

National Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning Workshop

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At the invitation of the National Oceans Council, I attended the Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning (CMSP) Workshop on 21 June at the Dept of the Interior in Washington DC. There were over 500 in attendance and 200 more through a webinar. The purpose of the workshop was to bring together Federal, State, public and regional representatives to develop an understanding of the CMSP process, build a community of CMSP users and consider future steps for regional implementation. The Workshop was also used to gather public feedback toward implementing "a National Policy for the stewardship of the Ocean, our Coasts and the Great Lakes (National Ocean Policy), as established by Executive Order 13547, under President Obama."

The Workshop, which began at 9 and went until 5:30, started with a welcome statement by Nancy Sutley the , Chair, White House Council on Environmental Quality. This was followed by three panel sessions chaired by various Government, state and county agencies. After each panel discussion, a question and answer period was provided for. Among the panelists who spoke was Vice Admiral Salerno, USCG. He indicated that 90 percent of US imports and exports are done by water, 75 percent of US residents live in coastal areas, there are 17 million recreational vessels in the US and the potential problems from multiple uses of our oceans, such as energy, commerce, security, recreational use, etc. He also spoke on the problem of invasive species. Nancy Stoner of EPA indicated that there are 24 agencies involved in the national oceans policy. . Nancy Sutley indicated there are tens of millions of jobs connected with our oceans and that collaborative planning can help achieve common goals.

The second panel provided an overview of National Ocean Policy and the framework for effective CMSP. Discussion ensued on identifying areas most suitable for various uses focused on region, not a specific location. Stelwagon Bank National Marine Sanctuary was given as an example. Nine Regional Planning Bodies will be established. Spatial plans will be implemented by states, tribes and local governments.

The third panel discussed lessons learned from places with CMSP experience. A panelist suggested that the role of the commercial fishing industry should be defined in Marine Spatial Planning. Rhode Island already has a long history of MSP with approved plans by NOAA. A representative from Alaska indicated there were expenditures of one billion dollars per year in recreational fishing alone, thereby indicating the importance of fishing consideration in MSP. Concerns were voiced on what the outcomes from MSP would be and how all government entities must cooperate on agreeing with final MSPs in their area.

Dr. John Oliver, USCG, indicated there will be nine regional ocean areas. To create their plans, a Regional Planning Body will be established in each region. They will hold meetings and from

that create a final CMS plan and then submit it to the National Ocean Policy.

In the afternoon session following the panel discussions, break-out sessions convened where numbers of people forming separate groups went to different meeting rooms to discuss specific areas and present questions to be answered by panelists following the break-out sessions. At the one I attended I mentioned the economic importance of recreational boating in the US, its impact on our GDP and the number of participants in boating. At the conclusion of the break-out sessions selected questions from each group were brought back to the main body for answers by the panelists. While I have a list of questions presented to the panelists, I could not get all the answers. I have discussed this with Andy Lipsky, the Ocean Policy Advisor, and he indicated all questions and answers will be provided in the Workshop summary which is now in preparation. This will be provided at www.whitehouse.gov/ocean and then go to Workshop and find play back.

At the conclusion, those wishing to offer public comment who had signed up were given three minutes to present questions to the panel.

This is only a summary of a very long meeting. As I receive more information on this subject I will forward it to everyone.