



STATEMENT ON OCEAN OBSERVING

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Presidential Team - Blue Industry Group Meeting

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The Alliance for Earth Observations is pleased to provide recommendations to the Presidential Transition Team regarding ocean observing.

Given that we are living in a time when the climate is changing and is expected to change in the future, NOAA—the science, products, and services it provides—has never been more critical to our nation’s well-being and economic progress.

Without robust observations of the Earth, the United States will not successfully transition to a green economy and will be at a great disadvantage for disaster prevention and mitigation, economic competitiveness, national security, and overall quality of life. No matter what climate policies the nation adopts, observations are needed to ensure they are having the impact intended.

Comprehensive, accurate, and sustained Earth observations are also critical to DOC/NOAA in fulfilling its broad responsibilities. Without ocean observations we cannot manage fisheries, understand and respond to a changing climate, manage coastal zones, or protect marine mammals or our marine sanctuaries.

The planet is changing at an increasingly rapid pace and more systems—a mix of in situ, airborne, and space-based observations—are needed to monitor those changes. This is particularly relevant regarding ocean observations and the ocean’s role in driving climate. Currently, U.S. observing systems are aging and replacements are a long way off. Many of the ocean observations required to better understand the changing planet do not

exist or have major gaps in their coverage. Those observations that do exist are heterogeneous and not integrated.

Coastal observations are becoming increasingly important, and requirements for new observations needed to meet emerging environmental challenges and aid decision-making are lacking.

The Alliance for Earth Observations recommends:

- Acknowledging NOAA as critical to the nation and providing the funding and leadership required to meet its essential responsibilities.
- Establishing a national strategic approach to environmental information, of which ocean and climate data and information are essential elements.
- Modernizing the National Ocean Service.
- Fully addressing research-to-operations issues to best leverage U.S. scientific investment.
- Establishing a mechanism for greater private sector engagement—to encourage innovation and to obtain an understanding of data user needs
- Supporting a NOAA Organic Act, IOOS legislation, and the LOS treaty.
- Implementing the Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) at a scale consistent with the nation’s needs

More information on the Alliance for Earth Observations is available at:
<http://alliance.strategies.org>