Executive Summary of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body's Public Listening Sessions on the Draft Framework

February – April 2014

Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, New Jersey, and New York

This document summarizes the presentations and public comments from the five public listening sessions held by the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body beginning on February 24, 2014 in Annapolis, Maryland and ending on April 7, 2014 in Riverhead, New York focused on the Draft Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Planning Framework. The summary was developed by Meridian Institute, which provides process design, meeting planning, and facilitation services to the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body.

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Introduction

The Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body (MidA RPB) released a Draft Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Planning Framework (Draft Framework) on December 16, 2013 for public comment. The Draft Framework outlined an initial geographic focus, and draft vision, principles, goals, objectives, and example actions for the MidA RPB. In order to gather substantive stakeholder input, the state representatives to the MidA RPB hosted public listening sessions in collaboration with their federal agency and tribal partners. The public listening sessions were held at the following dates, times, and locations:

- Monday, February 24, 2014 in Annapolis, Maryland at 1:00 pm and 5:00 pm
- Thursday, February 27, 2014 in Lewes, Delaware at 5:00 pm
- Thursday, March 20, 2014 in Norfolk, Virginia at 1:30 pm and 5:00 pm
- Thursday, March 27, 2014 in West Long Branch, New Jersey at 1:00 and 5:00 pm
- Monday, April 7, 2014 in Riverhead, New York at 1:00 and 5:00 pm

There were 169 members of the general public who attended the public listening sessions. The breakdown of the public listening sessions by state were as follows (including members of the public, state and federal employees, Tribal members): 28 attendees in Maryland, 54 in Delaware, 71 in Virginia, 39 in New Jersey, and 50 in New York. Representatives from state and federal agencies, tribal members, Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean (MARCO) staff, and members of the Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal team were in attendance.

Meeting Objectives

The objectives of each public listening session were to:
- Provide Mid-Atlantic stakeholders with an overview of:
    o Regional ocean planning in the Mid-Atlantic,
    o The MARCO Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal, a tool to support ocean planning, and
    o The Draft Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Planning Framework.
- Receive input and answer questions from stakeholders about regional ocean planning and the Draft Framework.

Presentations

Each public listening session followed a similar format. The MidA RPB state, federal, and tribal members, with assistance from MARCO's Data Portal Team, presented background information on regional ocean planning, the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body, MARCO's Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal, and the Draft Framework. All presentations can be found on the MidA RPB's website at: http://www.boem.gov/MidA-RPB-Public-Listening-Sessions/.

The presentations were led by the state hosts – Gwynne Schultz, Maryland Department of Natural Resources; Sarah Cooksey, Delaware Coastal Programs and John Clark, Delaware Department of Fish and Wildlife; Laura McKay, Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program; Martin Rosen, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection; and Michael Snyder, New York Department of State – who welcomed stakeholders, provided an overview of ocean planning, background on the MidA RPB, and the MidA RPB's activities and timelines.

The state host began by identifying opportunities and challenges that may be addressed through ocean planning and engagement by the MidA RPB. They also provided background regarding the genesis and purpose of the MidA RPB. The MidA RPB was established in April 2013 as an intergovernmental body that would coordinate and implement regional ocean planning among the six Mid-Atlantic States, Shinnecock Indian Nation, eight federal

agencies, and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council. The purpose of the MidA RPB is to plan for new and existing ocean uses, improve efficiency and leverage constrained resources, work with and engage stakeholders, and to make more informed decision about the management of ocean resources and space. Over the next few years, the MidA RPB plans to develop a workplan, complete a regional ocean assessment, continuously engage stakeholders, develop additional products, then implement and iterate those products and processes as our understanding of the ocean increases.

At each listening session, Gerrod Smith, Shinnecock Indian Nation and MidA RPB Tribal Co-Lead or Salvatore Ruggiero, Advisor to the Shinnecock Indian Nation, provided remarks about the importance of the ocean and regional ocean planning, and the tribe's role in the MidA RPB. The Shinnecock are dependent on the ocean, and this coupled with their respect for the ocean and coast drives them to be better stewards of the ocean for this and future generations. As the only federally recognized tribe with coastal land in the Mid-Atlantic, the Shinnecock will continue to reach out to other state and federal tribes to serve as a voice for native peoples. The Shinnecock also raised several issues of particular importance to them including food security, aquaculture, fishery management in the context of a changing ocean, habitat restoration and sea level rise. Gerrod and Salvatore strongly conveyed their interest in hearing from and continuing to work with state and federal partners and stakeholders through the regional ocean planning process.

Information about MARCO's Data Portal was presented by Tony MacDonald, Director of the Urban Coast Institute at Monmouth University and Jay Odell, Mid Atlantic Marine Program Director at The Nature Conservancy and member of the portal team. The purpose of the Data Portal is to serve as an online toolkit to visualize and analyze ocean and human resources using key information about fishing grounds, recreational areas, shipping lanes, habitat areas, energy sites, etc. The portal compiles data from a multitude of federal and state agencies and includes data gathered from participatory Geographic Information Systems (GIS) workshops with stakeholders to identify missing data and/or identify key ocean areas. Through the visualization tool of the Portal, users can add, remove, and modify different data layers. For more information on the Data Portal, please visit: http://portal.midatlanticocean.org/portal/

The presentation concluded with an overview of the Draft Framework. The Draft Framework was presented by either Maureen Bornholdt, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management and MidA RPB Co-Lead; Joe Atangan, U.S. Navy and Joint Chiefs of Staff; or Douglas Pabst, Environmental Protection Agency. They walked through the components of the Draft Framework – the initial geographic focus, vision statement, principles, goals and associated objectives, and example actions that could be taken to achieve the objectives. This version of the Draft Framework is in Appendix B.

Synthesis of Public Comments & Conclusion

At the conclusion of the presentations, Whitney Tome of Meridian Institute facilitated discussions with members of the public to solicit feedback on each of the sections of the Draft Framework. Below is a brief synthesis of comments that were consistently raised during the public listening sessions and seemed to be of high priority to public participants. For the detailed list of all public comments received at the public listening sessions, please refer to Appendix A.

The major themes consistently heard at the public listening sessions included:

- Estuaries and bays should be included in the geographic scope and in regional ocean planning by the MidA RPB. The interconnections between the estuaries, bays, and the ocean are important to both identify and account for. Additionally, the MidA RPB should coordinate with entities managing those water bodies as appropriate.

- The MidA RPB's regional ocean planning process and/or ocean plan should be documented. At every public meeting, members of the public advocated for either the development of an ocean plan, or other documentation of the MidA RPB's process, products, activities, and actions.

- Clearly define terms used in the Draft Framework to facilitate consistent understanding with members of the public. Among the terms identified by the public as needing clarification included: ocean (coastal and/or open ocean), resilience, sound science, traditional knowledge, efficiency, effectiveness, and adaptive management.

- Engage and communicate with stakeholders regularly by reaching out to them, soliciting their input, and providing information on the MidA RPB's activities, documents, and actions. There were several suggestions that other media outlets and tools should be used to disseminate information about the RPB including organizations, newspapers, social media, etc. Many comments also reflected that stakeholder engagement should become its own principle in the Draft Framework.

- Understand and account for the cumulative impacts of multiple projects in regional ocean planning. Members of the public either suggested that the MidA RPB undertake a project-by-project approach or take on multiple projects simultaneously. In either case, there should be a sense of the compounding impacts of multiple projects on the ocean and its users.

- Incorporate the value of nature and ecosystem services in both the planning and decision making processes. Several members of the public raised the importance of including ecological value, ecosystem valuation, and the rights of nature in the Draft Framework.

- Coordinate, cross-pollinate, and learn lessons from other regions that are also embarking on regional ocean planning and reach out to and engage other state and federal agencies and local governments who are engaging in ongoing planning efforts.

- Weight and/or prioritize the goals or principles, in relation to each other, in order to address any conflicts that might arise between them.
- Develop performance metrics to track progress toward the MidA RPB's goals and objectives.

At the end of each public listening session, the state hosts and all RPB members in attendance thanked the public for their input questions. MidA RPB Members asked that stakeholders continue providing input and comments to the MidA RPB by attending public meetings, listening sessions, and other in-person opportunities, and by providing written comments to MidAtlanticRPB@boem.gov. Additional information about the MidA RPB can be found at: http://www.boem.gov/Mid-Atlantic-Regional-Planning-Body/.

Appendix A: Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Planning Body's Public Listening Sessions February-April 2014: Public Comments and Questions Received

This document captures and organizes topically the nearly verbatim comments offered verbally by members of the public public listening sessions convened by the Mid-Atlantic RPB at Annapolis, Maryland on February 24, 2014, Lewes, Delaware on February 27, 2014, Norfolk, Virginia on March 20, 2014, West Long Branch, New Jersey on March 27, 2014, and Riverhead, New York on April 7, 2014. Written input submitted to the Mid-Atlantic RPB is not included.

