Policy was created to provide a more efficient, science-based, bottom-up approach to ocean policy, which builds off of decades of bipartisan work and discussion. The National Ocean Policy provides a framework in which local, state, tribal, and federal partners can come together to plan resource use and improve decision making. Mr. Weiss explained other benefits of the National Ocean Policy, including increased predictability, better access to data, and more efficient use of ocean resources. To aid this process, the National Ocean Council (NOC) has developed a national ocean data portal (ocean.data.gov), is finalizing RPB invitations, and will soon release a handbook outlining guidance on how RPBs might develop regional ocean plans around the U.S. Mr. Weiss stated that the NOC wants to build off of the strong foundation that is already present in the Northeast.

John Weber

Mr. Weber explained that ocean planning is not a new concept. He provided several examples of ocean planning and suggested that a common thread among them is that each addresses real issues and combines science, data, and public input. He elaborated that it is important that ocean planning include spatial and temporal data for both ocean and coastal areas, and underscored the need for strong stakeholder engagement. Mr. Weber acknowledged many challenges that point to a need for ocean planning, such as new and expanding ocean uses, and pointed to successes and catalysts for positive change, such as the National Ocean Policy. To help meet needs and objectives for ocean planning, NROC has developed a workplan and the Northeast Ocean Data Portal and has been engaging with stakeholders to provide clarity for moving the process forward.

John Bullard

Mr. Bullard referred to the port city of New Bedford, Massachusetts, which relies on the sea for its inhabitant's livelihoods, as an example of a case with increasing demands on the ocean environment. He stressed the importance of science in the decision making process. Drawing from his experience in the Massachusetts ocean planning effort, Mr. Bullard remarked that the ocean is a great connector and that concrete results will be needed soon to demonstrate the benefits of continuing to move forward with planning. He explained that much of the current political resistance to ocean planning results from fear of the unknown and that action and positive results are the best way to build confidence among those who are skeptical. He noted that making bad decisions under the current fragmented system can be costly, and in fact in some cases no decisions are being made, which is equally as harmful. He used the losses in time and resources associated with a decade-long decision process about the Cape Wind project as an example of the problem ocean planning promised to address. He concluded saying it is important to ensure that stakeholder concerns are addressed, and that ocean planning continue to move forward.

Question and Answer

After the opening remarks, the panel responded to a variety of questions from plenary participants focused on the topics of transparency and perceptions of the National Ocean Policy and regional planning.

Transparency and perception: A participant emphasized the importance of transparency and stakeholders feeling their input is being taken into account in decision making, and asked how the government defines transparency. Panelists responded with an example from the Rhode Island OSAMP in which BOEM changed regulations for wind energy in response to concerns expressed by the fishing community related to important fishing grounds. They also noted that

there is responsibility on both sides for transparency and engagement. It was acknowledged that communication from government entities could at times be improved, but that each stakeholder group is also responsible for engagement in ocean planning to ensure their interest is taken into account. It was explained that one way NROC is working to increase transparency is by talking to stakeholders about how to better characterize the commercial fishing industry, noting that methods of data gathering are very important. Participants were invited to share their ideas about how the process and transparency can be improved.

Concern was expressed about the perception by ocean users that ocean planning will lead to loss of economic opportunity. A panelist responded that the intent of the National Ocean Policy is to make more informed decisions, and not to take away access to resources. The goal is to engage stakeholders from the outset of the process.

Regional Planning: Panelists were asked for ideas about how to ensure there is on-the-ground support for the National Ocean Policy in the regions, regardless of future activities in Washington, DC. A panelist explained that this topic would be delved into further on the following day of the workshop, but in brief, replied that the most effective way to achieve stakeholder support is by building personal connections and immediately demonstrating success. He pointed to the Northeast Ocean Data Portal, which is already functional and useful, as an example of a way stakeholders can get immediate information.

Panelists were asked how the lack of an ocean plan in an individual state affects the region as a whole and the ability for that state to participate in the planning process. A panelist answered that the vision is to conduct studies on a regional basis so that all states will be equal players in the process. A follow-up question addressed a reduction in recent aquaculture permits in Rhode Island. It was explained that the application process since the Rhode Island OSAMP has been streamlined to include a pre-application which has resulted in fewer, yet stronger applicants requesting approval for projects of the Rhode Island Coastal Resource Management Council.

Panelists were asked how ocean plans will help with ecosystem management from an environmental protection perspective. A panelist gave an example of a cable project in Massachusetts that avoided important seafloor habitats. The streamlined and integrated information and broader data collection of an ocean plan allows planners to better identify habitat types and make smarter decisions. It was added that ocean planning effort is focused on better information and achieving a better understanding at a local level.

Breakout groups: Addressing opportunities and challenges in the Northeast region through ocean planning

During the first breakout session, participants worked in small groups to identify major opportunities and challenges for the region and how ocean planning can address them. It is important to note that most breakout groups stressed that many of the challenges can also be viewed as opportunities, while many of the opportunities have their own challenges. Therefore, the insights compiled across the different breakout groups are organized by topic, highlighting both the opportunities and challenges associated with that topic.

Comprehensive approach to management

Participants identified that regional ocean planning provides a much needed opportunity to take a more comprehensive approach to the management of ocean resources and uses, which will lead to better decisions about the use and protection of valuable regional resources. The regional ocean plan potentially could provide specific opportunities, including opportunities to:

- Identify and protect important places that support current uses, such as commercial fishing, recreational fishing, recreational boating, and diving
- Identify and protect important critical habitats and wildlife
- Better manage for sustainable use of and protection of ecosystem services
- Embrace new industries and emerging technologies
- Establish shared goals for regional resources and collaboratively consider trade-offs and resolve conflicts
- Assess environmental, economic, and social factors in planning and management

Participants cautioned that while the regional ocean plan will drive a more comprehensive approach, it is critical that the plan be adaptive and flexible to incorporate new information and adapt to changes in the natural and social environment. The ocean plan will need to consider both short and long term temporal scales to account for changes in fish migration and spawning patterns from climate change impacts. It was noted that the regional ocean plan faces the challenge of needing to be flexible enough to adapt to changing environmental or social conditions, as well as to incorporate new information or new uses, while remaining predictable enough that it can be trusted as a tool for long-term planning by developers and regulatory agencies. Participants stressed that the plan must be adaptive, with a clear process in place to update the plan every few years.

It was highlighted that, ultimately, a more comprehensive and informed approach to planning would likely lead to more jobs, more fish, stronger local economies, and healthier ecosystems. It was also pointed out that through engagement of stakeholders, including the public, the process

has great potential to ultimately strengthen stewardship in the region. One participant remarked that, if done properly, the regional planning approach presents an opportunity for coastal communities to break out of the business-as-usual mindset and embrace a future where they can approach issues differently – more comprehensively, more collaboratively – and manage for the long-term sustainable use of their resources.

Regional collaboration

Participants identified that the regional ocean planning process presents an opportunity for federal agencies, states, tribes, and regional organizations to work together and improve coordination on management of ocean resources. This improved coordination and collaboration will allow for increased leveraging of resources, expanded sharing of expertise and tools, and improved communication among all parties. It was pointed out that in a time when budgets are tight, this type of coordination is critical to ensure resources are used efficiently and partnerships are used effectively to help the region move toward its goals. It was stressed that while coordination between federal agencies and among federal agencies and regional entities is a benefit, there needs to be some assurance that at the end of the process the federal agencies will actually use the ocean plan that is developed by the region.

Participants also stressed that the regional ocean planning process provides the states and local governments with the opportunity to transcend parochial issues and think regionally. It was highlighted that the status quo sometimes leads to competition among the states, with management of resources and uses confined to the traditional state boundaries even as the resources and uses are affected by the actions of surrounding communities and states. Most participants agreed that a regional approach is important to allow for the establishment of shared goals for the region, which can drive an ocean plan that will help all parties see how things interact and make informed discussions about trade-offs from a regional, ecosystem-based perspective. It was pointed out that a challenge will be ensuring that local needs and priorities are supported by the regional plan.

Several participants also noted that the region has the unique opportunity to lead the way in regional ocean planning in the nation. With the Massachusetts Ocean Plan and Rhode Island OSAMP in place, the region is well positioned to be a leader and serve as a model for effective regional ocean planning for the rest of the nation.

Regulatory efficiencies and predictability

Participants noted that increased regulatory efficiencies for siting and permitting new offshore projects, especially energy projects, is viewed by many as an opportunity provided by regional ocean planning. However, it was noted that part of the challenge to regulatory streamlining lies

in acquiring the data needed for site-specific planning and permitting and in the current statutory requirements of the permitting agencies.

Participants also highlighted that the regional ocean plan will likely lead to increased predictability and reduction of risk for offshore industries, encouraging increased investments and jobs for the region. The regional ocean plan will lead to more informed requests for permits and more streamlined permitting processes, as options for siting will be more easily evaluated and compatibility with other uses more readily understood using the ocean plan.

It was pointed out that the regional ocean plan will serve as a tool for developers that need to consider feasible options for project siting as well as for the regulatory agencies that need to make permitting decisions. The ocean plan will not be binding but instead inform developers as well as regulatory agencies about compatibilities, conflicts, and risks. The plan will be a tool for users and regulators alike to inform their own decisions and to facilitate discussions when there are conflicts and incompatibilities.

Stakeholder engagement

Participants recognized that the regional ocean planning process presents a great opportunity to educate a broad range of stakeholders, including the public, about coastal and ocean resources and uses. It was stressed that a greater understanding of ocean planning, including its potential benefits and challenges, is needed by all stakeholders who are to be engaged in the process. Clearly explaining what ocean planning is, how the regional process will work, how stakeholders will be able to engage, and what the final regional ocean plan will look like and how it will be used is critical as a first step of the process. Several participants encouraged NROC to answer these and other common questions on its website to help assist with its stakeholder engagement process.

Stakeholder engagement process: NROC has identified stakeholder engagement as a primary component of its workplan, but participants stressed that robust, meaningful stakeholder engagement will be one of the major challenges to the regional ocean planning process. They questioned who would be engaged, what would be the opportunities for engagement, how the process would address stakeholders' concerns, and how the concerns would be taken into account. Participants pointed out that the stakeholder engagement done as part of the development of the Massachusetts Ocean Plan and the Rhode Island OSAMP are good examples for NROC to follow. Across the breakout groups, participants identified several important recommendations related to stakeholder engagement:

- Build a stakeholder engagement effort that allows the stakeholders to take ownership of the process, which will help build trust over time.

- Allow stakeholders to have an opportunity to comment early and often. Use websites, email, social media, and other commonly used communication mechanisms to keep stakeholders informed and provide them with easy ways to give input.
- Create opportunities for participation in a fair context by holding meetings at a variety of times and places to allow diverse stakeholders to attend (e.g. not holding meetings only during the fishing season or only during weekdays).
- Ensure the stakeholder engagement process is transparent and show people that they have been heard. Respond to stakeholders with an approach that captures the sentiment that “this is how we are going fix the problem.” Create a strong feedback loop to help them understand how their input has influenced the outcome.
- Engage people in data collection, analysis, and mapping. Different stakeholder groups need to have the opportunity to review the data, comment on it, and provide their own data.
- Use maps and spatial tools to engage stakeholders so they can visualize what the ocean plan will look like, how it can be used, and how their input and data is being incorporated. Clearly discuss uncertainties in the maps, models, and tools to promote transparency and credibility.
- Clearly articulate what the specific benefits of a regional ocean plan will be to each type of stakeholder – why should they be involved and how will the outcomes affect them.
- Engage people that do not live or work on the coast. People upstream affected coastal and ocean resources, and are dependent on those resources, so they have a stake in the process.
- Meaningful stakeholder engagement takes time and resources, but it is critical to build trust and ownership in the process and ultimately the ocean plan.

