

Comments on the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy Preliminary Report

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On behalf of the **Weather Coalition**, a diverse group of 32 institutions (full list follows) including the private sector, academia, the research community, and professional associations, we would like to commend the Commissioners and staff on the thoughtful preliminary report that addresses a wide range of issues related to the state of the world's oceans and the manner in which this country addresses those issues. We applaud the significant effort that has gone into the creation of this document.

We appreciate in particular the Guiding Principle, *Ocean—Land—Atmosphere Connections*, which states that, “Ocean policies should be based on the recognition that the oceans, land, and atmosphere are inextricably intertwined and that actions that affect one Earth system component are likely to affect another.” Without land-sea-air integration in the area of research, a true understanding of the Earth *system* cannot be achieved. This understanding and the manner in which it is implemented in policy decisions, day-to-day operations across many sectors, and hazard warning systems, affects our economy, the safety of our citizens, and the health of our environment. We would appreciate it if the Commission would use its considerable influence to promote a more thorough integration across ocean, land, and atmospheric research and research applications programs in particular, perhaps through a recommendation that a follow-on study be conducted under the auspices of the National Research Council.

A second Guiding Principle to which we would like to call attention and commend is that of *Best Available Science Information* which states, “Ocean policy decisions should be based on the best available understanding of the natural, social, and economic processes that affect ocean and coastal environments...” As the Commission is fully aware, the best possible research results are arrived at through full participation of the country's best researchers from across the broad community including academia *and* the private and public sectors. We would appreciate it if this fact could be stated in the final report.

In addition, we ask that consideration be given to including a broader version of the excellent recommendation numbered 19-9 that addresses increasing support for research within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Recommendation 19-9 focuses on collaborations among scientists and commercial and recreational fishermen in particular. For several years, the Weather Coalition has been advocating the creation of a NOAA Collaborations Fund, a competitive grants program focusing on basic and applied research related to weather. Obviously, it would be beneficial if the more inclusive ocean-land-atmosphere integrative aspects addressed above could be applied to such a research fund. Again, it would be extremely helpful if the Commission would use its influence to promote the creation of a competitive, peer-reviewed grants fund that strengthens NOAA's ability to address its research function that supports its broad operations mission. Such a fund should be open for proposals from the broad community including the private sector and should promote collaborative work across sectors addressing work that provides better understanding of the integrated Earth system.

As the Commission proceeds with the Ocean Policy Report process, we would like to volunteer the members of the Weather Coalition for any assistance that might be of use. Please do not hesitate to call on any of us.

Weather Coalition Membership

University of Alabama at Huntsville
Department of Atmospheric Science

University of Albany, SUNY
Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences

American Geophysical Union

American Meteorological Society

University of Arizona

Arizona State University

Atmospheric and Environmental Research (AER), Inc.

University of California at Los Angeles

Cornell University
Atmospheric Science Program

Florida State University
Center for Ocean-Atmospheric Prediction Studies
Department of Meteorology

University of Hawaii
School of Ocean and Earth Sciences & Technology

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Department of Atmospheric Sciences

Institute for Business and Home Safety

International Association of Emergency Managers

Iowa State University
Office of the Vice Provost for Research

Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Dept. of Earth, Atmospheric and Planetary Sciences

University of Missouri – Columbia
Department of Atmospheric Sciences

**National Association of State Universities and
Land-Grant Colleges**

North Carolina State University
College of Mathematical & Physical Sciences

University of Oklahoma
Oklahoma Weather Center

Pennsylvania State University
Department of Meteorology

Purdue University
Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences

Raytheon Company

Reinsurance Association of America

Saint Louis University
Department of Earth and Atmospheric Science
Cooperative Institute for Precipitation Systems

Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC)

University of Texas at Austin
Department of Geological Sciences

University Corporation for Atmospheric Research

University of Washington
Department of Atmospheric Sciences

Vaisala, Inc.

The Weather Channel, Inc.

Weathernews, Inc.