Public Comments/Questions about Draft Framework

Draft Vision

Vision: *A Mid-Atlantic ocean where safe and responsible use and stewardship support healthy, productive, resilient and treasured natural and economic ocean resources that provide for the wellbeing and prosperity of present and future generations.*

Public Comment:
Language/Definitions
- "Balanced" does not appear in the vision statement. "Balance" should be the cornerstone throughout this process. (Maryland AM)
- Specify "ocean resources" as either "near-shore" or "far-shore" ocean resources. (Maryland PM)
- More clarification is needed around what is meant by "economic ocean resources." (Maryland PM)
- Consider replacing the word "productive"—it needs further clarity as it implies oil and gas productivity or economic productivity. (Virginia AM)
- Can some of the concepts in the statement be condensed under the phrase "more sustainable?" (Virginia AM)
- Remove the word "treasured," as it implies that you are distinguishing certain resources as treasured and some as not treasured. (New Jersey PM)
- "Resilient" needs to be defined. (New York AM)
- I'm not sure the vision statement is a complete sentence. (New Jersey AM)

Length/Organization
- Make the vision a short statement that you can remember. (Virginia AM)
- Pull out key words and turn them into short core values for the RPB. (Virginia AM)

Timeline
- Do not change the vision, but think about what timeline this is operating on (5, 10, 15 years?). (Maryland AM)

Additional Concerns
- There are a few environmental issues of habitat loss that are going to effect the kind of work you're trying to do to coordinate or create a structure where you can take care of our treasured national and economic ocean resource. Ocean dumping, overfishing, oil and gas exploration, and lack of political leadership or political will to act on these issues are huge issues. I just found out the Rutgers has joined with the University of Texas to study sedimentation in Barnegat Bay. What does this mean? Is this a way for the oil industry to get into the Jersey Coast using the good reputation of Rutgers? I wish you well in your work, I truly do. I hope you have the endurance to complete it. I assume your definition of the general "wellbeing" includes the general population, but my suspicion is that it will somehow be interpreted to the advantage of a particular corporation or process. You could say "the people of the United States" to clarify that. (New Jersey AM)

Draft Goals

General Comments/Questions on Draft Goals

Implementation/Achieving Goals
- Who will be responsible for ensuring these goals are met? How will these goals be achieved? (Virginia AM)

Prioritization
- The statement should say that you will maximize the benefits of these two to the extent you can. (New Jersey PM)
- Consider prioritizing one goal over the other to balance concerns about promoting ecosystem health and the economy. Goal 1 and Goal 2 could be merged to state that we should promote healthy ocean ecosystems in a changing world. (Virginia AM, New Jersey PM)

Goal Incompatibility
- Both of these goals cannot be achieved at the same time. If you are going to promote ecosystem health how can you allow offshore drilling to occur? (New Jersey PM)
- The goals are compatible, just different. Goal 1 is a reflection of the vision statement; Goal 2 is how we are going to do business. You can't have a sustainable use of the ocean unless it is promoting ecosystem health. (New Jersey PM)

Goal 1: *Promote ocean ecosystem health and integrity through conservation, protection, enhancement, and restoration.*

Public Comment:

Ocean Health
- Thank you for taking into account the health of the ocean, but we would like to caution that it is more than just "habitat destruction" and we need to broaden this goal to include ecological functioning and endangered species restoration so it's not tied to a particular geographic location. (Maryland AM, New York PM)
- So are you going to promote significant ecosystem health? I love Goal 1. (New Jersey PM)
- The RPB needs more emphasis on marine species. (Delaware PM)
- I am very pleased to hear concern for other native species - man is a part of a web of life. (Delaware PM)

Coastal and Offshore Links
- Offshore and inshore data sharing will be useful. It was interesting to see how much biodiversity there is on the continental shelf on the portal. It's important to link coastal and offshore information. (Maryland PM)

Language/Definitions
- "Restoration" and "enhancement" need a little more definition. (New York AM)

General Comments
- Keep Goal 1. (Virginia AM)
- Prioritizing Goal 1; if you don't have a healthy system you won't be able to support all the uses that rely on it. (New Jersey AM, New York PM)

Goal 2: *Plan and provide for existing and emerging ocean uses in a sustainable manner that reduces conflicts, improves efficiency and regulatory predictability, and supports economic growth.*

Public Comment:

Language/Definitions
- Should we be focusing on (1) efficiency or effectiveness? "Efficiency" seems to be too narrow; (2) Are we promoting economic growth or bio-economic availability? The RPB should focus on bio-economic availability: (3) Do we want to "reduce conflict" (which is inherent in man) or "reduce exploitation?;" (4) Should we focus on "conservation" or "regeneration?" We should focus on maintaining the regenerative capacity to account for natural evolutions. (Delaware PM)
- Rephrase Goal 2 to balance all those things aside with economic growth. Economic growth has gotten us into a lot of trouble with the environment and it needs to be balanced in the statement here. (Virginia AM)

- Change "support" to "consider" - or something less strong. (Virginia AM)
- Can you explain what "regulatory predictability" means? (New Jersey AM)
- I like most of Goal 2, but the concepts embedded in the second part of the goal need some reframing. Overall there are three objectives I would recommend adding: (1) reducing storm vulnerability, (2) promoting diverse energy sources, and (3) protect fish populations - especially those populations that cross multiple regions and are threatened. (Delaware PM)

Ocean Health and Economic Growth
- Goal 2 is to anthropogenic heavy. We are not going anywhere if the health of the oceans isn't the number one. There are so many things that nature has provided for us. (Delaware PM)
- (In response to previous comment) We have made tremendous strides in improving our ecosystems. To even insinuate that people who work on the water are destroying it is crazy. What these people (the RPB) are trying to do is put together a plan for all users and uses. To have the entire ocean be an MPA is crazy. We need to keep economic viability in these objectives. (Delaware PM)
- "They" is "us" – the goods that come from those marine highways is us. We rely on them for our economy. Keep this objective. (Delaware PM)
- I support economic growth. Perhaps we should rephrase along the lines of "evaluates economic growth." (Delaware PM)
- "Economic growth" can be taken out. I am not sure if that is a goal. It is ideal, but I am not sure if that is what you want your mission to be. (Virginia AM)
- Taking "economic growth" out would be bad. We need as much input as possible. When you exclude someone they will fight like hell against it. (Virginia AM)
- Throw out Goal 2. The struggle we are in is what type of climate and oceans we want to hand off to our children. The question is that simple. We have more people around the world beginning to understand what protection of the planet is all about. (Virginia AM)
- Goal 2 has the sustainability framework and hopefully that implies a conservation baseline. (New Jersey PM)

Efficiency
- You should improve existing efficiencies but you also shouldn't discount or hinder existing efficiencies. There are existing efficiencies like fishing and habitats that we don't want to get in the way of either. (Maryland AM)
- Efficiency of what? I don't think sticking effectiveness in here is quite right. If you stick "effectiveness" in there it's only limited to the effectiveness of regulatory decisions. As you get into the goal statement, the more you qualify them with things, the less they become goals and the more they become lists. (New Jersey AM)
- I think what you're trying to say is "improve the efficiency and predictability of a regulatory process." (New Jersey AM)

Conflict

- Regarding the part about "reduces conflict" there are two existing views. In the first, we use good mapping tools to plan and decide where we'll put commercial property. In that sense you are reducing conflict. But the second, which is not really in here, is about be deciding who is going to win when it comes to making choices between conflicting uses. As stated, you address the more "warm and fuzzy" part. People will get upset with each other. That part about selecting optimal uses is avoided here and that's the messy part. (Maryland AM)
- (In response to previous comment) Reducing user conflict is almost the whole point of this process. You can't have a wind farm in a shipping lane. When you have these competing interests (wind farm vs. shipping) the third party is habitat and the loser is always habitat. Never cross off "conservation." Conservation is not a snap shot of freezing things as they are. Habitats change and that is natural. The RPB should not throw that word out – it is a key priority. (Delaware PM)
- Is "regulatory predictability" in conflict with "adaptive management?" If you are adapting your management to meet a changing environment than you will have issues with predictability. (New York PM)

Draft Objectives for Goal 1

Objective 1: *Understanding, protecting, and restoring key habitats*

Public Comment:

- I don't see ecosystem services, or a statement about the value of nature or how understanding the ways productive and resilient ecosystems contribute to tourism, recreation, commercial fishing, and economic growth. Look at linking this to the benefits to people. (Maryland AM)
- Does more "understanding" mean conducting more assessments? It doesn't say if their goal is to provide better assessments. It doesn't say assessment of existing critical habitats, where they might be. (Maryland PM)
- It's more than habitats—I'm glad to see it here, but I think that ensuring that the ecosystem is functioning is a priority, so this statement needs to be broadened to include that. (New Jersey AM, New Jersey PM)
- In addition to promoting renewable energy and limiting extraction of fossil fuel for the ocean, there was a previous slide about supporting economic growth. I'm not sure how you can be tasked with supporting economic growth, but not mitigating the effects of climate change. (New Jersey AM)
- I would question the use of the word "key." Key implies prioritization, but is there a part of the ocean that isn't worth protecting? (New Jersey PM)
- Identifying emerging issues like the need for better oceanographic assessment techniques of major storm activities and what they will do to the ocean. Putting infrastructure in the ocean might seem like it is accounting for some of these things. The

RPB could plan to address the climate change issues better or advocate for these issues. For example there is a buoy out there that is supposed to be registering wave heights and it is no longer registering wave height. (New Jersey PM)

Objective 2: *Accounting for ocean ecosystems changes and increased risk*

Public Comment:

- Disappointed and disturbed that there's no mention of climate mitigation. If you're working under the principle of sound science, there should be an explicit and specific reference to climate mitigation in some of these objectives. (New Jersey AM)
- You have the phrase "ocean ecosystem changes"—you have avoided saying climate change and other buzzwords, but you have clearly talked about climate change. Can you share some of the outcomes of your discussion on climate change? (New York AM)

Objective 3: *Valuing traditional knowledge of the ecosystem*

Public Comment:

- The traditional knowledge example is a bit vague - could tribes speak for species distribution or abundance? Do these pre-date our records? It is important for us to put species movement into context. (Maryland PM)

Draft Objectives for Goal 2

General Comments on Objectives for Goal 2:

General Comments
- We might need to update the preface. We need people to understand the context of what we can do as an RPB. (Maryland PM)
- For your breakdown of objectives you have national security as number one and I get the feeling that it's your number one priority. (Virginia AM)
- These are well written and do interconnect. (Virginia PM)
- NOAA is trying to take into account the ecosystem requirements of the species they manage. NOAA is looking for the RPB to inform them on what the Coast Guard needs or what the Navy needs or what the state of Maryland needs from the fisheries management process. It's a different context and not one that has to be captured in order to preserve the value of the ecosystem itself. (New Jersey AM)

Format
- I like how Goal 2 is organized by sector. (Maryland AM)
- It might be worthwhile to make one big paragraph and list all the sectors. You don't mention surfing and the layout seems a little strange. (Maryland AM)

- There is not a preface before these objectives. These objectives are organized by sectors, but they are not the same as if that particular sector came forward and defined its own will. I wouldn't be surprised if that distinction or disconnect pops up in the listening sessions going forward. (Maryland PM)

Language
- The verbs need to have something more measurable than what we see here. Can these be enhanced to clarify measurable goals and outcomes? Is collaboration the success story? Is it informing? How do we know when anything happens if we don't have an idea of how we want to measure it? (New Jersey AM)
- I noticed some of the terms are softer than others for instance "recognize" as compared to "inform citing of aquaculture." (New York AM)