Participants also raised concerns that the National Ocean Council’s RPB structure appears to exclude many groups by having a membership that includes only a limited number of federal, state, and tribal members and even fewer local and fisheries representatives. It was pointed out that since it is not clear how the RPB can formally engage with stakeholders, due to concerns under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) that structure seems like it will limit stakeholder input. Whether through NROC or the RPB, a wide range of stakeholders need to be a part of the planning process since, in the end, the plan will only be as good as the diversity of perspectives that contribute to it.

Engaging the public: Participants highlighted that NROC needs to ensure engagement of the general public, not just stakeholders familiar with the issues or who view themselves as having a stake in the ocean planning process. Since the process affects ocean resources, which are held

in the public trust, the planning process needs to be an open process with multiple avenues to encourage broad public participation.

It was noted that some people in the region perceive the National Ocean Policy as a top-down approach rather than from the bottom-up, guided by regional priorities and local needs. The public is used to business-as-usual, in which federal efforts are usually top-down with limited stakeholder input or engagement. There is a need to build trust by providing opportunities for robust engagement of the public, and following through so they know their engagement is valued and influenced the process. Several participants cautioned that it is important to set expectations of how public engagement will happen and how it will be used. Participants suggested that the ocean planning processes in Massachusetts and Rhode Island serve as examples of how the process allows states to influence and drive the federal decisions. These existing state examples should be communicated to the public to help garner understanding and encourage them to participate in this new way of planning for the region.

Engaging fishermen and fishing industry: Numerous participants stressed the need to get fishermen and the fishing industry engaged in the process. Regional ocean planning will have implications for the fishing industry, even though fisheries management will continue to occur as it does currently, and there are some within the industry who perceive that it will lead to further restrictions on fishing. Participants noted the importance of providing opportunities for fishermen to be involved, including at times (e.g. Saturdays, evening) and in places that are convenient for them.

Participants also identified the need to build trust with the fishing community. In the past, there have been times when the fishing industry or fishermen have provided data, only to have that data used against them. The ocean planning effort will need to ensure that fishermen feel comfortable sharing their data and information, as it is a critical component of the planning process. Fishermen need to understand how their data will be used and feel ownership in the process, not alienated. Improved communication, convenient opportunities to engage, and respect for their information and confidentially concerns are needed in order for the fishing community to meaningfully engage in ocean planning.

Avoiding stakeholder fatigue: Participants pointed to the many different ocean-related efforts going on in the region as a great opportunity for building on existing efforts, but also a great challenge to ensure the NROC effort does not contribute to stakeholder fatigue. They recommended that NROC educate stakeholders on the multiple efforts, how they fit together and are coordinated, and which process stakeholders are supposed to be engaged in. Any efforts to use stakeholder engagement opportunities to get input for various efforts in one

meeting would be beneficial. Participants also stressed the importance of setting real goals and a timeline for the next two years so it is clear to all stakeholders involved what the output or outcome of their efforts will be. Having an early success is critical. While it may not be the final outcome, a tangible, early success will help people see that progress is being made and will keep them motivated to stay involved. This is especially critical for the members of the public that are interested in the process, but are not paid to be engaged through their work, as they need other incentives to stay involved.

Data and Science

Participants highlighted that the opportunity to bring diverse groups of constituents together to share data and information, and to pull that data together in one central place, is a valuable benefit of the regional ocean planning process. It was stressed that the region has a lot of good data available, but there is a need to make people aware of them and make them available and accessible to users. By providing a central place for ocean planning data, as initiated by the Northeast Ocean Data Portal, a variety of possible benefits were identified:

- Opportunity to engage various stakeholders to understand what data they have and include their data in the portal.
- Opportunity to collect data in a consistent manner for all of New England.
- Availability of a credible and up-to-date source of data and information that can easily be used by various user groups and data providers.
- Opportunity to connect with data, information, and models used outside of the government by private industries, tribal nations, non-governmental organizations, and academia.
- Improved ability to understand data gaps and work with the broad spectrum of users to prioritize data and research needs.
- Opportunity to use data, through integration and spatial analysis, to build maps and other tools to help the region understand its ocean resources and uses and to inform the planning and decision-making process.

Despite identifying numerous benefits of a more coordinated data effort to support regional ocean planning, participants also discussed a number of challenges that would need to be addressed:

- Concerns of private entities, including fishermen and the fishing industry, about sharing confidential information. There will be a need to develop buy-in and trust among the data providers to assure them that their data is respected and can remain confidential as needed but still be used to inform the ocean planning process and plan.
- Insufficient data quality and quality on some ecosystem attributes and uses, including social and cultural information.

- Concerns about data standards used and who decides what data or information is acceptable, especially when considering data that will feed into models and support tools.
- Differences in data type, quality, scales, and availability between the states in the region and how to make data compatible for use in the regional planning process.
- Long-term commitment of funding is needed to ensure data providers and users remain interested; to ensure continued data collection, integration, and analysis; and to ensure data management tools are maintained and evolve to meet emerging needs.

Several participants stressed that data will never be complete, perfectly compatible, or as up-to-date as would be ideal for informing planning and decision-making. It was urged that the region has good data and information, and a variety of groups that are already coordinating data collection on a regional or sub-regional scale. The ocean planning process needs to move forward based on existing data and be a dynamic process that can incorporate new data and information over time.

Funding

Participants stressed that funding for regional ocean planning may be the biggest challenge. They questioned where the money would come from to do the process right, including funding the science, data collection and analysis, mapping and modeling, and stakeholder engagement process. Some participants raised concerns that if funding comes from private sources, those funders may want to influence the goals and outcomes of the process. It was clarified that NROC's approach is to identify its work plan goals and subsequent activities, and then finds funds – private or public – that can support its work plan. Other participants highlighted that the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy had called for an ocean investment fund to be established, with funds coming from revenues from offshore activities. They noted that it could be useful to make progress on that idea, as a dedicated funding source for regional planning would be beneficial in the current budget climate.

Role of NROC

Some participants expressed that a challenge was the confusion between NROC and the RPB called for by the National Ocean Policy. It was clarified that NROC is not the RPB, but a governor-initiated regional ocean council convened to address a number of priorities. The RPB will be a separate entity from NROC, but it is known that there will be much overlap in membership among the federal and state agencies. Much coordination is expected between the two groups. Participants stressed that the confusion between NROC and the RPB, and the perception that the two groups will do the same thing, may hinder stakeholders from engaging in the NROC regional ocean planning process as they do not want to put their time into an effort that may be changed when the RPB is established.

It was stressed that NROC is moving forward on foundational elements for the region, as identified in its workplan, primarily focused on public engagement and development of data. NROC is confident the work they are doing now is appropriate for the work of the RPB. For example, NROC took the lead in developing the regional data portal, recognizing that such a tool will be a critical component of developing the regional ocean plan. Other elements of the workplan, including a baseline characterization and exploring implementation options, would be other key contributions to the RPB based on their required deliverables to the National Ocean Council. These synergies are deliberate and are intended to build off one another.

Participants also expressed concern that the NROC workplan did not establish specific goals for the region. It was clarified by NROC that the purpose of the workshop was to begin the public input process on what the regional goals should be. It was pointed out that the purpose of the stakeholder engagement piece of the NROC workplan is to start a robust engagement process to get input on the regional, shared goals that need to drive the ocean plan. Because NROC wished for the workshop to provide input on its work plan, including the various pieces of public engagement NROC is proposing, NROC did not feel it appropriate to have already begun that public goal-setting process prior to the workshop.

Several participants also questioned if the NROC ocean planning process will go forward if there is a change in government leadership at the state or national level with the upcoming elections. It was stressed that NROC existed before the National Ocean Policy was created through Executive Order, and the state ocean planning processes in Massachusetts and Rhode Island were independent of the national policy. The region is clearly interested in moving forward with ocean planning for its own purposes and the foundation has been established to allow the region to continue through NROC, regardless of the political changes that may occur.

Panel: Addressing opportunities and challenges in the Northeast region through ocean planning

During this plenary session, a panel of stakeholders and state, federal, and tribal representatives responded to questions from the preceding breakout groups related to opportunities and challenges of ocean planning the region. Major reflections and questions from each breakout group were provided by breakout facilitators to the lead plenary facilitator, who offered major themes to the panel for response. Themes and panelist responses are summarized here. The summary captures both questions posed by the breakout groups as well as plenary participants.

Panelists for this session were:

- *James Behnke, Member, Rich May*
- *Denise Desautels, Deputy Section Chief, Office of the General Council, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration*
- *Doug Harris, Tribal Preservation Officer, Narragansett Indian Tribe*
- *Kathleen Leyden, Director, Maine Coastal Program*
- *Sally McGee, Member, New England Fishery Management Council*
- *Stephanie Moura, Director, SeaPlan*
- *Joel Whitman, Chief Executive Officer, Global Marine Energy, Inc.*

Biggest opportunity and challenge

Panelists were asked what they thought were the biggest opportunities and challenges that the regional ocean plan can address. Panelists remarked that an opportunity lies in creating a better understanding of the interactions between the various existing and emerging ocean uses, including fisheries, energy, and transportation. It was noted that the offshore has much development potential but also significant existing uses, and the ocean plan can help users and stakeholders better understand the resources and think through how to develop responsibly. Panelists stressed the opportunity to enhance permitting efficiency and offer more predictability to encourage industries to invest in the region. Other panelists identified building off of the existing efforts in the region and moving into setting regional ocean goals as key opportunities.

In regard to the challenges, panelists identified engaging the range of stakeholders that need to be involved as a primary concern. They stressed that NROC needs to focus and get started on the stakeholder engagement process right away, starting with a strong communication effort to explain what ocean planning is and why it is important to the region. Panelists also urged NROC to not let the effort collapse under its own weight or be reduced to the lowest hanging fruit, but to really focus on engaging stakeholders and building an understanding, as that will provide a solid foundation for the ocean planning effort.

Short-term momentum

The panel was asked what the region needs to do in the coming year to build on and maintain momentum for ocean planning. Panelists responded that NROC already has pieces of the workplan in motion, such as efforts to engage stakeholders, map recreational boating and commercial fishing activities, address other data gaps, and examine approaches to habitat modeling. Panelists stressed that it was important for NROC to move forward and get something done, then to craft messages about lessons learned, both successes and failures. They also urged NROC to ensure that they define the problems, the goals, the geographic scale, and the specific role of NROC in the coming year so that people are clear about who they are, what

they are trying to do, and why. It was also noted, with the coming elections, that it is critical to make sure that leaders who support the regional ocean planning effort are elected or re-elected.

Funding

The panel was asked how the regional ocean planning process would be funded. Panelists responded that in the current government budget situation, at both the federal and state levels, they do not expect much new money to be available to help with the effort. They stressed the importance of leveraging funds from existing efforts and across agencies, as well as looking for opportunities for public-private partnerships. It was noted that a multiple investment strategy will be needed, with funds coming from both government and private sources. The Rhode Island OSAMP was raised as an example of a process supported by a range of funding types and sources. Panelists also remarked on the need to build the market potential of the region, based on clear goals, to entice industries to engage in the region and bring funds to the ocean planning process.

Stakeholder engagement

Panelists were asked to discuss what high-quality stakeholder engagement would entail. Panelists remarked that the stakeholder process used in the Rhode Island OSAMP process was very good and should be used as a model. In that process, numerous stakeholders were brought together to have conversations with each other were in groups. Participants in those processes were asked to invite others that needed to be a part of the conversation. This created an opportunity for different stakeholder groups to understand and truly engage with each other. It was in this dialogue that the sense of community began to grow. It is critical to carefully consider how you set up the process to build a sense of community to ensure that stakeholders feel a part of the process and will work together to move toward the goal. Panelists cautioned that the Rhode Island process included lots of meeting and opportunities for feedback and input, which can be expensive over a larger regional area, and that NROC may need to consider practical aspects of options for engagement. Panelists also warned that there can be downfalls to looking for representatives of a stakeholder group or sector, as often they have many members that would like to be and need to be a part of the conversation.

