

Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body

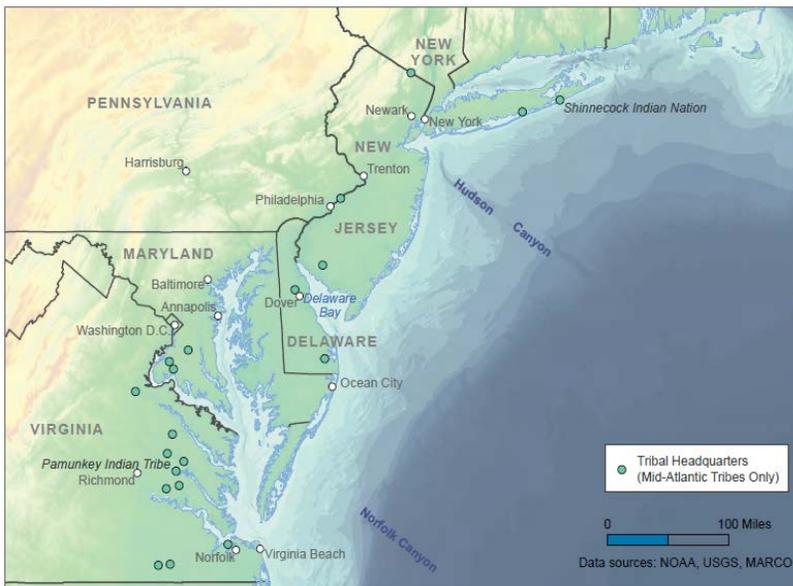
Fact Sheet

Importance of Our Oceans and Regional Planning

The ocean waters of the Mid-Atlantic provide a wealth of economic and environmental services to local communities, states, and the Nation. State and federally managed waters are used in many ways: commercial fishing, shipping, military exercises, energy, aquaculture, sand mining, habitat for wildlife, and recreation. Over the past decade, the demands for human use increased dramatically, creating a new generation of challenges and opportunities. It has become increasingly clear that a regional approach is essential because ocean resources are ecologically and economically linked across jurisdictional boundaries.

The intergovernmental Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body (MidA RPB) was formally established in April of 2013 to coordinate and implement regional ocean planning in the Mid-Atlantic. The MidA RPB is working to improve our understanding of how ocean resources and places are being used, managed, and conserved, and to establish a broad vision that will guide actions to address shared regional priorities. These efforts are guided by the National Ocean Policy (*Presidential Executive Order, 2010*).

Moving Forward



Regional ocean planning in the Mid-Atlantic is being led by state, federal, tribal, and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council partners, with the ongoing involvement of ocean industries, commercial and recreational fishers, other recreational interests, conservation interests, local communities, academia, and others. Information obtained through this regional ocean planning approach is intended to guide resource conservation while supporting a growing number of uses vying for ocean resources and space.

In collaboration with stakeholders, the Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean (MARCO), and other partners in the region, the MidA RPB seeks to coordinate state, federal, tribal, and fishery management council representatives to:

- plan for existing, new, and expanding Mid-Atlantic ocean uses;
- make better and more informed decisions about the use of ocean space;
- improve efficiency and leverage constrained resources;
- work with stakeholders to vet and share ocean data; and
- provide ocean stewardship.

Public Engagement

Participation of stakeholders and the public is fundamental to a successful ocean planning process. The MidA RPB is committed to offering timely, transparent, inclusive, accessible, and meaningful opportunities for engagement. Recent stakeholder engagement efforts have focused on providing opportunities via workshops, meetings, and webinars to foster dialogue among stakeholders and federal, state, and tribal entities to share ideas on ocean planning and to share and vet data and information. The input received to date is helping the MidA RPB shape the ocean planning process so that it meets the needs and interests of the region. Comments are encouraged via email, and through MidA RPB- hosted events such as public listening sessions that are held across the region at key points in the process. The MidA RPB will consider all comments received.

MidA RPB Representatives

The MidA RPB is composed of representatives from:

- New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia
- Federally-recognized Tribes :
 - The Shinnecock Indian Nation
 - The Pamunkey Indian Tribe
- The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
- Eight federal agencies with ocean interests:
 - Department of Agriculture (represented by the Natural Resources Conservation Service)
 - Department of Commerce (represented by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration)
 - Department of Defense (represented by the U.S. Navy and the Joint Chiefs of Staff)
 - Department of Energy (represented by Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy)
 - Department of Homeland Security (represented by the U.S. Coast Guard)
 - Department of the Interior (represented by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management)
 - Department of Transportation (represented by the Maritime Administration)
 - Environmental Protection Agency
- Connecticut serves as an ex-officio member

Points of Contact for MidA RPB Information

The MidA RPB is led by a federal, state, and tribal representative:

- Bob LaBelle, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management; Federal Co-Lead
 - Phone: 703-787-1700
 - Email: robert.labelle@boem.gov
- Gwynne Schultz, Maryland Department of Natural Resources; State Co-Lead
 - Phone: 410-260-8735
 - Email: gwynne.schultz@maryland.gov
- Kelsey Leonard, Shinnecock Indian Nation; Tribal Co-Lead
 - Phone: 631-294-0671
 - Email: KelseyLeonard@shinnecock.org
- MidA RPB email address: MidAtlanticRPB@boem.gov
- MidA RPB website: www.boem.gov/Mid-Atlantic-Regional-Planning-Body