Objective 1: *Account for national security interests in the Mid-Atlantic*

Public Comment:

- Is there a Navy representative here? DOD puts a big box around offshore areas and lists them as "training areas," but we actually don't know much about them. I understand that DOD is not open for a variety of reasons. Even if they are, they have to find out who they can talk to higher up, etc. Didn't know if they have figured out a way to improve their planning process for engaging the RPB? If they are not here – how will they know our questions? (Maryland AM)
- When working with Navy and DOD – five years ago we would get maps with different shapes marked out and no one could tell us what they meant. They are much more engaged and it is a huge step forward from where we were. There is a huge opportunity for data sharing and working with the Navy. We throw these maps up and its crazy and busy, but just because two uses are overlapping doesn't mean there is a conflict (Maryland AM)
- Having one or two Navy reps may not be sufficient. It's difficult to have one person speak on behalf of what's happening across an entire department. (Maryland AM)
- The Navy is a leader in how things are getting set up, but they have significant procedures to follow and it is a long path to get information to the top. They need input from outside parties. (Maryland AM)
- What do you mean by "national security?" Do you mean broadly or narrowly speaking? At Ocean Frontiers screening – Joe A. used a definition upfront that helps us understand that national security is more than Navy exercises and the coming and going, but also ensuring we have a reliable and affordable source of petroleum. What are your thoughts on that? (Maryland PM)
- A big problem has been military waste. There are millions of tons of waste out there. Now the military won't admit that this waste is point sources of pollution. DOD does not want to be in the garbage business. (Virginia AM)

Objective 2: *Facilitate greater collaboration around ocean energy issues in the Mid-Atlantic*

Public Comment:

- What ocean energy issues are you referring to? (Maryland AM)
- Is your work plan going to consider specific energy uses? (Maryland AM)
- From a personal standpoint, oil and gas has its own five year planning process in the Mid-Atlantic, so the RPB should not address that in this process. The focus and emphasis should be on renewable energy sources. (Maryland AM, New Jersey PM)
- The second example given is offshore wind and not conventional sources of energy, which I equate with national security. (Maryland PM)
- When you talk about energy you need to differentiate between renewable energy and nonrenewable energy/fossil fuels. (Delaware PM, Virginia PM)
- On ocean energy – offshore oil and gas needs to be brought into this process. If they do not have a seat at the table they will defeat the process. (Virginia PM)
- I would not say you advocate for oil and gas. You will have to facilitate other energy development that will come across a decade from now. You may want to be more specific in regards to energy issues. (Virginia PM)
- All energy needs to be incorporated into this process. (Virginia PM)
- Your example actions specifically talk about offshore renewable energy issues —what do you have pictured for LNG (liquefied natural gas) issues? (New Jersey AM)
- By including oil and gas leases you are undermining your goal of sustainability especially with climate change and ocean acidification. (New Jersey PM)
- It might be worth these industries (oil and gas) funding buoys and other research needs. If they want to develop out there they should fund the science out there. (New Jersey PM)
- "Facilitate greater collaboration around ocean energy issues." We see that the earlier we have more collaboration the better. We think that Virginia is one of the most successful energy areas because they brought in stakeholders early in the process. What is this body's role with the interstate wind energy task force and other bodies? (New York AM)
- I would recommend that the RPB not take on oil and gas development in its first iteration of a plan. (New York AM)
- In order to have an end result of a plan one of the concerns is that if oil and gas are addressed every lobbyist will be here and that would be a distraction to achieving a purpose and plan. We have concerns that those with a political agendas would interfere with a comprehensive process. (New York AM)
- If we want a comprehensive plan – likely future usages would also include things I don't agree with like non-renewable energy development. It's a more comprehensive approach and you need to take those interests into account as you continue ahead in a planning process. (New York AM)
- If we are bringing in LNG drilling we are going to bring in a lot of people who are not part of the process. You may bring in people who will distract what we are looking at in terms of protecting habitat and renewable energy. (New York AM)

Objective 3: *Foster greater understanding of the needs of the Mid-Atlantic fishers and fishing communities*

Public Comment:

- Objective 3 is very carefully crafted. I assume that was done to avoid riling the fishing interests. (Maryland PM)
- Does the RPB plan to involve itself in fisheries management? (Maryland PM)
- What do you mean by "fishing community?" (Virginia PM)
- Trash and pollution are impacting the health of the fish we eat and it is a major concern to us. (Virginia PM)
- How do you account for the fact that the needs are not always going to be in line with the availability of the resources? "Need" may not be the right word here. (New Jersey AM)
- It's a mistake to assume the fisheries sector is monolithic. People you think would have the same interest – commercial and recreational fishers – don't want the same thing at all or want incompatible things. Have you experienced this with other sectors? (New York PM)

Objective 4: *Inform ocean aquaculture siting and permitting through greater coordination*

(*No comments offered to date*)

Objective 5: *Enhance coordination to ensure and update nautical information and navigation practices*

Public Comment:

- What do you mean by "navigation practices?" (Maryland AM)

Objective 6: *Facilitate enhanced coordination on the use of sand and gravel resources*

Public Comment:

- I did not see any reference about sea floor mining and drilling? I assume you will be working with those activities as well? Does that include minerals? (Delaware PM)
- When you mean "sand and gravel" does that include minerals? (Delaware PM)
- I am a recreational user of the beachfront and a customer of recreational fishing. I would encourage that you include beach replenishment projects in your data and framework. There is a vast difference between beaches that have been replenished and those that have not. Those impact fishing. From personal observation – it impacts the quality of recreational activities. If you include recreation, I would encourage you include this data to see how it has impacted the recreation in the area. (Virginia PM)

Objective 7: *Coordinate improved understanding of near-shore and offshore non-consumptive recreational uses*

Public Comment:

- In addition to "non-consumptive recreation" I would add a note about "protect and preserve resources for sustainable uses." (Maryland AM)
- We need more than just being "understood better." We'd like to know whether uses are actually protected better in the future. (Maryland AM, New Jersey AM)
- How do you define non consumptive users? Do you have other examples of what that means? (New York PM)
- The current wording does not feel like it is giving high priority to non-consumptive recreational usage. That language can be way stronger. (New York PM)

Objective 8: *Recognize and take into account important Tribal uses and submerged cultural resources*

Public Comment:

- Has there been outreach to non-federally recognized tribes in this geography? (Maryland PM)
- Does the Shinnecock have a proposal for ocean uses? (Maryland PM)
- Lewes had a unique experience where the USACE pumped in sand to replenish beaches and no one knew that the dredge was on a ship wreck. Lewes has multiple world class ship discoveries and has no place to display them. We would like the RPB to work with the feds to help display these and other maritime artifacts to improve tourism and help coastal communities. (Delaware PM)
- It is important that we keep committing this information to the tribes because they are very interested. (Virginia AM)
- What do you mean by "tribal uses?" I see you mentioned the Shinnecock in there, but why are no other tribes mentioned? (Virginia PM)
- When you talked about tribal uses – I am not sure what you mean by "recognize and take into account?" I want this language to be stronger. It's weaker than it needs to be. It needs to be stronger. (New Jersey PM)

Objective 9: *Facilitate greater understanding of the current and potential future location of submerged infrastructure*

Public Comment:
- This is the first time you mention the word "future." I would suggest incorporating "future" into all of the objectives. (Maryland AM, New Jersey PM)
- We had to call AT&T because we needed to make sure our sites were not in conflict with submerged cables. Instead of telling us where they were, they asked us where we were looking at and told us if was ok or not. We were not privy to that information.

Submerged cables may run into conflict with military and other interest. There will be inherent conflict amongst these objectives and that's why smart people are working on it. (New Jersey PM)

- It's not just buoys we need to be focusing on – it's ocean observation as a whole. It's making that information, but also advancing that information. This is definitely separate from submerged infrastructure. (New Jersey PM)

General Comments on the Principles:

- We need to find examples of where people aren't happy, where things aren't working well and figure out how to improve them. If offshore energy isn't going well, that's the kind of stuff that needs to float to the top. It seems like it should be an overarching goal. (Maryland AM)
- Has there been discussion thus far of what to do when two principles come into conflict? It comes to mind that principle 3 "improving resilience" will conflict with principle 9 "respecting intrinsic value" (e.g. communities talk about sand dredging for resiliency purposes, but in your conversations with stakeholders they may find it to be a tremendous waste of money or may ruin the surf which will conflict with the intrinsic value principle). (Maryland PM)
- In taking a look at our principles, we need more refinement of terms. (Delaware PM)
- Emission management from boating has not been addressed. (Delaware PM)
- There are some real world proposals that are not represented here. We need to catch up by giving examples of pending real world proposals. (Maryland PM)
- I would add another principle that addresses the precautionary principle. Having a precautionary principle will be worthwhile so that when we see something happening we can take action to improve our understanding of it before we allow just anything out there. It's another tool to help prevent decisions that could be harmful in the long run. (New York AM)
- Do the principles imply some type of ranking? (New York PM)

Principle 1: *Recognizes and considers the interconnections across human uses and interest, marine species and habitats, and coastal communities and economies.*

Public Comment:

- We really like Principle 1. (Maryland AM)
- In a lot of your objectives later on, you have strong verbs. You're not just "recognizing," you're "collaborating" and creating dialogue. "Recognize" is weak and you might be able to use something stronger. (New Jersey AM)

Principle 2: *Coordinate in making information available to support economic development and ecosystem conservation so that multiple interests can co-exist in a manner that reduces conflict and enhances compatibility*

Public Comment:

- I think Principle 2 is compelling – making information available – I would just like to see "ensure compatibility of multiple interests." (New Jersey PM)

Principle 3: *Consider the risk and vulnerabilities associated with past, present, and predicted ocean and coastal hazards and predicted changes to temperature and ocean acidification*

Public Comment:

- Do "ocean and coastal hazards" only include natural hazards? Does it include oil and gas? (Virginia PM)
- A stronger verb than "considering" might be necessary. In addition to considering the risks, you need to incorporate them into the ultimate work/ocean plan for current and future uses of the ocean that promote ocean health and resilience. (New Jersey AM, New Jersey PM)
- An answer to considering risks and vulnerabilities of coastal hazards by sea level rise is seeing how shorelines and coastlines have responded to past rises in sea level – examining geological information to see how vulnerable these shorelines are. My read of that, it's a strong endorsement of continuing basic research on vulnerability. (New Jersey PM)
- Can you talk about more about resilience? What we are starting to realize is that some communities are feeling a lack of resilience now that our coastal waters are in trouble. Resilience is not just risk and vulnerabilities – there is an interconnection with green infrastructures. When I think of communicating resiliency now – it's not just your barrier islands – but that you can also go fishing, swimming and flush a toilet. Resilience has a more expanded view. It is why people want to live on a coast and ensuring that the infrastructure is in place to keep them there. Resilience to a fisherman might mean one thing as compared to someone who just wants to go to the ocean and not get sick. What we have learned more and more is that to have resilience you need to have the grey infrastructure (the roads, etc.) and that you need to make sure the green infrastructure is sustainable. (New York AM)
- I would agree with the question: what does "resilience" mean? A decade ago it meant sustainable. Now it's resilient. I do think when you use a buzz word you need to define it. It's like love: it's hard to define, but you know what it means when you see it. I'm not sure how the current text in Principle 3 relates to the concept of resilience or not. Resilience is used in so many different contexts – you owe it to the reader to define what you mean. You do not do that here. (New York PM)
- Resilience will be different depending on the sector you are talking about. When you talk to fishing businesses they will tell you it is more about economic resilience. When you talk to certain groups in the public they have different concepts. You may need some qualifiers there – e.g. whether you are talking about economic or natural resources. (New York PM)

Principle 4: *Consider sound science and traditional knowledge in decision-making*

Public Comment:

- The term "sound science" is problematic and can be defined in multiple ways by multiple parties. If you keep it, you'll have to define it. (Virginia AM, New Jersey PM, New York AM)
- I would suggest you frame it as: "peer reviewed science." (Virginia AM)
- The way it is written makes it seem that sound science is separated from traditional knowledge, but they are not and often go hand in hand. (Virginia AM)
- "Best available science" is another term you can use. As the draft principles come along the devil will be in the details. What will your mechanisms be to get at that best science? Thinking through how this planning process is accessing the best available science would be a good idea. (Virginia AM)
- Instead of "sound science" you can say "consensus science." (Virginia AM)
- (In response to above comment) I would like to respond to the last comment. Consensus in its purist form means universal agreement and you rarely have that in science. It needs to be something less universal, but very wide spread. (Virginia AM)
- Sound science is important for our stakeholders. The information that comes out can't just be what someone thinks is true; it has to be what's real. It will cause debates later on if you don't define it. (New Jersey AM)
- Without adding all of those other adjectives, I'm not sure how in the portal people are making sure that the science is accurate. If we say something like "sound, established" or "sound, accurate" or just "sound" science you can hash that up. I don't know about making any changes here, but I think sound science implies established and accurate. (New Jersey AM)
- Will "sound science" be defined? (New Jersey PM)
- There's an unlimited amount of science that could be done—I'm not sure that it all can and should be done. There may be some scientific explorations that could be harmful to the other eight principles, like seismic testing. (New Jersey PM)
- "Traditional knowledge" should incorporate the tribal nation's history but should also apply to that local fishermen knowledge. They often have a great knowledge base, but their conclusions may be different. (New York AM)
- On traditional knowledge: are you using that to describe commercial fishermen telling you where to fish? Have you establish verification criteria for that? How will you verify the information that is given? For instance when you put up the MARCO map and there are lines drawn that indicate where fishing is taking place. I am wondering was that a result of people saying "I fish there?" (New York PM)
- Is the emphasis on principle four that you are considering using both sound science and traditional knowledge? Sound science is another buzz word. It's better than unsound science, but needs to be defined. Fishermen will say that the best available science is often not good enough – that your adherence to using the best available is not all that

impressive and helpful. On the other hand – you need to make decisions based on reliable science. You need a standard/threshold for science. (New York PM)

- Traditionally we heard "best available science" – I am just wondering why you chose sound science? I don't know what it means. (New York PM)
- For these technical definitions like "sound science" – or "resilience" – it might be worthwhile to reach out to someone in the science community to get there feedback. It would be sad if the science community does not feel that the definition encompasses their beliefs. If there is a way to ensure their feedback into the definition process that would be great. (New York PM)

Principle 5: *Apply a flexible and adaptive approach in accommodation changing environmental conditions, advances in science and technology, and new or revised laws and policies*

Public Comment:

- Can you define what you mean by adaptive management? (Virginia PM, New Jersey PM, New York AM)
- Will you have the resources to do adaptive management? (Virginia PM)

Principle 6: *Actions will be consistent with Federal laws, regulations, Executive Orders and treaties, and with State laws, regulations, Executive Orders, and treaties where applicable*

Public Comment:

- When working in existing laws there will need to be a feedback loop so that you can go back to legislatures and say "we would do this, but these legal problems prevent us from doing so." You get to these things by working on real world problems and that's how you get people engaged. (Maryland AM)
- Is there part of this that works to influence or change inadequate laws? (Virginia PM)

Principle 7: *To increase inter-jurisdictional coordination to facilitate efficient and effective management of Mid-Atlantic ocean uses and resources*

Public Comment:

- This process should lead to better decision making by all parties. "Decision making" could be added so that it reads: "Increase inter-jurisdictional coordination and government consistency to result in better decision making." (Maryland AM)
- "Increase inter-jurisdictional coordination and government efficiency" - we have talked about the fact that one of our basic problems is that you have different legislation, guidelines, and jurisdictions in the various states and a very dramatic example of that is Virginia versus Maryland. Somewhere in there we need to acknowledge that in Virginia

we are a drilling state and that gets in the way of common sense and coordination. (Virginia AM)

- Given the theme of including local government, you could add that in. (Virginia AM)
- To me, government works well when it is less efficient. It takes time do things with inclusion and participation. (Virginia AM)
- Principle 7 should be "government efficiency and effectiveness"—that's what you're hoping for. (New Jersey AM)
- What do you mean by "promote?" Will you cheerlead? Does it mean tangible implementation? (New Jersey PM)

Principle 8: *Process and products will benefit from meaningful public input, be designed to be easily understood by all, and allow stakeholders to participate and understand when and how decisions are reached*

Public Comment:

- More language around transparency and stakeholder outreach. (Maryland AM)
- In terms of aspiration and in principle, it would be good to have an additional note about stakeholder participation. (Maryland AM)
- I would encourage that this section be reworded to have "transparency" as its own principle and have "stakeholder input" as its own. (Maryland AM)
- There has been discussion about whether the RPB will be going through a bottom up approach and whether or not there will be opportunities for the public to directly provide input to RPB. Past processes have not worked ideally (e.g., in the Gulf of Mexico) because issues don't get brought up to the RPB. Those complaints are real and could be avoided by making sure an organization is represented and that you try to get the word out broadly. These are the experts you will need to engage. This is an opportunity to think out of the box. Would hope that the RPB steps up the timeline and does not go back and forth. (Maryland AM)
- You can mention how you are striving to have all stakeholders at the table, and acknowledge that you may not have everyone at the table. (Virginia AM)
- There should be a separate principle for engagement and a separate one for transparency. (New Jersey PM)
- For transparency and engagement the Coastal America Partnership and institutions around the world reach out to families and connect people to oceans and its resources and are another way of reaching the public. (New York AM)

Principle 9: *Respect the intrinsic value of the ocean and its biodiversity*

Public Comment:

- Principle 9 is different from the others. I would recommend that this be part of the vision and not part of the principles. (Maryland AM)

- We really like Principle 9. You've got healthy ocean in the draft vision but I think Principle 9 puts more detail into what that means. In order for us to continue to use our oceans for so many of the things we want, we have to respect the ocean's functioning. Even though Principle 1 addresses some of that interconnection, Principle 9 has its own value and I would keep it. (Maryland AM)
- Stakeholders will be need to be reminded that Principle 9 is what they will need to be doing along with looking out for their particular sector.(Maryland PM)
- We are all here to discuss how we use the oceans. There is a conflict between Principle 9 and promoting economic growth. Principle 9 should be at a top of this list and economic growth should not be included. We are going the wrong direction with how we manage our oceans. You could say if we don't save our ocean, none of these other concerns matter. 300 years ago we didn't have super storms because humans were not messing with the oceans at the scale we are today. We need to police the people who want to exploit are natural resources. Everything you guys have done is great, but we should not be concerned with our personal gain, but instead with the ocean. (Delaware PM)
- Principle 9 positively frames present and future generations not only of people, but of all ocean life. There is a growing global movement for the rights of nature. A lot of communities are putting it in their public policy. The city of Pittsburg states that "National communities and ecosystems possess inalienable and fundamental rights to exist and flourish in the city of Pittsburg. Residents shall possess legal standing to enforce those rights on behalf of natural communities and ecosystems." You might want to consider including public policy for the rights of nature. (New Jersey AM)
- Intrinsic value – does that run up against one of the other principles about science? It seems like we're faced with this situation where doing science, there's a cost to it. Some people want to do it anyway. Intrinsic value, if there's a value to the ocean and maybe we don't need to poke it and do things to it to get this information that has nothing to do with/could be detrimental to the intrinsic value of the oceans. Any conversation of those two being in conflict? (New Jersey PM)
- Intrinsic value is a very general term. I am afraid with these nine points as is. We take intrinsic value and we lump ecological assessment and ecological and habitat value under that term. You can argue that you will use sound science – but that does not call out the value of having and understanding a robust, well-managed ecosystem – the ecological nuts and bolts that drive the economy. Using the phrase "intrinsic value" may not elevate it to the appropriate level. I didn't see the word habitat and ecology in here and these are fundamental to meeting resource needs. Is ecological protection not one of our principles? If not, that's a problem. The principles do not recognize it as its own important thing. (New York AM)
- If we are looking for specific words you can include "stewardship." It is in the Executive Order and gets at ecological responsibility. (New York PM)