A member of the audience asked for clarification on how the NROC stakeholder process would work and when people would be able to get engaged. Panelists responded that the workshop was the first step, but obviously not everyone in the region with an interest could participate. Part of the purpose of the workshop was to get input from participants on how to design an approach that gets all interests involved. Panelists stressed that NROC invites all participants to put what they need on the table. They urged participants to give input, share your concerns, and ask questions. NROC is trying to build a community where all members can identify

problems and then work together and invest in the process to resolve them. Panelists noted that the stakeholder process will need specific conversations with each category of user-group or interest, between certain interests, and more open-ended discussions involving many interests. Panelists highlighted that there is a specific need to engage developers and industry groups and to bring together developers and regulators to identify opportunities for collaboration and more efficient permitting in order to build a business case for ocean planning. It was noted that NROC has issued a request for proposals for assistance with a robust interest-specific outreach plan.

Implementation under existing authorities

Panelists were asked questions about how implementation of the regional ocean plan will work in the context of existing authorities and laws. Panelists responded that the regional ocean plan will be a tool to help inform decisions under existing authorities. It will provide state and federal agencies with a factual characterization of the region, which includes assessment of where resources and uses are located and what compatibilities and incompatibilities exist. Individual agencies will still manage and make decisions under their own statutes, but they will be informed by a more consistent and shared baseline. It will lead to a more efficient and effective way of permitting projects and making other decisions, still under the current authorities.

Concluding thoughts

At the end of the panel, each panelists was asked to summarize a primary take-away point as they reflected on the input and questions from the breakout groups. Their concluding thoughts were:

- We need to embrace the opportunity to make a business case for the region and engage with industry.
- It is important for NROC, working with the stakeholders, to identify regional goals to drive the ocean planning process.
- We are at a great place to make things better in coastal and ocean management and to get people to care about these resources. We need to define the problem to be solved, define the appropriate geography, and define NROC's role.
- We have an opportunity to innovate and create change. Ecosystems are regionally-based, and it's time we start a new kind of management within our region.
- There is a valuable opportunity to look for unexpected collaborations. We need to pull together as a region and manage our shared resource sustainably.
- It is important to be open to development and use the regional ocean plan to develop in a responsible manner. NROC should not be involved in the decision about permitting and siting development, but instead provide a tool and a process to better inform those

decisions. Be aware of and open to future uses, and ensure the ocean plan can be adapted.

Tuesday, March 13, 2012

On the second day of the workshop, participants heard from NROC leaders about its workplan for laying the groundwork for ocean planning, then provided feedback on that workplan in small groups. A panel of NROC members responded to the participant's feedback. Then participants worked in small groups again to develop specific recommendations to NROC related to science and data, stakeholder outreach, and implementation. The workshop closed with a panel response to those ideas and discussion of stakeholder outreach going forward.

Panel: Northeast Regional Ocean Council preparations for moving forward

During this panel, representatives of NROC described its two-year workplan, including proposed outcomes and preparations for ocean planning in the region. This session was aided by a PowerPoint presentation and a summary of the workplan, located in Appendices A.2 and B.3 respectively.

Presenters for this session were:

- *John Weber, Ocean Planning Director, Northeast Regional Ocean Council*
- *Nick Napoli, Director of Marine Planning, SeaPlan*

John Weber

Mr. Weber opened the second day of the workshop by welcoming participants back and explaining that the discussion on day two would delve deeper into the status and content of the NROC workplan. He remarked that a primary concern raised on day one was the need to be inclusive and transparent in the development of the workplan and he assured workshop participants that NROC leadership agrees strongly with this sentiment. He invited and encouraged participant input, emphasizing that it will help guide the details of plan refinement and execution.

Mr. Weber reminded participants that NROC was formed in 2005 to identify and address regional ocean issues. Since NROC's formation, the National Ocean Policy was established, which calls for the creation of RPBs. There will be a relationship between NROC, which includes state and federal agencies, and the Northeast RPB, which will have overlapping membership with NROC on an individual basis, but will also include tribes and the NE Fishery Management Council. In regard to public engagement, Mr. Weber explained that NROC is

generally developing several avenues for the public to have input into the planning process, within the overall goals of transparency and efficiency going forward

Referencing the timeline for ocean planning in New England included in the workplan summary among the workshop materials (Appendix B.3), Mr. Weber explained that there are three basic phases for ocean planning and that NROC is currently in “Phase 1.” Phase 1 is devoted to executing the current NROC two-year workplan by gathering information and identifying key issues and goals in order to lay a foundation for NROC’s work. As part of Phase 1, NROC is planning conversations about the workplan with stakeholders throughout New England in the coming months. Phase 2, following this two-year initial stage, will be devoted to developing the ocean plan and Phase 3 to the implementation of the ocean plan.

Mr. Weber then elaborated on the five key, desired outcomes of NROC’s workplan, starting with the first two:

- **Outcome 1** is a well- engaged public. He noted that one of the most important ways to engage people in New England is to reach them personally. He also discussed the need to reach out to stakeholders across New England using a topical approach (e.g., energy, shipping, ports, aquaculture, etc.) to identify the current status and future trends of ocean uses. Using social media and other forms of modern technology and working with existing entities are also very important. Mr. Weber explained that this workshop is an initial step in a robust process of outreach and data gathering with stakeholders and the public.
- **Outcome 2** is developing data and science. This includes reviewing data products and identifying gaps and areas of uncertainty. There is currently a focus on spatial data, which NROC aims to supplement with new data about recreational ocean users. The Northeast Ocean Data Portal is now available to the public online. Mr. Weber then invited Mr. Napoli to explain the data portal.

Nick Napoli

Mr. Napoli described for workshop participants the functionality of the data portal, which includes ocean maps and tools that help characterize the Northeast region. The portal’s web address is <http://northeastoceandata.org>. Mr. Napoli explained that work has been done to identify data priorities for regional ocean planning. The portal was developed through a collaborative effort with many regional partners, coordination with the National Ocean Council, and by incorporating information from ocean buoys. Data needs that have been identified include information about recreational boating, and commercial fishing.. Future work will include incorporating economic information. Mr. Napoli then demonstrated examples of data portal capabilities and explained to participants that the portal also links to other E-data catalogues.

John Weber

After Mr. Napoli's presentation, Mr. Weber described the remaining outcomes:

- **Outcome 3** is compiling science and preparing a baseline characterization of the region. A baseline characterization in this context is essentially an overview of the region's ecology, natural resources, socio-economic condition, and other information that is the current state of "what we know." NROC will serve as a platform from which to have a discussion of tools and work needed in the region to conduct a high quality baseline characterization.
- **Outcome 4** is related to exploring options for how to meet goals and address issues as the process evolves. NROC recognizes it will need to conduct significant public engagement and that there will be an evolution of activities and needs in the region.
- **Outcome 5** is considering and developing options for implementation of the ocean plan, including integrating state and federal plans. Implementation refers to agencies and stakeholders carrying out their business in the context of an eventual ocean plan.

Mr. Weber concluded his remarks by stating that NROC is still exploring options for how to achieve these outcomes and welcomes stakeholder input and ideas.

Question and Answer

Meeting participants were offered an opportunity to ask Mr. Weber and Mr. Napoli questions following their presentation:

Relationship to coastal management plans: A participant asked whether the ocean plan would need to be consistent with coastal management plans under the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) and Mr. Weber responded that from a legal standpoint this seems very possible. He also noted that amending state coastal management plans to reflect the ocean plan could certainly be an important implementation option for states and, since states will be significant and important partners in the planning process, it would seem logical that they would want to do so.

Public engagement: Mr. Weber was asked if state-by-state public engagement was part of the public engagement strategy. Mr. Weber responded that yes, NROC does plan to go state-by-state, but to go beyond that also. In addition to public hearings on a state basis, NROC plans to work with existing entities and meeting agendas to become involved in industry-specific workshops, maintain an online presence, and reach out with social media.

Ocean Data Portal: Mr. Napoli was asked how the data in the portal is or will be weighted. An example was given that mapping a boating route does not necessarily capture how heavily the route is traveled. Mr. Napoli responded that the current focus is on collecting as much data as

possible, recognizing that the maps are a starting point for analysis in partnership with stakeholders who can provide information about such details. Mr. Weber added that this is a good example of how NROC would like to engage stakeholders—by inviting them to weigh in on what is important in specific areas.

Breakout groups: Providing input to the Northeast Regional Ocean Council about preparation for moving forward with ocean planning

During this session, participants worked in facilitated small groups to provide feedback on NROC's plans for moving forward, including its work plan for the next two years. Participants were asked to identify positive elements of the workplan they feel should be preserved or emphasized, as well as improvements needed and specific recommendations for NROC to consider going forward.

Positive feedback

Participants were asked to provide specific positive feedback about the NROC two-year workplan. Major themes that emerged in breakout groups included a sense that the workplan is achievable and useful, includes strong emphasis on public and stakeholder engagement, offers a number of positive elements related to data collection and management, and is flexible and adaptive.

Achievable and useful: Participants noted that the workplan sets realistic and achievable goals for the coming two years for NROC to lead a regional effort to lay the groundwork for ocean planning. They also noted that implementation of the NROC workplan would create many positive impacts for the region, regardless of whether a full regional ocean planning process is completed in the longer term. The positives mentioned include better collection and use of data about ocean resources and uses, better informed decision making, and increased coordination among governmental agencies. The workplan includes consideration of implementation options early in the process, which was also identified as positive.

Stakeholder and public involvement: Participants expressed enthusiasm for what they perceived as strong emphasis on stakeholder and public engagement in the process outlined in the NROC workplan. They felt there was a meaningful effort to increase transparency and provide stakeholders opportunities to vet data and planning options throughout the process. They noted that NROC plans to communicate directly with stakeholders and supported the pro-active approach to identifying stakeholders early in the process in a systematic way and reaching out to them for input continuously. They expressed approval for NROC's plans to tap into existing networks for stakeholder outreach and for planning to use a variety of mechanisms by which stakeholder can provide their input. Specifically, they liked NROC's strategy to reach

out state-by-state and also sector-by-sector. They also noted that while there is some frustration that more questions about ocean planning in the region cannot be definitively answered now, there was appreciation that NROC is reaching out so early in the process before key decisions are made. They noted particular approval for NROC's strategy to engage stakeholder in goal setting from the outset of the decision making process.

Collection and management of ocean data: Participants expressed a number of positive comments about data-related elements of the NROC workplan. There appeared to be general agreement that the recreational use survey is a positive and important step. Participants also expressed strong support for the data portal, liking in particular that the portal is widely accessible, takes into account temporal and historical dimensions, and that it will be further populated and refined with the help of stakeholders. They also liked that this work will build on existing data, while also vetting that data for quality, as well as identification of gaps in existing data and efforts by NROC to support strategies for filling those data gaps. NROC conducting a baseline characterization was seen as a major positive, with some participants expressing a desire for the timeline to be accelerated. There was also general agreement that NROC conducting analysis of the data is positive, particularly that stakeholders will be engaged in that analysis.

Adaptability and flexibility: Participants generally approved of the idea that the eventual ocean plan would be adaptive as new information emerges and the overall situational context in New England changes through time, that is, that there would be iterations of the ocean plan. They liked that the NROC two-year workplan seems to strike an appropriate balance between articulating as much specific action and milestones for those actions as possible, while still being flexible and open to refinement as needs and circumstances change.