Public Comments/Question about Ocean Planning Generally

Comments on Framework

- I wanted to thank the RPB for all its work. I like the framework and its emphasis on ocean health. (Delaware PM)
- What is the legal weight of this framework once it is finalized? What support will it offer to smaller groups and organization who are trying to battle some bigger and specific issues? (Delaware PM)
- On your framework, the only stakeholders you listed are federal and state government. You didn't list anyone from industry or local government or tourism. (Virginia AM)
- The existing framework does not mention the whole issue of migration or unexploded ordinance – perhaps there is an issue you can provide a unique perspective on. (Virginia PM)
- You brought up climate change a few times, which is an important issue for this RPB to address. What kind of advocacy do you plan on doing? How will advocacy play a role in this when it comes to sea level rise and some of the resources that are possibly being mined and drilled for in the ocean? (New Jersey AM)
- My understanding is that the RPB is not going to be dealing with current issues. There's an LNG tanker being proposed, seismic activities being proposed, and a lot of things happening that don't fit into the categories you've defined that are fairly controversial. How did these issues get selected over others? (New Jersey PM)

Comments on Process

Purpose of the RPB
- Is this just for data purposes? You're not going to make a law. You're not going to enforce a law or change a law. I'm confused. Where do you come in? Are you raising money? Are you taking the money? What are you actually going to do? What power do you have? (Delaware PM, New Jersey AM, New York PM)
- You're laying out these issues as key opportunities and challenges to address—how does this body exactly plan to do that? Are you addressing issues that will be happening two years from now, but not things currently moving through the regulatory decision processes? (New Jersey PM)
- I'm trying to understand the structure of this group in relation to others. Who are you making recommendations to? What is your relationship to BOEM? Are you just a planning body making recommendations? (New Jersey AM)
- It strikes me as broadly cast as this is, you ought to have some success measures that tell you if you have done well or if haven't done well. You need to think about things you can point at and say "that meets our definition of success." This is a potentially all-

encompassing exercise – the other way to do it is to pick something out there and focus in on one thing. What is it about the pilot project approach that turned everyone off? You could do both I suppose. (New York PM)

Next Steps/Products
- After these listening sessions, will you come out with a new version of the framework and rubberstamp it at the next Mid-Atlantic RPB meeting? Or will you come in with a rough draft and work through it during the meeting? Will there be a chance to provide public comments on the charter? (Maryland AM)
- What is your timeframe on this? When do you need to have the Framework done so we can submit public comment? (Maryland PM)
- What are the main products that will come out of the RPB? (Delaware PM)
- Would your work plan identify next steps? (Virginia AM)
- What I don't understand is what the likely outcomes of this effort are? I mean what are the regulatory tools that get potentially created here? We know the difference between planning and zoning. It is one thing to have a plan, but if you haven't laid in place a architecture where "use one can go here and use two can here" then a plan is moot. You need a box where one activity is allowed and others are not. Is the outcome a plan or is it zoning? I sat in a meeting a few years ago where we were talking about an LNG proposal and someone observed that if this process was on land we would be pulling out a zoning map. Our use of ocean based resources has completely skipped this common sense step where certain activities are allowed and other not. I would encourage you to include this step. If we don't have the regulatory authority and guidance where specific activities are and are not allowed – we've pretended that what happens in the water is completely different from the land. I would encourage you to think about this more. (New York AM)
- The BOEM intergovernmental task force from our experience in Virginia was pretty effective. We all knew each other. Within just one agency like DOD you can learn a lot internally. The intergovernmental task force might be a mechanism for implementing. It means widening the geographic scope and also the sectors you engage. (Virginia PM)

Feedback Loops
- Not all stakeholders can be present all the time. It would be important for the RPB to reduce the level of conflict between groups – now and in the future. (Maryland AM)
- Is there any sort of interactive role for the RPB to interact with various legislative processes such as the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act? Maybe there could be a feedback loop so that the RPB can say "we've now set goals that we don't have information for but hey there's a process underway that could feed into this." (Maryland AM)

Current Activities/Proposals
- The RPB needs to work on the areas that are not currently being worked on. We need to find things that people are not happy with in terms of decision making right now. If

offshore energy siting is not going well, then that needs to go to the top of the RPB list. (Maryland AM)

- At what point will you consider, say for example how a wind farm will impact what goes on below (under the water)? Will there be specialists brought in? Who will be making the suggestions (e.g. who will be making the operational decisions for wind farms)? (Maryland AM)
- Say the plan will be done in 2018, but right now there is oil and gas, and offshore wind development being talked about. Is this planning body helping out already in those processes? What are you going to do in 2018 when it is done? How will you help those agencies? (Virginia PM)
- We know Congress is fast tracking LNG – so while we sit around planning things are already going on. Is there a way to have a moratorium on LNG? So that decision makers can make decisions based on science? (New York AM)
- LNG needs to be incorporated into the planning process. We see LNG moving forward because we have a process for it and that there is no process for wind. Will examples like that be addressed? Will we know the process exist? (New York AM)

Mitigating Potential Conflicts/Phased Approach
- Eventually the RPB will need to deal with conflicting uses between users. The RPB will need a process around that. (Delaware PM)
- As you go from goals to action make an effort of separating them into a separate document or phase. Maybe those issues that will be conflicting will not delay the overall process. You could have a phased approach focusing on agreement. That would allow you to be productive sooner and not be hijacked by other processes. (New York AM)
- There are number of issues that the RPB and MARCO have identified – wind, habitat protection. We need to put in effort where we can have the most synergy before tackling items that will lead to more conflict with the states. Looking through the objectives list you have – there are enough issues that need decisions now. I would work to make more progress on those. This process is planning for the future. I would like to get a plan out of this and to have something by those deadlines. The best ways to get that done is to work on the things we can make progress on. As a plan evolves overtime, that's when you can take on new challenges as they arise. (New York AM)

General Comments
- We are here because we see great things coming out of this group/process. We see this is as a way to be pro-active and do things better. (Delaware PM)
- No one knew what all the interest was when offshore wind first started out. When this is all set up it will be easy and bring all the right people together to look at the issue. (Virginia PM)

Comments on Data/Mapping

Data Use

- We should not be asking what the oceans can do for us, but should be asking what we could do for the oceans. What can we do with that data set to make the oceans better? We need to do something so positive with this information. (Delaware PM)
- Is the data in the maps considered final? (Delaware PM)
- As you assemble these data layers are you prohibited at calling out attention for a data gap? (Virginia PM)
- What are you going to do with all the information? How are you going to disseminate it? (Virginia PM)
- On the mapping and characterizing of canyon habitat – there are other areas of importance than just canyons. And it is more than just identifying – we need to move forward and actually protect these areas. (New Jersey PM)

Data Implications/Potential

- The RPB needs to take the data and try to figure out what it means. This factors into shipping and spatial decisions, and has large ramifications that could be challenging for maritime commerce. (Maryland AM)
- The potential for 3D maps is very exciting. But we also need a quantification of existing uses (e.g., how much of each thing). If it is recreation – how many surfers? After the BP oil spill they looked at the quantity of activities lost due to the spill. Since we are talking about the ability to map at high resolution – finding some quantification of the mapping would be useful. (Maryland PM)
- Data layers should be identified offshore that will have implications for the major bays and be incorporated into the portal. The data in the bays for the portal gets funky. There may be some instances where you can link between the two. There is a way to work with my concern that links the two. In the Chesapeake, we are struggling with fisheries management. It would be great if offshore data could help inform what is actually going on in bays. (Maryland PM)

Data Sources

- To the Portal team, your group had no representatives from recreational fishing groups. This is very important economic industry which needs to be included. (Delaware PM)
- Where did you get your data for offshore wind farms? (Delaware PM)
- Do you allow links to other portals? (New Jersey PM)

Data Quality/Verification

- What is your data management plan? How will you control the data that comes in and deal with conflicts between data sets? The hard part is managing data, which is where everything falls apart. (Delaware PM)

- Your dataset said something that bothered me. You said you've done your job to date and you're wondering what's next. I know of all the data sets around from Navy, NOAA, NASA, there are datasets all over the place, so much so that you will drown in data. That's the problem—that it's all over the place. What is your data management plan to control the data that goes in and when conflicts arise between data sets, how will you resolve them? (Delaware PM)

Omissions
- You should include bird habitat and migration in the data portal. (Virginia AM)
- When it comes to the right whales – they are out of time and we need the regulations in place to protect them from being eliminated. There are things this group can do, but you need to be hands-on and knowledgeable about where your resources and information comes from. That data is right at your fingertips. One of the most dramatic things, a few years ago, is that they wanted to find out where the right whales were going. They were right under our nose. We found out that the whales were there by calling boating trips and tourists. (Virginia AM)
- I was on the portal and couldn't find a list of species in the Mid-Atlantic. Listing them might be good. (New Jersey PM)
- It would make sense to identify issues that we hope to be entered later or data sets that we plan to include later. (New Jersey PM)

General Comments
- What is the timeframe for the completion of all the data collection? (Delaware PM)
- What I have not seen addressed and mentioned is seismic testing in the Mid Atlantic. That is more of a danger to the right whales than the ships. In the maps that you showed, there didn't seem to be any recognition of where the live-fire Navy training areas are. Some of our islands are right smack dab in these firing ranges. Have you overlaid those kinds of things? (Virginia AM)
- I am concerned about offshore drilling. With the area the federal government designated off Virginia for drilling, much of that area (97%) is off limits as it conflicts with the military, but they have that 3% which could be accommodated and developed. My question is will the final end product result in oil and gas development conceivably only happening in that 3%? (Virginia AM)
- We just learned that sea level rise in Mid-Atlantic is caused by changes in the ocean – we will need to know a lot about the coastal ocean to predict sea level rise. This will need to be improved upon if we are going to be better at predicting this rise. (Virginia PM)
- Seeing language around using the data to display the climate change impacts that proposed ocean activities are having could give us an overall view of the problem. Instead of looking at impacts individually, a collective impact survey would be good. (New Jersey AM)
- Looking at the outputs there's a lot of lines on the maps. If your target is the public you might want to invest in cleaning up the outputs in the portal. (New York PM)

Comments on Development of an Ocean Plan

- The RPB needs to encourage that this process culminates in some type of plan. You need to document this. It will be hard to get the kind of engagement you want if you are not working on a plan that captures the information and provides some guidance going forward. If we don't have a plan, or roadmap, how will we resolve those issues down the road? A plan would address how the oceans would be used in the future – how people are going to implement it at an agency level, so that people can not only coordinate their efforts but also know going forward what others are doing. Without the plan existing there is no requirement to act. With all the work that has been put into this – a plan needs to come out. People expect that the coordination and cooperation is already happening and they want to see what emerges from it. The final product needs action. If we don't have a plan we will identify things we need to do, but never get them done. (Maryland AM, Maryland PM, Delaware PM, Virginia AM, New Jersey AM, New York AM, New York PM)