Recommended improvements

Participants were asked to spend most of their time in this breakout session providing specific feedback on improvements needed to the NROC workplan and specific recommendations for NROC to consider going forward. Feedback focused on stakeholder engagement and messaging, data and information, and mechanisms for evaluating effectiveness, among other ideas.

Recommendations related to stakeholder and public engagement: Participants focused many of their comments on strategies and tools for stakeholder and public engagement outlined in NROC's workplan. Comments included:

- *Ensure the right stakeholders are at the table.* Participants noted that for many categories of stakeholders, there are sub-groups whose perspectives are important and should be

represented in decision making. A good example of this is within the commercial fishing community where gear types and fishing areas significantly affect perspectives and interests. Participants also noted that leaders of industry groups and governmental or quasi-governmental managers of public resources do not necessarily represent the full suite of interests of those industries. To successfully engage and understand the full suite of interest, NROC will need to go beyond the obvious players and reach out to sub-groups. With regard to the commercial fishing industry, one suggestion was made to reach out to the groundfish sectors specifically.

Participants also noted the importance of reaching out to non-extractive ocean uses as well. A suggestion was made to differentiate between stakeholders with a tangential interest and those for whom decisions about ocean resources are critically important, and that the degree of engagement should be tailored accordingly. It was also noted that some important user groups may not have a clear leader, and NROC will need to identify ways to include those interests in decision making. To help ensure that NROC captures all important stakeholders, it was suggested that NROC try to define compatibilities among various ocean uses and interests up front. This will help identify some important stakeholders that may not otherwise be engaged, e.g. coastal property owners.

- *Early engagement is critical.* Participants recommended that NROC engage stakeholders in crafting the outreach plan, and scale and scope of the planning effort, to ensure key dynamics and nuances are taken into account. They also urged that NROC engage some stakeholder groups right away, particularly the commercial fishing industry. They cautioned that engaging sub-groups of commercial fishing interests very soon will be critical to developing relationships and building trust.
- *Mechanisms for outreach:* Participants provided a variety of ideas for engagement mechanisms. One recommendation was that NROC should use social media and new technological tools and strategies. Participants advised that NROC take advantage of existing mechanisms for stakeholder outreach, for example adding ocean planning to the agendas of meetings already being planned. A number of comments were made about NROC and/or a future RPB establishing stakeholder working groups to provide input and serve an ongoing advisory role. NROC was also encouraged to bring stakeholders together across interest groups to foster increased understanding and collaboration for ocean planning.

- *Additional guidance for engagement:* Participants provided a variety of specific guidance related to engagement, including that data should be collected and vetted at the grassroots level. They stated that NROC should clarify how and when stakeholders can provide input and influence decision making. A related point was that NROC should create opportunities for continuous engagement throughout the process, and turn that feedback into action, helping stakeholders see how their input has had an impact. NROC was asked to include the full range of ocean values, economic and otherwise, when making decisions about who to engage. NROC was also advised to offer stakeholders preliminary ideas or options to respond to when reaching out, and try to include as much specificity about proposed future actions as possible. If ocean planning is framed too vaguely, stakeholders may not see the benefit of engaging in the process now.

Recommendations for messaging and communication about ocean planning: Participants offered a number of recommendations related to the way that NROC messages or communicates about ocean planning generally, including that NROC should be very clear and concrete about what ocean planning is and why the region should move forward with it. NROC should demonstrate how ocean planning will address important regional issues and why stakeholders and the public have a strong interest in the success of ocean planning, that is, how ocean planning will improve their lives. Both economic and conservation interests should be included, and messaging about the benefits of ocean planning should be crafted to be understandable to a full range of stakeholders, particularly those who may not be policy experts. When engaging with particular stakeholder groups, NROC should help clarify their particular interest or stake in the process. NROC should also clarify that ocean planning will not supplant existing authorities, but rather help identify areas of compatibility and opportunities for better decision making, coordination, and collaboration. It was suggested that NROC provide a glossary of terms related to ocean planning in New England to help provide clarity.

Participants also made recommendations about messaging related to NROC's workplan. They suggested that NROC manage expectations and set specific goals that people can understand, going beyond broad visionary goals that, while important, hold little specific meaning to stakeholders. A very specific recommendation was made that stakeholder engagement should be captured in the timeline that is provided in the summary workplan found in the workshop binders (and in Appendix B.3 of this document). The timeline should show clearly how stakeholders are integrated throughout the process. NROC should clarify that the region is currently still in the very early stages of the process and that individuals and stakeholder groups that have not yet become involved are well positioned to start engaging now (i.e., assuring them that they are not too late to influence the process). NROC should also offer some

explanation for how decisions that are currently being made by NROC member agencies are or are not being affected by the work that NROC is doing in preparation for ocean planning. NROC should also work to clarify the roles of NROC and a future RPB as soon as possible, and offer some ideas for what that relationship may or may not look like to stakeholders. Stakeholders who want to provide input are eager to know who the appropriate recipient of that input will be before dedicating their time and energy to engagement.

Recommendations related to data and information: Participants offered many comments related to data and information, many of which were focused on quality assurance and control, data collection, tying NROC's work to existing efforts, and additional specific recommendations.

- *Quality assurance and control:* A recommendation offered by a number of breakout groups was that NROC should establish a technical body or bodies to review data and help ensure quality and appropriate interpretation and usage. NROC was advised to engage with grassroots stakeholder in the setting of standards and protocols for data and to always establish robust metadata. Participants also recommended that NROC identify ways to appropriately capture and use anecdotal data. Participants cautioned NROC to ensure that the right data is used at the right scales for various management decisions.
- *Data collection:* It was recommended that NROC work with grassroots stakeholders to collect and vet data. Not only would this lead to better information, it would also give stakeholders a clear way to engage and take ownership of the process, contributing to decision making and seeing the potential benefits of ocean planning. Participants suggested that NROC consider how the data portal could be used to collect input and feedback, for example by allowing individuals to upload data or post comments. NROC was also urged to include socioeconomic data and to engage stakeholder early in the process of determining what is important before conducting valuation studies. NROC was cautioned to ensure there is enough time to collect the right data about ocean usage. It was also urged that NROC collect historical data to better understand patterns over time and take into account trends so that data can be collected that will be relevant into the future.
- *Tie to existing efforts:* NROC was urged to ensure that its data-related efforts tied to existing work. This includes the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission data portal (the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program), the federal Multipurpose Marine Cadastre, and the National Ocean Council's data portal (ocean.data.gov), among others.

It was also recommended that NROC position ocean planning as a driver to bring together “stovepiped” research and help focus it on addressing applied management challenges and information needed to make decisions about ocean planning. A related recommendation was for NROC to bring together the research and monitoring communities.

- *Additional recommendations:* Additional recommendations related to data were offered in this breakout session, including a number of requests for NROC to clarify what is meant by “regionally important areas” in the NROC workplan. NROC was also asked to be explicit about using adaptive management and integration of new data over time in ocean planning. NROC was cautioned to be careful and explicit about its definition of “habitat” and to go beyond just benthic habitat in the baseline characterization. Participants recommended that the northeast data portal should note on the home page that the portal does not yet include all data, is a work in progress, and that NROC is seeking input on data gaps and welcomes input and contributions from users. It was recommended that NROC determine how it will address uncertainty of information related to some decisions, both how to fill information gaps and setting timeframes for decision making in that context.

Recommendations about creating mechanisms for evaluating effectiveness: Participants recommended that NROC establish mechanisms to evaluate the effectiveness of its efforts related to ocean planning. The mechanisms should help those involved with ocean planning stay within established timeframes, ensure transparency, ensure the process is leading to more coordinated and streamlined decision making, and that other goals of ocean planning are being achieved. Metrics might include identifying decisions that were impacted by NROC’s efforts, science that was supported by NROC and how it informed those decisions, and gathering feedback from stakeholders about how engaged they feel in the process. It was recommended that NROC evaluate its effectiveness after two years and then establish a schedule for evaluation into the future.

Additional recommendations related to the NROC workplan: Participants offered a number of additional recommendations during this session, including:

- NROC should consider focus ocean planning on a few key issues to which people can relate and that everyone agrees are important and need regional solutions, for example energy, fisheries, transportation issues.
- NROC should build on existing planning efforts, including those in Massachusetts and Rhode Island, but also others.
- NROC should consider a sub-regional approach.

- NROC should consider how this work will tie into coastal planning by local governments and other entities.

Panel: Members of the Northeast Regional Ocean Council respond to participant input

During this plenary session, state and federal members of NROC responded to key reflections and questions identified by workshop participants during the preceding breakout session. Major reflections and questions from each breakout group were provided to the lead plenary facilitator, who offered major themes to the panel for response. Themes and panelist responses are summarized here. In addition to those reflections and questions emerging from breakout groups, panelists also responded to questions from the plenary participants during facilitated question and answer at the close of this session.

Panelists this session were:

- *Ron Beck, Chief, Energy and Facilities Branch, First District, U.S. Coast Guard*
- *Steve Couture, Program Manager, New Hampshire Coastal Program*
- *Bob LaBelle, Co-Chair, Northeast Regional Ocean Council and Science Advisor to the Director, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, U.S. Department of the Interior*
- *Betsy Nicholson, Northeast Lead, Coastal Services Center, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration*
- *Brian Thompson, Director, Office of Long Island Sound Programs, Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection*

In response to positive feedback from the breakout groups about the NROC workplan, panelists emphasized that stakeholders are intentionally being engaged early in the process, before goals for ocean planning are established and before many process elements are finalized. NROC wants ocean planning to be an adaptive, iterative process that is heavily informed by and grounded in stakeholder input and engagement. Panelists also discussed the desire to make NROC's actions under the workplan useful in both the short and longer terms, describing a strategy in which there are clear benefits now even as NROC is setting up the region for future development of a regional ocean plan. One example of a product that offers clear utility now and also in the future is the regional ocean data portal. Panelists agreed with comments about there being a need to clarify what the benefits of ocean planning will be for particular interests. They also referred to a need to account for natural capital and intrinsic values of ocean resources in addition to traditional ways of valuing ocean resources. NROC members also noted that NROC is engaging the region in carrying out its workplan by re-competing funds that it has received from NOAA and the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation. Panelists also

reminded participants that its work over the next two years will lay the groundwork for subsequent development of a regional ocean plan, and that once the RPB is established the respective roles of NROC and the RPB and the relationship between the two bodies will be further defined and clarified. In the meantime, NROC is leading the region in laying appropriate groundwork for ocean planning.

Existing models

Panelists were asked about models of ocean planning that NROC maybe be considering, aside from existing plans and processes in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Panelists responded that the New England Fishery Management Council can offer many lessons for regional ocean planning as it has been conducting regional planning and management of fisheries resources for decades and recently has been developing ecosystem-based science and moving toward more integrated management of fisheries. Panelists also mentioned efforts of particular agencies to manage specific resources on a regional basis, and lessons that can be learned from those processes.

Stakeholder engagement

Panelists were asked to consider the challenges of engaging and communicating effectively with various stakeholder communities and convening them not only within sectors, but across sectors as well. Panelists were asked to describe any plans or ideas that NROC may have about collecting socio-economic data and also about establishing a technical body to review data and ensure its quality. Panelists responded that there is a lot of work underway to collect important socio-economic data and that NROC can play a key role by integrating the data efforts, identifying gaps, and conveying those needs to researchers throughout the scientific community. Panelists expressed appreciation for the idea of establishing a scientific and technical body to help ensure the quality of information. Panelists also discussed how the northeast region would coordinate with neighboring regions on ocean planning, with the shared Long Island Sound being an example of how important coordination will be.

Defining and measuring success

Panelists were asked to reflect on two years in the future and what they would consider success and how they would measure it. Panelists responded that the first step for NROC is to make sure their two year goals are achievable, assess progress in the interim, and then consider whether goals have been met and products are useful at the two year mark. This includes whether member agencies are making decisions better, more efficiently, with more information, and faster than in the past. Another measure will be whether stakeholders feel they have been

adequately engaged in the process and feel they understand ocean planning, how to participate in it, and what the benefits will be for them.

Breakout groups: Generating specific ideas about key elements of moving forward

In this session, participants worked in small groups to generate specific ideas about moving forward with key elements of regional ocean planning: science and data, implementation, and stakeholder outreach. Each group was asked to focus on specific discussion questions and bring their ideas and recommendations to the subsequent plenary panel.

Science and data

Participants were asked to consider what they believe should be NROC's priority activities related to data and science, and any next steps related to those activities. They were also asked to consider ways that NROC should engage with stakeholders specifically regarding science and data.

Socioeconomic and cultural data: Participants noted a need to collect cultural data, in addition to the chemical, physical, biological, and socio-economic. This would start with an assessment of existing work and should draw lessons from the Rhode Island OSAMP collaboration with the Narragansett Tribe. It was noted that a comprehensive assessment of submerged cultural resources needs to be developed, and efforts in Virginia, the Great Lakes, and Gulf of Mexico were pointed to for lessons learned. These cultural assessments were identified as potentially saving money in the long run. Making some of this data publicly available was identified as a potential challenge.

Mapping fishing activity and habitat: Participants noted existing sources for quality fisheries data, including the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program, New England Fisheries Science Center observer data and essential fish habitat data, Vessel Monitoring System and Vessel Trip Report (VTR) data for some fisheries, the Atlas project about mapping fishing communities, and others. It was noted that VTR data is complicated and there would need to be effort to ensure proper interpretation and understanding of the limitations. A model for predictive impacts is the Swept Area Seabed Impact model. Participants reminded NROC that pelagic habitat should be considered, in addition to benthic.

Weighing tradeoffs: Participants suggested that NROC conduct a project early in the process related to assessing tradeoffs of uses. This would inform the gap analysis and help engage stakeholders in a meaningful dialogue. A next step would be an interdisciplinary literature

review and articulation of quality assessment and control standards. It was noted that the analysis should have a temporal component.

User feedback and quality assessment and control: Participants suggested that NROC provide a mechanism through the data portal for stakeholders to post input and feedback. It was also suggested that metadata on the portal include summarized information that lay users could understand when exploring the information, as well as a link to the original data provider. With regard to quality control, it was noted that qualifying and verifying data comes with challenges when different data sets with different standards and resolutions are brought together. Participants suggested linking to external data because data is always evolving and being corrected—direct access to data would minimize the challenges of updating—although major challenges would need to be overcome to make this work.

Purpose of the data: Participants noted that the type of data needed will depend on its purpose. They discussed data needing to be high enough quality and resolution for planning and for entities choosing sites to know generally whether a site is appropriate or not for a particular activity. Once that assessment has been made, they may still need to conduct site-specific tests for their purposes, but the process will have been streamlined from the perspectives of users, regulators, and stakeholders. It was noted that there will need to be prioritization of data needs at different nested scales. Data thresholds were identified as potentially useful, particularly to make implementation of certain laws, such as the Endangered Species Act, more efficient.

Data confidentiality: Proprietary and sensitive data were identified as challenges. Participants offered that there are many existing techniques for protecting the confidentiality of individual providers of data. They also shared the perspective that if users want planners to consider the fact that certain areas are important to them in their analyses, then they will need to share that information in some form.

Applied research agenda: NROC could facilitate the filling of data gaps by providing a list of key data that are needed, which researchers could then point to when justifying their proposals for funding to fill those gaps.

Stakeholder engagement

Participants were asked to identify specific stakeholder outreach mechanisms and opportunities that NROC should pursue going forward, as well as advice for tools and strategies that would be beneficial and potential pitfalls that NROC should avoid.

Provide meaningful opportunities: Participants advised NROC to ensure that they are not reaching out to stakeholders for its own sake or simply to adhere to legal public notice and engagement requirements. Rather NROC was encouraged to provide specific, meaningful

opportunities for stakeholders to give input that will be considered in decision making. NROC should make it very clear and obvious why engagement is important and in the interest of stakeholders. It was noted that NROC has identified two specific activities in which to engage stakeholders closely—the commercial fishing characterization work and setting regional goals for ocean planning. A meaningful opportunity for engagement is data collection. Stakeholders could be provided a set of standards and asked to participate in mapping resources. They should also be shown how to use the mapping tool in the data portal, and it was suggested that a public comment opportunity be added to the data portal. It was also noted that for engagement to be meaningful, there needs to be a local connection. NROC was encouraged to find mechanisms for tapping into local knowledge and experience and perspectives.

Interest-specific standing committees: Participants offered NROC the idea of establishing standing committees to represent particular interests. This would foster dialogue and a sense of ownership in a more formalized, regular process. The members of the committees would be well-informed about the process and could help clarify the process and purpose for their respective communities. They could also help NROC identify the right individuals to engage. Those committees would need to be coordinated and the public would need to be able to find information about committee membership and meetings and discussions via a centralized clearinghouse for such information. This would help ensure accountability and transparency and make engagement easier for members of the public. It was suggested that one person on each committee be the public liaison to their community. It is possible that members of such committees would need to be paid for them to be able to devote sufficient time, particularly the liaison, who would spend significant time playing that role.

Generate success stories and examples: Participants urged NROC to use factual stories and examples of ocean planning success to communicate about the purpose, potential benefits, and process of ocean planning. These success stories would be useful in bringing clarity and dispelling myths at all levels—from engagement of local ocean users to building support among national leaders. These stories should touch on the full range of values of our ocean—from the economic to the cultural and everything in between—expressing why ocean planning will be good for people and communities.

Identify the right stakeholder to engage: Participants discussed the importance of inviting the right stakeholders to engage, and suggested NROC conduct a robust social mapping effort. They noted that leaders of an established interest group may not represent everyone in that community and outreach should go beyond just those obvious leaders. So while those leaders should certainly be closely engaged and updated frequently on progress, NROC should go beyond them as well. There also needs to be a concerted effort to include those who may have a strong interest, but who are typically underrepresented in public policy discussions because

they are less well-organized or well-funded. There was also discussion about the pros and cons of distinguishing among different kinds of stakeholders, between those who have a strong and direct stake and those with a more broad or indirect connection, and having distinct engagement strategies for those groups.

It was recommended that NROC look to models in Europe for renewable energy development and ocean planning efforts and how they defined their universe of stakeholder and lessons learned from the way they engaged different kinds of stakeholders. Engaging stakeholders themselves in identifying who the right stakeholders are and how to best engage them was a strong recommendation offered by participants. In addition to many categories of fishermen that need to be engaged, participants mentioned the Marine Trade Association, ship builders and designers, ship operators, sport fishing, tourism, fish processing and service providers (such as auctions), boat suppliers, kayaking, eco-tourism, realtors, marine pilots, Governors and state legislatures. Many of these groups have existing meetings that could be attended. States have existing databases of stakeholders that should be tapped into.

Tailor outreach: Participants emphasized the importance of reaching out to different stakeholders through different mechanisms. Commercial fishermen were offered as an example of a group for whom the timing of on-shore engagement opportunities will be critical to their ability to participate, as well as the use of electronic and other methods that work for busy people. It was noted that some people, for example many fishermen, prefer communication by phone over email. Participants also noted that they can only communicate effectively about ocean planning if messages they are asked to pass along to members of their community are clear and easy to understand. They also noted that certain categories of stakeholders physically congregate in certain places, and NROC should use that to their advantage for outreach. NROC could provide materials or have some sort of display in those places where important stakeholders frequently spend time.

Generate trust: Participants emphasized the importance of building trust. They identified clarification of the ocean planning process, the role of the RPB versus NROC, and ultimate outcomes of ocean planning as key step toward building trust. They recommended consulting with the Sea Grant offices and extensions in various locations about engagement. They also recommended working to build relationships through partners that are more locally based. There was a sense that NROC as an entity needs to introduce itself to the stakeholders of the region, that some people weren't aware of the existence of NROC until this workshop. Specific recommendations related to outreach to the commercial fishing industry included attending meetings of the boards of directors of the groundfish sectors, attending the lobster association annual meetings, and finding similar opportunities for other fisheries. It was recommended that

NROC seek solutions from a wider group than just small numbers of experts, through new techniques that tap into communities of practice.

Participants recommended that John Weber reach out in person as much as possible. They noted that people trust other people, not institutions. If John or any other NROC representative plays a roles in different institutions, that is “wears various hats,” it can inject confusion about loyalties and so their role in a given dialogue needs to be made clear. A recommendation was made that NROC look to the Rhode Island OSAMP model for responding to stakeholder comments. If every comment is addressed, even in a general way, then people feel they have truly been heard and their perspective has been considered. It was noted that participation is driven by fear for many stakeholders right now, so NROC was advised to chart a clear path toward showing stakeholders the positive opportunities for them in ocean planning. Then their engagement will be positive and productive. It was also recommended that NROC make significant improvements to its website, including making it very clear and easy to find information about what NROC is, what it is working, and how people can engage.

Address key concerns: Participants expressed concern about the source of funds for carrying out NROC’s workplan and the intention of those funders in supporting the ocean planning effort, specifically that their interests may differ from other stakeholders, some of whom feel they are at a relative disadvantage in terms of influencing the process because of that funding. A major concern among industry stakeholders is that they would lose flexibility once an ocean plan is in place. There was also confusion expressed about the geographic extent of an ocean plan among state and federal waters and how states and federal agencies would work together in developing and implementing an ocean plan.

Implementation

Participants were asked to identify specific programs, regulations, and processes that would benefit from ocean planning. They were also asked to consider how these improvements could be implemented, through either regulatory or non-regulatory changes.

At the start of this session, participants were reminded that an eventual RPB, which would develop and implement an ocean plan, would not generate federal actions or regulations. While the ocean planning effort would not amend any existing authorities, participants were reminded that agencies often have significant discretion in how to carry out their mandates. The idea is that state and federal and tribal entities would work within those areas of discretion to take actions that are consistent with an agreed-upon ocean plan. They would share more information up front to make better and faster decisions. They would establish a charter in which they agree to work together and then Memoranda of Understanding about particular elements of the plan. Agencies would agree and be expected to take actions consistent with the

plan wherever possible under existing law. And the plan would be adaptive in recognition that circumstances and levels of understanding and knowledge change over time. Participants were referred to the Environmental Law Institute, which has helpful documents that address many common questions about ocean planning.

Participants discussed and presented a number of ideas for NROC to consider going forward related to jurisdictional issues, use of existing statutes and processes, proximity of planning to the coast, and data gathering and use.

Jurisdictional issues: Participants noted that there would be greater confidence in the benefits of the process if agencies would be required to consider the ocean plan when making permitting and other decisions. A concern about such a requirement would be creation of added delay and an extra step in the decision making process, although some participants noted that there is potential to design the process so that existence of an ocean planning streamlines the creation of Environmental Impact Assessments and Statements under NEPA. The ocean plan would help inform decision in the sense that agencies would be required to consult, rather than comply. Agency strategic plans could also be informed by the regional ocean planning process. It was recommended that best practices be established for regional planning in the Northeast.