- There are two ways to plan: 1) take an existing activity and address and plan for it and 2) preplan – where you physically plan for something to occur. Preplanning seems that it has not been addressed yet in this process. I think the best way to plan is to do both. (Maryland PM)

- Are we hoping to have a plan which is a combination of current and future usage/wishes on what we want to have on our coasts? When you say "coastal zone planning" – is that kind of a guidepost? Where we will hit a wall is on offshore oil and gas. Are we hoping to zone? e.g. "five miles from this canyon you can put an oil platform up." (Delaware PM)

- At some point you're going to have to address conflict between agencies, users, and how that's going to play out. You'll have to weigh economic costs and benefits and user benefits and things like that. (Delaware PM)

- We want to see stuff on a map. (New Jersey PM)

- Without the end result of a plan you will never get to that point where you can look at projects with cumulative impacts or longer terms views and you will keep looking at it on a site by site basis. That is one danger with sticking with a planning process and not actually developing a plan. You need to find the space in between with zoning and a planning process. (New York AM)

- Perhaps you could have some sort of gradient of things that work well together in the region and some that don't work together – a gradient of what's compatible and what's not. (New York AM)

- Is the plan going to address or figure out conflict use resolution? There will be more resource conflict in the future. How does that conflict get resolved in the context of good planning and good decision making? (New York AM)

- The Executive Order and Implementation Plan – all those documents have led up to a plan. What's feedback have you gotten on the development of a plan? The coordination is great – we are concerned that if we don't get far enough along that when there's a big

project coming along like wind development we have to go back to square one instead of going to a plan that says some project does x or does y. (New York PM)

Comments on Geographic Scope

Bays and Estuaries
- You need a process that you can wrap your arms around, but excluding non-blue water processes can be challenging. Not looking at bays will be challenging and in doing so you may discount things which are important or that you may need to eventually include. There may be a concern that you're either going to discount things that are very important or perpetually include them. I think some of this may be an overreaction from some outliers in prominent positions who have been trying to stop the process. Robust participation is important, not just for the public, but to ensure we don't repeat problems of the past. (Maryland AM)
- The large estuaries receive significant attention, but the small coastal ones are often overlooked in planning. After the Monmouth meeting I talked to many RPB representatives and learned that the big fear is that estuaries have such a robust body of work and would divert the work of the RPB. Part of that I completely agree with – the National Estuaries Program is doing some of this work, but they are more focused on water quality and Nitrogen runoff. As a representative of Maryland Coastal Bays Program we want you to focus on some of the issues – fisheries, transportation, etc. – that impact small bays and we urge that you include coastal estuaries in your planning. If you drop the ball on these small coastal estuaries, everyone will. (Maryland AM)
- It would be a mistake to excise out the major bays because they are so important to the stakeholders and most of the shipping is coming out of the bays. The RPB should give more attention to it. (Maryland PM, Delaware PM, Virginia AM, New Jersey AM, New Jersey PM)
- Do you have linkages to those who are doing planning in the estuaries? How will you link with land planners and those working on estuaries? (Delaware PM, Virginia PM, New York AM)
- Your scope needs to take into account the whole ocean from the sand to the 200 miles. You cannot separate the ocean from the land. Everything is interconnected. Many species go between estuaries and oceans. Many ships come up the Delaware and Chesapeake. They are intertwined. (Delaware PM)
- If a line is drawn at the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay, what happens in the oceans will impact estuaries. What is known offshore will be of interest to those managing inshore. I think it's going to become more and more of an issue and that line between inshore and offshore will be a blurred one. (New Jersey PM)
- Not much is being said about the estuaries. Ecosystems are dependent on estuaries. I was thinking that where there is a potential for offshore drilling there is the potential for an oil spill and it could wipeout a lot of oyster restoration work on estuaries. I would like the RPB to consider including estuaries. (Virginia AM)

- As far as shipping goes, that will connect to the bays especially going up the Chesapeake. Bigger and larger ships and where they are going will impact the estuaries and we want to include them in the focus. (Virginia AM)
- The estuary programs are focused on inshore, NOAA on offshore. But, who is focused on the 0-3 miles from our coastline out? (Virginia AM)
- One of you talked about the seasonality of the data and the estuary areas. Watersheds drive a lot of coastal oceanography and biology. A lot of what happens in estuaries has effects on the coast. (New Jersey AM)

Long Island Sound

- How will you treat the Long Island Sound? (New York AM)
- On the Long Island Sound issue it should be included – it is a great example of ecosystem based management. We need to stop dividing it. The challenge has been that it is half New York, half Connecticut, and the main watershed is in the North East region. Our accomplishments have been slowed by that. This is one way to protect it in a holistic matter. The Sound has been under attack through conflict of uses. If we can address those conflicting needs it would work to protect the Sound for its ecosystem and multi-uses. It's a direct correlation. The way we have managed it is like taking care of your heart, but not worrying about what you are eating. It doesn't make sense. (New York AM)
- The estuaries programs have had a decent structure and long history of working across municipalities. The discussion around Long Island Sound is relevant as it splits two states and two RPBs. There is this long history of traditional uses and Long Island Sound is particularly difficult. I'm curious how you will work that out. I understand why you are silent on it right now. You will have a good poker match to see who gets Long Island Sound. (New York AM)

Coordination

- How do we make NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) and that connection between land and ocean work better? This process needs to take that next step. (Maryland AM)
- Are you networking with the other regional planning bodies? How will it work? How will you coordinate with state boundaries? Is there a central authority? (Virginia AM, Virginia PM)

State/International Borders

- Where the RPB draws the boundary line is very important – there are international ships that come in everyday and do work in the region. You will need to include the major cities like New York and Philadelphia. These are significant economic drivers that will impact the ocean. (Delaware PM)
- There is one dramatic difference between Virginia and Maryland. Virginia has voluntary regulations "and voluntary this and that." There is a critical difference between North Carolina, Virginia, and Maryland. (Virginia AM)

- With the southern line drawn at the VA/NC border, do you feel that it is close enough? Are we missing anything biologically in terms of the natural resources and the gulf stream? (New Jersey AM)
- From the commercial fishing perspective, North Carolina would definitely be important to include in the Mid-Atlantic, so it would be important for information to be flowing between the Mid-Atlantic and Southeast regions. North Carolina should really be in this discussion. (New Jersey AM)
- I am curious how you drew your line in NC? It does not add up with the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council border. (New York PM)
- It seems arbitrary to separate New York and Connecticut. It's such a small range, but I think there's an issue about understanding the shoreline. If you're trying to exclude bays and estuaries, maybe you need an oceans shoreline or something that doesn't include the smaller things. (New Jersey AM)

General Comments
- Focusing on geography can make it become overwhelming easily and hard to get started,e.g. who to invite, from where, etc. From a practical point of view the RPB needs to tackle something thematic (apart from geography). Doing this first will inform the geographic regions of focus. If you approach it that way, you will realize who needs to be engaged. (Maryland AM)
- You have done a great job so far considering the task you have at hand and you have a full workload already in the ocean. All these things affect the oceans. I would like to complement what you have done and encourage you remain on the current path. (Maryland AM)
- Does your focus end with the EEZ (exclusive economic zone)? (Maryland AM)
- Is your purview from the shore or near shore? (Delaware PM)
- The Indian River was mentioned earlier – many businesses operate on the river and lots of inland sources contribute to coastal pollution. The RPB has not mentioned watersheds. Does your scope of research include watersheds or companies pumping in pollution from the rivers? The RPB should go to the problem and not looking at the causes of the problem. You should look at the inland problems. (Delaware PM)
- You do not mention a vertical connection from the bottom of the ocean to above wind turbines. Your geographic scope needs to be three dimensional. (Virginia AM)
- On geographic focus, the back bays and the lagoons between the barrier islands and the mainland are critical in many ways. I would not recommend the RPB get involved in every issue, but would like the RPB to address the needs that are not currently being addressed or their connection to the oceans. Sandbar sharks and other critters move between the two. (Virginia AM)

Comments on Stakeholder Outreach

- Thanks for coming to our town and providing us with this background. I'm only here because I had a short chance last night to look at it online. I'd like to thank a local environmental group called MERR who sent out a notice for volunteers. You talk about being interested in robust citizen participation, but I've had my ear to the ground and the first time I heard about you was last night. I'm not sure what your publicity was for tonight, but I would consider using NPR and other print media that are heavily consumed by locals. As you talk about offshore activity, there is likely a need to be a link to onshore. You need to provide local communities that may be doing those things advanced noticed so they don't put you in a bind by doing things on their coasts that will lock you out for 40 years. (Delaware PM)
- It might be worth contacting the state office of Delaware to help plan for these meetings. It might be helpful if they can disseminate information. There are two other things you can do to get the word out: connect with the University of Delaware's lab here and promote the RPB at Coast Day in October. (Delaware PM)
- How can the general public stay plugged in? (Delaware PM)
- Please don't forget that the eastern part of Virginia in your data collection. There are many people there who are not online. There are many, many fishermen and watermen who are not online and who do not have access to the critical information you are talking about. (Virginia AM)
- It was mentioned that local governments were not involved. I disagree. I just left a local meeting where all of these issues – sea level rise, planning – were discussed. They are involved. They may not be involved on the level you are, but they have been working on these issues for a decade. They have been addressing these issues, and they have recognized that we have run out of time. (Virginia AM)
- Aerospace uses are important in Virginia and need to be considered. NASA Wallops launches rockets and there is concern about turbines getting hit by rocket waste and spent fuel tanks. The aerospace sector does not appear in your framework. Who knows what will happen when drones start flying over. (Virginia PM)
- How do you plan to reach the public and inform them about these meetings? Half the people in Norfolk don't know about this meeting. Facebook is one way to get it across. Word of mouth advertising works too. (Virginia PM)
- How does the RPB plan on seeking and incorporating continuous stakeholder feedback and input? Is it through the website or the portal? Will there be regular listening sessions? Will members of the RPB canvas their respective groups? Or will you bring in boots on the ground to update you on key information? How will the RPB sustain its stakeholder outreach? (New Jersey AM)
- How did you form the stakeholder liaison committee? (New Jersey AM)
- I think a lot about stakeholder engagement and help run Healthy Oceans Coalition which is a group of groups interested in supporting National Ocean Policy and helps connect smaller groups with what's going on with implementation of the National