Use of existing statutes and processes: Participants noted that the ocean plan could become part of state coastal management plans under the CZMA, an important potential implementation tool. This was related to establishing geographic location descriptions, state-level enforceable policies (e.g. utility corridors), port access routes, and offshore energy. It was also noted that the ocean plan itself would need to be consistent with state coastal management plans. Other statutes and processes whose implementation would benefit from ocean planning included the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Management and Conservation Act, Clean Water Act, National Marine Sanctuaries Act, BOEM's permitting and leasing processes, and state wildlife conservation strategies. With regard to fishery area closures and marine sanctuaries/reserves, it was noted that there should be better coordination in how those areas are managed. Coordination of new projects with the Department of Defense's (DoD) training ranges is another area that was identified as possibly benefitting from ocean planning. With regard to NEPA, it was noted that ocean planning could help with cumulative impact assessments and perhaps inform the analysis of alternatives. BOEM's task force meetings may be an important venue for bringing people together to make implementation decisions. It was also noted that existing plans could be sanctioned and linked together more effectively through ocean planning.

Proximity to the coast: Participants noted that the proximity of the boundary of an ocean planning area to the coast will have a large impact on many aspects of the planning process. In Rhode Island, the OSAMP stays 500 feet off the coast. The Massachusetts plan starts at 1500 feet from shore. The connections across land and sea were emphasized in a discussion among participants about how planning for offshore energy cables could benefit from a comprehensive ocean planning process.

Data gathering and use: Participants emphasized that data collection and management could be made more efficient through ocean planning, and that this would facilitate improved decision making. Data standards were cited as important. And habitat characterization was identified as a particularly useful area of focus. It was noted that ocean planning could allow agencies to more clearly understand the situation in our oceans and be prepared to address project-specific requests. It could also help reduce duplication of data gathering and analysis efforts.

Panel: Regional leaders respond to participant input and highlight key connections across workshop discussions.

During this final panel session, representatives from each breakout group provided a summary of the key ideas and insights that were discussed in the preceding session to the panel and plenary participants. Panelists were asked to respond to these concepts and also share their perspectives more broadly about major insights gained throughout the course of the workshop. This session closed with facilitated question and answer with plenary participants.

Panelists for this session were:

- *Bruce Carlisle, Co-Chair, Northeast Regional Ocean Council*
- *Rip Cunningham, Chair, New England Fishery Management Council*
- *Bob LaBelle, Co-Chair, Northeast Regional Ocean Council*
- *John Weber, Ocean Planning Director, Northeast Regional Ocean Council*

Panelists responded positively to the ideas and insights that emerged from breakout groups and responded to a number of key themes, including ideas about stakeholder engagement and communication, the scale of the planning area, and data and information.

Stakeholder engagement

Panelists remarked that while participants seem to be yearning for greater clarity, NROC is looking to them and other stakeholders to help define a path forward. NROC does not have all of the answers yet and is looking for strong input and feedback from the region to ensure the ocean planning process meets regional needs and is widely beneficial. Panelists also agreed strongly with the need to build off of existing programs and networks for every element of this

process, and to ensure that processes for decision making are becoming more efficient because of ocean planning. Responding to the recommendation to create standing advisory committees that are sectorally or geographically specific, the panel expressed appreciation for the idea. It was noted that the RPB for the region will also need to be involved in creation of mechanisms for receiving stakeholder advice and that this might include standing committees, working groups, workshops, and other mechanisms. A participant noted the importance of trust and asked questions related to NROC's current funding sources and whether they are influencing the process, to which panelists responded that NROC developed its workplan first and then sought funding for it. They also noted that trust needs to be earned and that over time, if NROC carries out its work as it hopes to, stakeholder in the region and those engaging in ocean planning will generate mutual trust. Panelists also noted that this was a new process and there would inevitably be some "bumps in the road" and asked participants for some patience as NROC works to build trust in the region.

Communication

In response to the idea of developing a communications plan that clarifies audience, messages, and messenger, panelists agreed this was an important. They noted that NROC would be focusing on this trust in the near future to ensure that there is clarity of understanding among stakeholders and that all the right people would be reached. The communication and branding of ocean planning would need to be carefully crafted and executed and it was suggested that NROC focus significant effort on ensuring this is done well from the outset. If NROC cannot do this work in-house, it was suggested that the work be contracted.

Scale of planning area

Panelists clarified that NROC represents both state and federal entities, and ocean planning as currently envisioned would be coordinated among state and federal entities and include some elements of both state and federal waters. Regional ocean planning is beginning with a focus on the regional nature of some of the issues at hand, recognizing that other programs and projects are looking at issues at a finer scale; therefore, there is the potential for regional ocean planning to knit these other efforts together. For example, there are many land use planning efforts in effect and underway, and NROC does not envision that this regional ocean planning effort would duplicate those efforts, but would coordinate where necessary and appropriate. They recognized that many high quality planning processes are underway in coastal areas and that for some ocean-based activities that have strong physical connections to land, such as renewable energy, it will be particularly important to coordinate with local communities. Panelists also acknowledged good watershed-scale planning programs that have positive impacts on ocean ecosystems.

Data and information

Panelists clarified that all metadata for this ocean planning effort are fully compliant with federal requirements for metadata. They also noted that data verification efforts would be a high priority and that new data collection work would build off of existing high quality data wherever possible. With regard to ensuring appropriate use of data, panelists agreed with participants that this was a top priority. NROC would be consulting with experts to ensure data is used correctly and considered in the appropriate context. Panelists also acknowledged that while the data portal is a great tool, there will be some limitations to overcome and aids to visualization that could be improved. With regard to confidentiality, panelists acknowledged that protecting information is very important to many stakeholders, including fishing operations and ports, and there are many existing methods for data aggregation that could be helpful. Also there may be ways to account for an ocean activity through the portal without making the data itself available through the portal for all to access. In response to a question about cultural issues and how they would be addressed, panelists responded that social mapping would be very important and some existing entities, such as the New England Fisheries Science Center, are being engaged so that NROC can build off of existing work in that area. The temporal elements of this data were also noted.

Closing remarks

As the final panel came to a close, panelists were asked to reflect on the workshop as a whole and provide final thoughts.

Bruce Carlisle

Mr. Carlisle reminded participants of the participatory nature of this ocean planning work, that NROC urgently needs and wants their input going forward. He noted that the Northeast region is large and complex and NROC and stakeholders will need to stay focused on the most important tasks and issues to succeed. In support of this, NROC will need to work with stakeholders to prioritize tasks and issues. It will also need to remember the dynamic nature of these issues and remain flexible. He expressed a hope that participants feel they understand the context of what NROC is doing more clearly than prior to the workshop. He also hoped that the opportunities to engage at the workshop were meaningful and welcomed participants to contact NROC with any further ideas or feedback.

John Weber

Mr. Weber reviewed the four objectives of the workshop: (1) building a shared understanding before the ocean planning work is started, (2) informing participants about progress to date, (3) providing an opportunity for meaningful engagement about the work that is planned, and (4)

identifying immediate next steps. He felt those objectives were reached and summarized some key next steps, including:

- Continuing to leverage resources and fostering future engagement
- Continuing the conversation about a structure to implement ocean planning, particularly once the RPB is established
- Planning upcoming workshops that are user-group specific
- Reinforcing connections and relationships and expanding them to all the right people
- Clarifying timelines, including the timing for working with stakeholders to establish goals and other key ocean planning steps
- Diving into a number of immediate issues, and creating ways to engage stakeholder perspectives in addressing those, perhaps through work groups, as have been suggested

Bob LaBelle

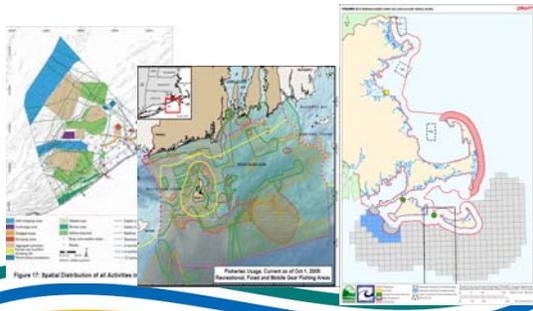
Mr. LaBelle spoke in this role as the federal co-chair of NROC, reiterating a point made by Michael Weiss early in the workshop that the federal perspective is that ocean planning is to be done by and for the region. He also emphasized that workshop participants can be key agents of change. He expressed a hope that these two concepts would come together in people's minds and inspire them to be closely involved in the ocean planning work going forward.

The lead facilitator thanked participants for coming and adjourned the workshop.

Appendix A.1

Day 1: Setting the Stage for Regional Ocean Planning in the Northeast: Grover Fugate

What Is The Value Of Marine Spatial Planning ?



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

CRMC's legislative charge: "...to preserve, protect, develop, and where possible, restore the coastal resources of the state for this and succeeding generations..." Developed and Adopted First Ocean Spatial Plan in 1983.



Attributes of a Good MSP Process

- Identifies Resources and Uses
- Evaluates Uses and Resources- Space, Status and Compatibility
- Determines Current Trends and Future Uses
- Provides for Protection of Critical Resources and Desired Uses
- Establishes Clear Standards for Uses
- Uses Transparent Stakeholder Process
- Coordinates Among Various Levels of Government

The decision making equation in the management process

Uncertainty=Risk=Time=\$\$\$\$\$

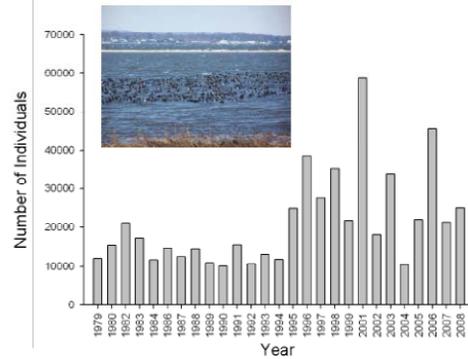
MSP can cut down on the uncertainty



Advantages of CMSP

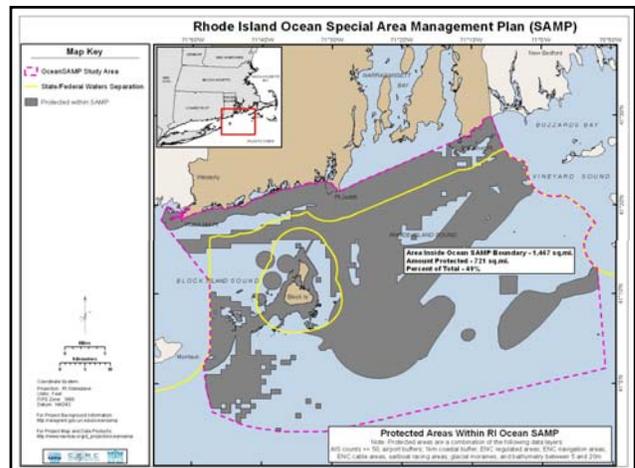
- Amasses data on equal footing
- Can add clarity and predictability to permitting process.
- Can protect sensitive resources.
- Forms the basis for ecosystem based management and cumulative impact analysis.
- Nesting NEPA in MSP greatly enhances the NEPA process due to scales of data collection.
- Front loads permitting process with data in time series.
- Allows for a discussion of game changers-climate change.
- Etc.

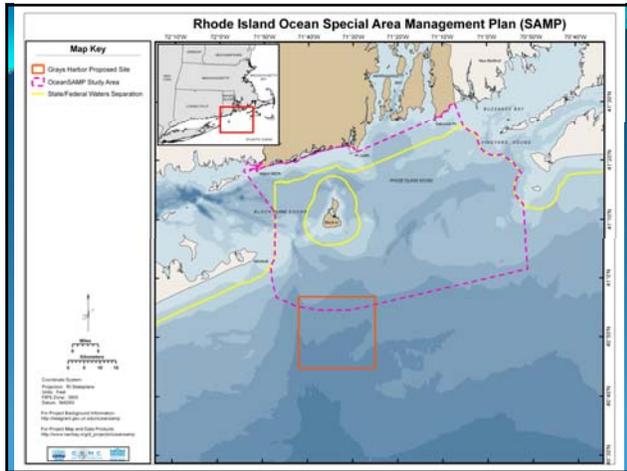
Waterfowl abundance in Narragansett Bay based on DEM mid-winter waterfowl counts



Advantages of OSAMP

- A Set Of Policies For Each Area Of The Plan
- Protection Of Existing Uses And Sensitive Resources Or Unsuitable Areas
- Informational Requirements For Major Ocean Developments And Development Standards For Those Uses
- Continued Stakeholder Representation Through FAB and HAB
- Public Review Every 2 Years and Mandatory Review Every 5 years.
- Expansion Of Blanket Coverage Though GLD
- Truly Adaptive-4th Round Of Amendments
- Potential payback already of 4 times the cost





Appendix A.2

Day 2: Northeast Regional Ocean Council preparations for moving forward:
John Weber



Regional ocean planning in New England

RWU/Bristol
March 13, 2012



National Ocean Policy



- Framework
 - Regions develop plans
 - Data/science-based
 - Public engagement
 - Comprehensive



National Ocean Policy



Legend

- US Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)
- Regional Planning Area
- Large Marine Ecosystem

Regional Planning Areas have been approximated for illustrative purposes only and should not be construed as a legal or official boundary of any kind.

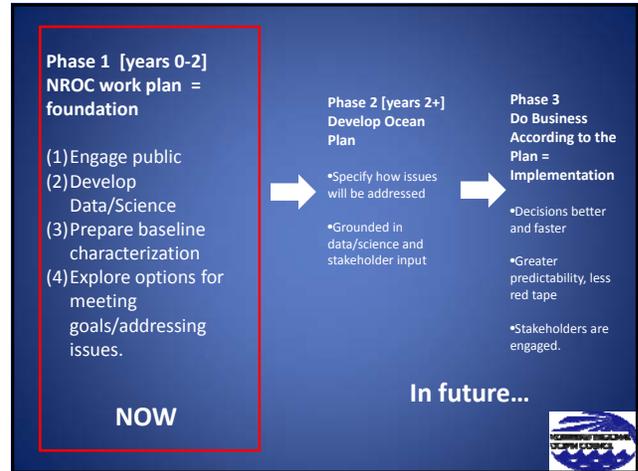
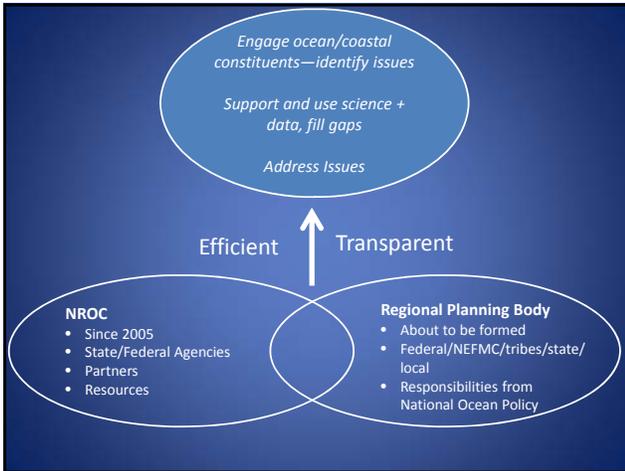


Northeast Regional Ocean Council



- Formed in 2005, recognizing regional ocean issues
- New England states, federal agencies
- Resources for regional ocean planning





Outcome 1: Well-engaged public

- Vital
- Need to be creative
- Maximize existing opportunities/entities
- Identify goals/issues
- Approach is to gather data/info/input through engagement
 - Work with partners to help scope projects

Outcome 1: Well-engaged public

- Various vehicles: meetings, workshops, on-line
- Topical approach:
 - Workshops on specific issues: energy, infrastructure, shipping/ports, aquaculture
 - Current status, trends, future technology developments
 - Additional efforts to engage with commercial fishing, recreational uses
 - Conservation
- Public meetings to discuss goals, review draft data, etc.
- Evolve over time (e.g., to bring information from various efforts together)

Outcome 2: Data

- Also vital, and takes time
- Leverage existing efforts
- Recognize variations in data/science availability throughout region
- Public/technical review of products
- Result in stand-alone products which can be applied in other ways



Outcome 2: Data

- Focus on spatial data—i.e. can be mapped
- Start with compiling existing data, but also address some known key gaps
- Already working on this through NE data portal effort



NE Portal – How We Work

- Identify data priorities for regional ocean planning
- Develop and disseminate approved data products with the authoritative source (for existing datasets)
- Website and tools for accessing and analyzing data
- Regular meetings and updates with NROC
- Coordination with other regional governance bodies and the National Ocean Council



High Priority Data for Ocean Planning

Ocean Uses

Vessel traffic patterns
Shipping channels
Energy facilities
Pipelines and cables
Commercial fisheries – VTR, VMS
Recreational boating & fishing
Shipwrecks

Habitat

Avifauna
Cetacean
Fish habitat – EFH, resource surveys
Shellfish habitat
Benthic communities

Physical Oceanography

Bathymetry
Seafloor geomorphology
Wind regime
Surface current and waves (circulation)

Administrative & Regulatory

Fishery management areas
Dangerous and restricted areas

Recently Prioritized Data

Ocean Uses

Aquaculture
Power transmission
Native American heritage and cultural sites

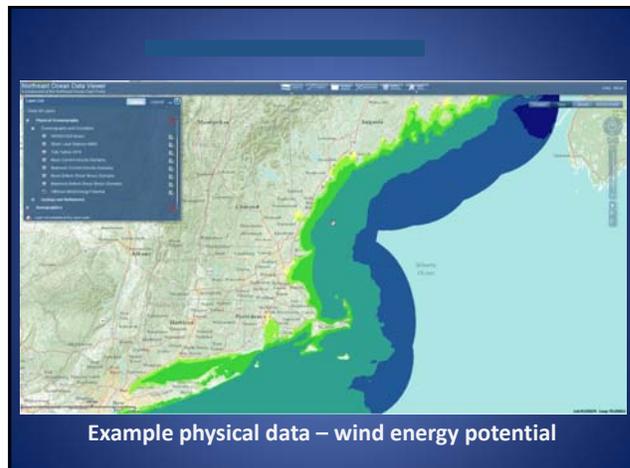
Administrative & Regulatory

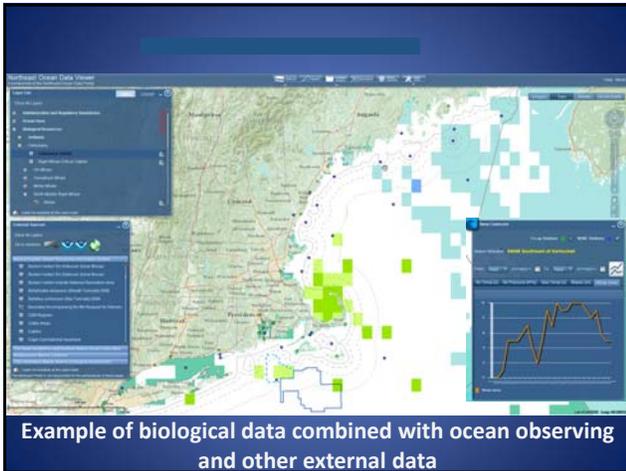
Federal Marine Protected Areas
State Marine Protected Areas

Physical Oceanography

Shoreline classifications

Website





Northeast Recreational Survey

- **Geographic scope:** NY to Maine
- **Goal:** Collect statistically robust data on boating and boating-based uses (e.g., fishing, whale watching)
- **Timeframe:** 2012 boating season
- **Partners:** NROC, New York, Marine Trades Associations (MTAs), SeaPlan, UMass

Northeast Recreational Survey

Methods

- Registered or USCG Documented Vessels from the six states
- Only include boats used for recreational purposes
- Random sample of 60,000 boaters
- Web based survey focusing on one boating trip per month

Northeast Recreational Survey

Spatial boating activity data:

- Boating routes
- High concentration boating areas
- Boating based recreational areas

Economic estimates:

- Trip related spending
- Yearly maintenance
- Contribution of recreational trips to the economy
 - >44% for fuel
 - >\$806 Million to state economy
 - >Over 4700 jobs

Northeast Recreational Survey

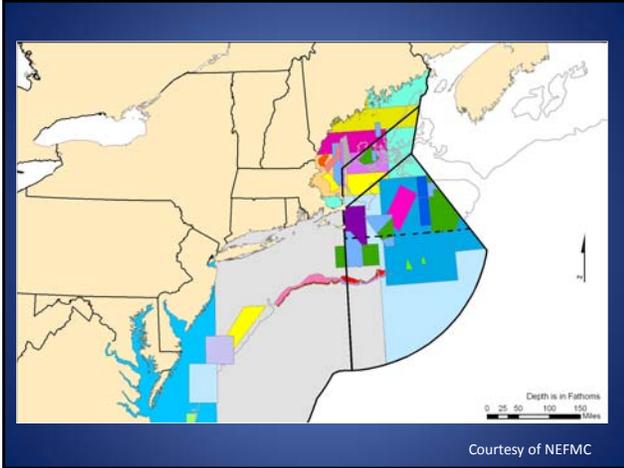
Benefits to:

<p>States:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spatial data for planning and permitting • State specific economic data • Stakeholder engagement 	<p>Industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data to engage in planning and permitting • Business planning & promotion • Customer engagement
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Outcome 2: Data

- Fisheries
 - Develop spatial characterization of fishing
 - Start with existing data sets
 - Work with industry, scientists, managers to review draft products, identify gaps
- Continue to address priority data needs

Outcome 3: Science

- Compile science (beyond spatial data)
- Assess tools/models
 - Habitat classification
 - Tools for models re: tradeoffs? cumulative impacts? Climate change?—address identified issues
- Two-year product: baseline characterization



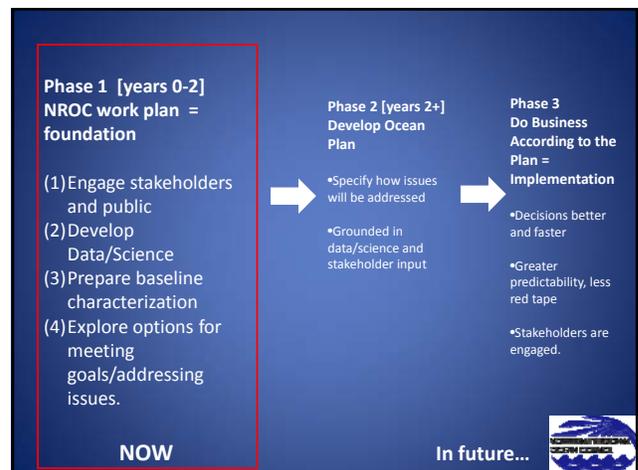
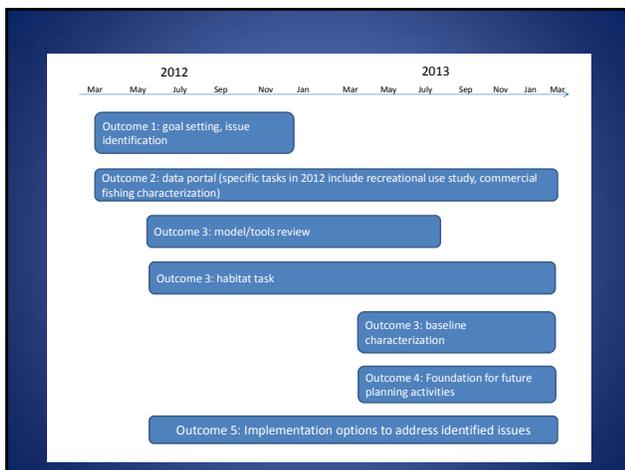
Outcome 4: Future Activities

- How to meet identified goals?
- What does science/data tell us?
 - Spatially
 - Otherwise
- Public engagement (review data, discuss options, etc.)



Outcome 5: Implementation

- Opportunities provided by existing Federal/State programs
- Beyond regulatory: coordination, use of data....
- Start conversation now—coordinate at federal level (e.g. with National Ocean Council)



Thank you

<http://collaborate.csc.noaa.gov/nroc/default.aspx>





Appendix B.

Northeast Workshop on Regional Ocean Planning

Workshop Agenda

March 12-13, 2012

Roger Williams University School of Law

Meeting Objectives

- Build a shared understanding of ocean planning in New England.
- Inform participants about progress made at the regional and national levels that lays the groundwork for successful ocean planning in New England.
- Provide meaningful engagement among participants and opportunities to provide input related to both the process and substance of ocean planning.
- Build commitment to ongoing collaboration and support among regional stakeholders for ocean planning in the region.

Monday, March 12

9:00 am	Registration opens
10:00 am	Welcome <i>Donald J. Farish, Ph.D., J.D., President, Roger Williams University</i>
10:05 am	Opening remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bruce Carlisle, Co-Chair, Northeast Regional Ocean Council</i> • <i>Bob LaBelle, Co-Chair, Northeast Regional Ocean Council</i>
10:10 am	Keynote speaker <i>Senator Jack Reed (D-RI)</i>
10:25 am	Ocean Planning in New England <i>Richard Delaney, Executive Director, Provincetown Center for Coastal Studies</i>
10: 40 am	Agenda review <i>Laura Cantral, Partner, Meridian Institute</i>

10:45 am	<p>Panel: Setting the stage for regional ocean planning in the Northeast</p> <p>State and federal representatives and ocean stakeholders will provide an overview of progress at the state, regional, and national levels to help frame ocean planning in the Northeast. This session will include facilitated dialogue with plenary participants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Grover Fugate, Executive Director, Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council</i> • <i>Michael Weiss, Acting Director, National Ocean Council Office</i> • <i>John Weber, Ocean Planning Director, Northeast Regional Ocean Council</i> • <i>John Bullard, President, Sea Education Association</i>
11:50 pm	Charge to breakout groups
12:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 pm	<p>Breakout groups: Addressing opportunities and challenges in the Northeast region through ocean planning</p> <p>Participants will work in small groups to identify major opportunities and challenges for the region and how ocean planning can address them.</p>
3:15 pm	Break
3:30 pm	<p>Panel: Addressing opportunities and challenges in the Northeast region through ocean planning</p> <p>A diverse panel of stakeholders and state, federal, and tribal representatives will respond to the concepts emerging from breakout groups, followed by facilitated dialogue with plenary participants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>James Behnke, Member, Rich May</i> • <i>Denise Desautels, Deputy Section Chief, Office of the General Council, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration</i> • <i>Doug Harris, Tribal Preservation Officer, Narragansett Indian Tribe (invited)</i> • <i>Kathleen Leyden, Director, Maine Coastal Program</i> • <i>Sally McGee, Member, New England Fishery Management Council</i> • <i>Stephanie Moura, Director, SeaPlan</i> • <i>Joel Whitman, Director Corporate Strategy, Marketing and Communications, Global Marine Systems, Ltd.</i>
5:00 pm	Adjourn
6:00 pm – 7:00 pm	<p>Networking reception, sponsored by SeaPlan</p> <p>Marriott Newport, 25 America's Cup Avenue, Newport, Rhode Island</p>

Tuesday, March 13	
8:00 am	Continental breakfast
9:00 am	Welcome, review of day 1, review agenda for day 2 <i>Laura Cantral, Partner, Meridian</i>
9:15 am	Northeast Regional Ocean Council preparations for moving forward Representatives of the Northeast Regional Ocean Council will describe their proposed process, outcomes, and preparations for ocean planning in the region. This session will include facilitated dialogue with plenary participants. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>John Weber, Ocean Planning Director, Northeast Regional Ocean Council</i> • <i>Nick Napoli, Director of Marine Planning, SeaPlan</i>
10:00 am	Charge to breakout groups
10:05 am	Transition to breakout groups
10:10 am	Breakout groups: Providing input to the Northeast Regional Ocean Council about preparations for moving forward with ocean planning Participants will work in small groups to generate feedback and input to the Northeast Regional Ocean Council regarding its proposed process, outcomes, and preparations for ocean planning in the region, building on the discussions during day one of the workshop.
11:25 am	Break
11:40 am	Plenary panel: Members of the Northeast Regional Ocean Council respond to participant input State and federal members of the Northeast Regional Ocean Council NROC will respond to key reflections and questions identified during the breakouts, followed by facilitated dialogue with plenary participants. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ron Beck, Chief, Energy and Facilities Branch, First District, U.S. Coast Guard</i> • <i>Steve Couture, Program Manager, New Hampshire Coastal Program</i> • <i>Bob LaBelle, Co-Chair, Northeast Regional Ocean Council and Science Advisor to the Director, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, U.S. Department of the Interior</i> • <i>Betsy Nicholson, Northeast Lead, Coastal Services Center, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration</i> • <i>Brian Thompson, Director, Office of Long Island Sound Programs, Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection</i>

12:25 pm	Charge to afternoon breakout groups
12:30 pm	Lunch
1:30 pm	<p>Breakout groups: Generating specific ideas about key elements of moving forward</p> <p>Participants will work in small groups to generate specific ideas for moving forward with important elements of regional ocean planning, including science and data, implementation (regulatory and non-regulatory) issues, and stakeholder outreach. They will also provide recommendations to the Northeast Regional Ocean Council about how to keep stakeholders meaningfully engaged in the process going forward.</p>
3:00 pm	Break
3:15 pm	<p>Plenary panel: Regional leaders respond to participant input and highlight key connections across workshop discussions</p> <p>During this session, representatives from each of the breakout groups will present to the panel and plenary participants the key ideas and insights generated during the preceding session. Panelist will respond to these ideas and share their perspectives about key insights gained during the workshop. This session will include facilitated discussion with plenary participants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bruce Carlisle, Co-Chair, Northeast Regional Ocean Council</i> • <i>Rip Cunningham, Chair, New England Fishery Management Council</i> • <i>Bob LaBelle, Co-Chair, Northeast Regional Ocean Council</i> • <i>John Weber, Ocean Planning Director, Northeast Regional Ocean Council</i>
4:30 pm	<p>Opportunities for continued collaboration and engagement</p> <p>Participants will hear about opportunities for continued collaboration and engagement as the ocean planning process moves forward in the Northeast region.</p> <p><i>John Weber, Ocean Planning Director, Northeast Regional Ocean Council</i></p>
4:45 pm	<p>Closing remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bruce Carlisle, Co-Chair, Northeast Regional Ocean Council</i> • <i>Bob LaBelle, Co-Chair, Northeast Regional Ocean Council</i>
5:00 pm	Adjourn

Appendix B.

Northeast Workshop on Regional Ocean Planning

March 12-13, 2012

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Appendix B.

Ocean Planning Elements: Summary of NROC Work Plan

This work plan summary provides the basic structure, elements, and rough timeline for the first two years of regional ocean planning in the Northeast. This summary is intended to provide an overview of desired outcomes and general tasks that would be necessary to achieve those outcomes. Funding has been secured to help the Northeast Regional Ocean Council (NROC) accomplish these tasks over the next two years.

The general intention of this work plan is to produce the foundational elements necessary for a regional ocean plan. As such, it focuses generally on: public process and stakeholder engagement; issue identification and goal setting; data development; model and tool development; and identification of specific implementation measures to ensure the plan is effective in achieving its goals.

At the end of this two year period, NROC's following goals would be achieved:

1. **Well-engaged public**, with sector-specific groups providing input, data, and engaged with other aspects of planning.
2. **Issue-specific goals established** and helping to direct other activities related to spatial data development.
3. **Spatial data** necessary to address these goals developed (including development of new data as described below) and tools/models assessed and developed as appropriate to apply this data.
4. **Baseline characterization** of the region completed, structured to enable application of tools and models as appropriate.
5. **Potential plan implementation options** identified.

These outcomes are all necessary to ensure a strong foundation for subsequent activities necessary for developing a draft plan. Future efforts, beyond year 2, would include the development of a draft plan using the materials developed and public input obtained during the first two years.

These five outcomes above are all inter-related. Development of spatial data will occur as issue-specific goals are formed, and will also be developed to maximize their utility in application of future planning tools and models. Finally, the most critical aspect of this effort is the first goal: a well-engaged public. Input from well-informed stakeholders is vital to this effort's success.

The following pages describe the general tasks intended to accomplish each of these outcomes, and provides an overall rationale. Finally, the schedule following the table is intended to lay out approximate timelines for these outcomes in general.

New England regional ocean planning elements

Outcome/task	Description/rationale
Outcome 1: Goals Task 1a – Public listening meetings Task 1b – Interest group workshops Task 1c – Draft goals/vision Task 1d – Public meetings to discuss draft goals/vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sector-specific workshops will enable a more in-depth discussion of certain issues • Maximize use of technology and existing meetings/conferences/entities to obtain input • Public meetings in each state <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Input from workshops/listening sessions/other public engagement activities informs goals • Summary issue statements: what this effort will address <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review draft statements, summarized in Task 1c • Use existing meetings and modern tech for input as well
Outcome 2: Data development Task 2a – Continue population of regional data portal Task 2b – Fill priority gaps in human use mapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certain data priorities have been developed by team working on Northeast Ocean Data Portal (www.northeastoceandata.org) • Developing work plan for coming year to continue to populate Data Portal to ensure priority needs are addressed (e.g., as identified through development of plan goals) • Additional functional needs of data portal addressed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial fishing and rec boating have been identified as key existing data gaps • Existing VTR/VMS data may have scale/confidentiality issues • Also is a good opportunity to engage these key constituencies and continue development of relationship with NEFMC, other fisheries entities • Preliminary outreach/messaging in fall 2011; main effort winter 2012 (commercial fishing) and 2012 boating season (May-Oct) • Build in general outreach component

Outcome/task		Rationale
Outcome 3: Baseline characterization	Task 3a – Evaluate ecosystem services models, decision support tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage existing work in region/application of existing models • Examine potential utility to help address identified issues
	Task 3b – Evaluate habitat classification models	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine various approaches to benthic habitat classification/modeling underway in New England • Assess planning/management utility of these approaches to meet desired goals • Identify commonalities among various approaches • Identify specific elements of further work needed to enhance overall utility/applicability
	Task 3c – Draft baseline characterization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characterize planning area natural resources, human uses (current status and future trends), ecosystem, issues identified • Consider application of tools looked at in Task 3a to help inform/structure baseline characterization • Draw upon data developed in Outcome 2 • Heavily dependent on maps/data • Review by public
	Task 3d – Finalize baseline characterization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate comments received on draft
Outcome 4: Foundation for future planning activities	Task 4a – Consider approaches to identifying regionally important areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specifics of this task will depend on nature of issues identified, data developed, public engagement, etc. • Will be further defined as process moves forward
	Task 4b – Public workshops to discuss/ review data developed, options for addressing identified issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public forums to discuss/review data developed, draft baseline characterization, and options developed in Task 4a • Input will help inform future work

Outcome 5: Implementation options	Task 5a – Review of existing law, regs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operating within context of National Ocean Policy/existing law and regulations: what are possible ways to address identified issues? • Other implementation options may be non-regulatory in nature (e.g., a need to better coordinate scientific research for a specific issue) • Important conversation to begin in early stages of effort
	Task 5b – potential implementation	

General timeline for NROC work plan elements