Ocean Policy. I think of stakeholder engagement as part of my job. Don't be afraid to use us as engaged stakeholders. I run a coalition of people who want to know about this stuff. When you're looking to do your engagement strategy or whatever Principle 8 looks like – don't be afraid to use the people in the room. Each federal agency has a communications team where it wouldn't be hard to add this to the list of things they could do because you have great resources in place. You don't always have to recreate the wheel when doing stakeholder engagement for RPB. I recently listened in on the US Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution webinar on stakeholder engagement for marine planning and it was fantastic. Their 7 principles are great. Their conversation really centered on the idea of stakeholder engagement plans. I'm not promoting that you do another plan, but the idea of having the RPB members who are stakeholders and those without management authorities come together to create a baseline of understanding of how we interact and where you have authority that is non-negotiable is something to think about as you move forward with stakeholder engagement. (New Jersey PM)

- It would be good to have the commercial fishing representative reach out to us so we know what's going on. It might be important to have someone representing fishermen from each Mid-Atlantic state. It might be worthwhile to have state by state fisheries representatives. (New York AM)
- I would suggest that in terms of engagement within the region there are a lot of existing organizations who are working on marine issues which you can draw upon to increase engagement. (New York AM)
- As the RPB goes ahead RPB members should look at going to a fishery council meetings. Meetings are great, but creating more opportunities to engage – through webinars or other means is good. (New York AM)
- There is a lot of mention and interest in recreational fishing – the bigger part of that is coastal tourism. Are there plans or a strategy for incorporating those responses? How do you incorporate those stakeholders? For coastal tourism you could go through travel agents, etc. There was a mention of social media – within Sea Grant they are moving into social media. I am wondering if that could be a tool to investigate how you go about reaching out to stakeholders. Maybe that is one avenue you can explore with reaching out to the general public. We are clueless with how to do that in Sea Grant; we can't even define the general public. (New York PM)

Comments on Funding

- Congress is considering funding for the RPB – these efforts should be funded. I would encourage this group (the public) to contact your legislature supporting the RPB. (Delaware PM)
- How much money have you spent so far? Where is the funding coming from? What are your long-term funding needs? What is your timeline for completion on the portal? (Delaware PM)

- The fact that you are not drawing from an enormous pot of money makes the effort less vulnerable. If there is a change in Congress this fall there will be even more constriction of the budget to the things I consider valuable. When people with a certain mindset are dictating policy we end up extracting resources at the highest possible rate without considering any of the things not of an economic mode. I think taking into account the big picture in terms of the health of our planet goes beyond traditional economic analysis. I see this as the big picture view that this discussion has been getting at. I want this effort to be bullet proof regardless of what happens. (Virginia AM)
- Is the vision for the board to provide grants and funding? Or will that be through the agencies? If there is a baseline study needed will NOAA fund that study or the RPB? (Virginia AM)
- You must have someone you report to – who pays you? Is it state government or the feds? (Virginia PM)

General Questions and Comments

- Is Mid Atlantic Fishery Management Council part of the RPB? (Maryland AM) (Virginia AM)
- Is there a way to have minutes in prep for the next meetings so that these thoughts are carried over for other public listening sessions? (Maryland AM)
- Is the RPB focusing on how federal waters are used? Or reducing pollution? (Maryland AM)
- You talk about enhancing coordination between politicians. Why don't you also talk about coordinating between recreational stakeholders or experts in the field? (Maryland PM)I do not see anything regarding inshore wind platforms in the RPB documents. (Maryland PM)
- Are other or neighboring regions doing a similar process? (Delaware PM)
- Are you coordinating with other regions so that you can share data? (Delaware PM)
- Are the states below doing a process as well? (Delaware PM)
- What is your timeframe? (Delaware PM) (New York AM)
- Who is our state counterpart for these issues? (Delaware PM)
- Have energy companies been involved in this process (oil/gas/wind)? (Delaware PM)
- Do you report to the National Ocean Council? Are you regulatory or advisory? (Delaware PM)
- Is there any part of this program which could classify MPAs (marine protected areas)? And/or restrict fishing? (Delaware PM)
- Is the US Army Corps of Engineers working with the RPB on this? (Delaware PM) (Virginia AM)
- Whom do you report to? Congress? The President? (Virginia AM)
- Is this planning body going to make recommendations to legislators? I am not sure how you will get things done if you don't do this. (Virginia AM)

- What about Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) involvement? Is there any way to make them or the US Army Corps of Engineers an at large member or way to evaluate their status? (Virginia AM)
- Where will this information be? How it will be available? (Virginia AM)
- How will the RPB interface with the permitting process for offshore oil and gas? (Virginia PM)
- Can you discuss how the RPB will interact with MARCO (Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean) and how these two entities plan to collaborate in the future? (New Jersey AM)
- What will the relationship be between MARCO and the RPB? How do these different organizations feed into each other and who is going to be doing what? Do you have an agreement of how you will be working together? (New Jersey PM)
- Is this the end of the public forum? (New Jersey PM)
- Will you be producing a list of all those who attended the public listening sessions? (New Jersey PM)
- Where can I see other state plans? (New York AM)
- Who is representing the commercial fishing interests on the planning body? (New York AM) (New York PM)
- I understand if you guys aren't ready to do this, but you can use this time as an opportunity for a soft opening and test some ideas you have been hearing on us. (New York PM)
- If there is any way to get the revised document circulated before the next RPB meeting that would be great. There has been a lot of synergy in the comments made especially the discussion of the definition section. That is something that people will need time to think about and will need to meet with other folks about. I don't know if that is a possibility. To the extent to put something up in advance would be great. (New York PM)

Miscellaneous

- I am a 20 plus year resident of Norfolk and would like to talk about abandoned military waste. We built a robot that can pick up undetonated bombs. As an expert I brought up these issues with BOEM (Bureau of Ocean Energy Management). Is anyone familiar what I am talking about? These seismic cannons can disrupt undetonated chemical weapons up and down the coast. Ultimately, these white phosphorous and chemical deposits will wash ashore and burn. We don't want to have what happened in Poland where people put these things in their pockets and their pants lit on fire. In any event – this is a very real thing, and it is documented. I am neutralist, but we don't have to share the fate of nations with having this come onshore. We don't want to blast these munitions. The issue of this is taboo in the military. The military is also focusing on active problems like wind turbines in their flight routes – but these munitions are a real problem. No one knows where they are. I am here today to throw that out here. I would

like the DOD representative's information so that I can have a line of communication. (Virginia PM)

Appendix B: Draft Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Planning Framework

Since the formal establishment of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body (MidA RPB) in April of 2013, the MidA RPB has been identifying needs and opportunities that can be addressed through regional ocean planning. This document offers, for public review, the MidA RPB's draft framework for regional ocean planning. The framework will inform how the MidA RPB moves forward with ocean planning by articulating a vision, principles, goals, objectives, example actions, and a proposed geographic focus.

Public feedback and ideas about this draft framework will help the MidA RPB ensure it is accounting for the full diversity of ocean interests in the region. To provide input on this draft framework, please send comments in writing to MidAtlanticRPB@boem.gov

by April 15, 2014. To facilitate a regional dialogue, the MidA RPB is planning a variety of in-person and online public input opportunities for early 2014. Details about these opportunities will be posted on the MidA RPB website at www.boem.gov/Mid-Atlantic-Regional-Planning-Body/ in the coming weeks. Members of the public can also request to receive email updates from the MidA RPB by sending a message to MidAtlanticRPB@boem.gov.

Definitions of the terms used in this document are as follows:

- **Vision:** Desired future state for the Mid-Atlantic ocean.
- **Principles:** Basic or essential qualities or elements determining the intrinsic nature or characteristic behavior of regional ocean planning. Principles describe how the MidA RPB intends to operate.
- **Goals:** Statements of general direction or intent. Goals are high-level statements of the desired outcomes the MidA RPB hopes to achieve.
- **Objectives:** Statements of specific outcomes or observable changes that contribute to the achievement of a goal.
- **Actions:** Specific activities that Federal, State, and Tribal agencies may take, individually or together, to address the stated objectives.
- **Geographic Focus:** The area of focus for MidA RPB planning and coordination efforts.

About Mid-Atlantic regional ocean planning

Regional ocean planning will improve our understanding of how the Mid-Atlantic ocean and its resources are being used, managed, and conserved; and guide planning to address current challenges and emerging opportunities. Regional ocean planning will help guide

resource conservation and economic development by facilitating information sharing, fostering collaboration, and improving decision-making about a growing number of ocean uses vying for ocean resources and space. Partnerships with stakeholders will be critical to the success of this planning effort.

The regional ocean planning process **does *not* change** existing authorities or create new mandates. Rather, it aims to improve the efficiency of those authorities as well as effectiveness of the mandates being implemented by the Federal agencies with jurisdictions in the Mid-Atlantic ocean.

Key elements of regional ocean planning include:

- Identify shared regional goals and objectives to guide decision-making by Federal, State and Tribal entities, informed by stakeholder engagement and input.
- Provide participation by ocean stakeholders and the public.
- Build upon all relevant work at the regional, State, Tribal, and local levels.
- Identify emerging issues and account for the needs of both current and future generations, while remaining mindful of traditional uses.
- Efficiently use constrained public resources, while leveraging investments with private-sector partnerships.
- Consult scientists, technical, and other experts in conducting regional ocean planning and developing ocean planning products.
- Inform data collection and analyses to better understand the potential benefits and risks of decisions.
- Compile a regional assessment of ocean uses, natural resources, and economic and cultural factors to provide a comprehensive understanding and context for ocean planning.
- Use enhanced collaboration and coordination across jurisdictions and with stakeholders to avoid disputes and facilitate compatibility wherever possible. In order to resolve disputes that do arise, the MidA RPB will emphasize use of collaborative, mediative approaches in an effort to avoid costly, formal dispute resolution mechanisms and find solutions that meet the interests of multiple parties.

Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal

The Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal is an online toolkit and resource center that consolidates available data and enables users to visualize and analyze ocean resources and human use information such as fishing grounds, recreational areas, shipping lanes, habitat areas, and energy sites, among others. The Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean (MARCO) initiated and oversees the portal in close coordination with the Portal Project Team, using funds provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Regional Ocean Partnership funding program. For more information, please visit: http://portal.midatlanticocean.org/portal/

About the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body

Regional ocean planning in the Mid-Atlantic is led by the MidA RPB, which includes representatives from Federal, State, Tribal, and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council entities, as listed below.

- The six Mid-Atlantic States: New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia
- The Shinnecock Indian Nation
- The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
- Eight Federal agencies:
  - 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
  - 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

To learn more about the MidA RPB and to view recent and historic postings, please visit www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Mid-Atlantic-Regional-Planning-Body/index.aspx

Role of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body Geographic Focus

The MidA RPB provides a forum for coordination of ocean planning activities in the region. As part of the regional ocean planning process, the MidA RPB plans to do the following:

- Develop a work plan that describes strategies and activities designed to achieve the MidA RPB goals and objectives.
- Compile a capacity assessment to identify existing activities that are relevant to ocean planning.
- Complete a regional ocean assessment to provide baseline information for ocean planning in the Mid-Atlantic that takes into account current trends and forecasts about changing ocean uses and ecosystems.
- Consider developing a forward looking ocean plan to foster enhanced coordination on ocean management and stewardship across jurisdictions. The purpose and content of such a plan would be determined by the MidA RPB in collaboration with stakeholders

DRAFT Description of Initial Geographic Focus

The MidA RPB proposes that the primary geographic focus area for regional ocean planning at this time be the ocean waters of the region. This means:

- From the shoreline out to 200 miles (EEZ), which includes State and Federal waters
- The northern limit would be the NY/CT and NY/RI border
- The southern limit would be the VA/NC border

The RPB does not anticipate including in its planning efforts the major bays and estuaries of the Mid-Atlantic. However, where necessary, the MidA RPB will draw connections and coordinate with estuarine and terrestrial areas for planning purposes, particularly in such cases where ocean uses may impact coastal communities, estuaries, and ports or other shore side infrastructure. Coordination and collaboration with Regional Planning Bodies and other entities in the Northeast and South-Atlantic, including leveraging of resources, will also be essential for success. The RPB will consider further refining the geographic focus as goals and objectives are determined, as informed by public input.

DRAFT Vision

The draft vision is intended to articulate the RPB's desired future state for the Mid-Atlantic ocean:

A Mid-Atlantic ocean where safe and responsible use and stewardship support healthy, productive, resilient, and treasured natural and economic ocean resources that provide for the wellbeing and prosperity of present and future generations.

DRAFT Principles

The Mid-Atlantic ocean planning efforts would be guided by the following overarching principles:

Principle 1 (Recognize Interconnections) – The MidA RPB will facilitate an approach to managing ocean resources that recognizes and considers the interconnections across human uses and interests, marine species and habitats, and coastal communities and economies.

Principle 2 (Compatibility of multiple interests) – The MidA RPB will coordinate in making information available to support economic development and ecosystem conservation so that multiple interests can co-exist in a manner that reduces conflict and enhances compatibility.

Principle 3 (Improving resilience) – The MidA RPB will consider the risks and vulnerabilities associated with past, present, and predicted ocean and coastal hazards (e.g., erosion, extreme weather, and sea level rise) and predicted changes to temperature and ocean acidification to protect Mid-Atlantic ocean and coastal communities, users, and natural features.

Principle 4 (Sound science) – The MidA RPB will consider sound science and traditional knowledge in decision-making.

Principle 5 (Adaptive management) – The MidA RPB will apply a flexible and adaptive approach in accommodating changing environmental conditions, advances in science and technology, and new or revised laws and policies.

Principle 6 (Consistency with existing laws) – MidA RPB actions will be consistent with Federal laws, regulations, Executive Orders, and treaties, and with State laws, regulations, Executive Orders, and treaties where applicable.

Principle 7 (Coordination and government efficiency) – The MidA RPB will serve as a forum to increase inter-jurisdictional coordination to facilitate efficient and effective management of Mid-Atlantic ocean uses and resources consistent with regional needs. Such coordination will extend to partners and issues in adjacent uplands, in the Northeast and South Atlantic, and international waters to the east.

Principle 8 (Transparency and engagement) – MidA RPB processes and products will benefit from meaningful public input, be designed to be easily understood by all, and allow stakeholders to participate and understand when and how decisions are reached that affect their lives.

Principle 9: (Intrinsic value) – The MidA RPB will respect the intrinsic value of the ocean and its biodiversity, at the same time recognizing humans as part of the ecosystem and dependent on the health of the ecosystem for our own well-being.

DRAFT Mid-Atlantic Ocean Planning Goals and Objectives

Mid-Atlantic ocean planning goals will be high-level statements of the desired outcomes the MidA RPB hopes to achieve. Objectives will describe specific outcomes and observable changes that contribute to the achievement of ocean planning goals. They are intended to serve as guideposts for the focus and work of the MidA RPB. Draft ocean planning goals and draft objectives are offered below for public feedback, and include articulation of some example actions that could be taken by the MidA RPB to achieve the draft goals and objectives for illustrative purposes.

DRAFT Ocean Planning Goal 1:

Promote ocean ecosystem health and integrity through conservation, protection, enhancement, and restoration.

Note: Goal #1 focuses on protecting and conserving our ocean and coastal resources through efforts that improve our understanding of ocean resources and habitats, account for ecosystem changes, consider traditional values and scientific data in regional ocean planning, and foster collaboration across jurisdictions around ocean conservation efforts.

Draft objectives:

1) (*Understanding, protecting and restoring key habitats*) Enhance understanding of Mid-Atlantic ocean habitats and physical, geological, chemical, and biological ocean resources through improved scientific understanding and assessments of the effects of ocean uses. Foster collaboration and coordination for protection and restoration of critical ocean and coastal habitats.

   Example action: Map and characterize canyon habitats in the Mid-Atlantic region. Identify Federal, State and Tribal habitat protection and restoration initiatives to leverage partnerships that maximize the opportunity for success.

2) (*Accounting for ocean ecosystem changes and increased risks*) Facilitate enhanced understanding of and take into account in decision-making current and anticipated ocean ecosystem changes in the Mid-Atlantic. These include ocean-related risks and vulnerabilities associated with ocean warming (including sea level rise, coastal flooding/inundation), ocean acidification (including effects on living marine resources), and changes in ocean wildlife migration and habitat use.

   Example actions: Coordinate the collection and understanding of information needed to adjust human use activities in certain ocean areas in response to changing migratory pathways of marine life. Coordinate information sharing regarding sea level rise and ocean acidification in order to inform management of living marine resources and coastal communities and industries dependent on them.

3) (*Valuing traditional knowledge of the ecosystem*) Pursue greater understanding and acknowledgment of traditional knowledge along with other cultural values, and incorporate such knowledge and values in the ocean planning process.

   Example action: Include traditional ecological knowledge and consideration of local cultural values in regional capacity assessment.

DRAFT Ocean Planning Goal 2:

Plan and provide for existing and emerging ocean uses in a sustainable manner that reduces conflicts, improves efficiency and regulatory predictability, and supports economic growth.

Note: Goal #2 focuses on fostering coordination, transparency, and use of quality information to support accommodation of existing, new, and future ocean uses in a manner that reduces conflict and enhances compatibility. The MidA RPB has chosen to organize the draft objectives under Goal 2 by sector to facilitate initial data collection, future needs assessment, and highlight how the proposed actions will affect key stakeholders. During the subsequent phases of the ocean planning process, application of the principles articulated above calls for considering various sectors and concerns in an integrated, holistic, and collaborative manner. The MidA RPB intends to provide the means for decision-makers to implement their programs and authorities in an integrated way.

Draft objectives, organized by sector:

1) (*National security*) Account for national security interests in the Mid-Atlantic through enhanced coordination and sharing of information across agencies.

   Example action: Consider military needs and preferences early in decision-making processes to avoid potential conflicts with proposed ocean activities and current and planned military training and testing areas.

2) (*Ocean energy*) Facilitate greater collaboration around ocean energy issues in the Mid-Atlantic.

   Example action: Coordinate data collection for environmental assessment to inform development of new offshore renewable energy projects.

3) (*Commercial and recreational fishing*) Foster greater understanding of the needs of Mid-Atlantic fishers and fishing communities in the context of the full range of ocean uses and conservation efforts.

   Example action: Identify areas of high fish productivity and high usage to inform management of ocean uses and habitat areas.

4) (*Ocean aquaculture*) Inform ocean aquaculture siting and permitting in the Mid-Atlantic through greater coordination among stakeholders and management authorities to address compatibility issues.

   Example action: Facilitate interagency coordination regarding ocean aquaculture permitting.

5) (*Maritime commerce and navigation*) Enhance coordination to ensure new and updated nautical information and navigation practices at local, regional, and international levels are considered in regional ocean planning.

Example action: Coordinate information about new and proposed revisions to existing maritime corridors in the Mid-Atlantic, taking into account global and regional trends in maritime commerce.

6) (*Offshore sand management*) Facilitate enhanced coordination among coastal jurisdictions, Federal and State regulatory agencies, and Tribal entities on the use of sand and gravel resources in the Mid-Atlantic.

   Example action: Coordinate regional identification and prioritization of sand borrow sites in Federal and State waters.

7) (*Non-consumptive recreation*) Coordinate improved understanding of near-shore and offshore non-consumptive recreational uses in the Mid-Atlantic to inform management of ocean activities and resources that may impact those activities (e.g., surfing, boating, whale watching, birding, diving).

   Example action: Share data about ocean areas important for recreational activity and recreational user perceptions on issues such as siting of ocean renewable energy facilities.

8) (*Tribal uses*) Recognize and take into account important Tribal uses and submerged cultural resources in the planning process.

   Example action: Document and foster shared understanding of ocean and coastal sites important to Tribal use, beliefs, and values related to the Mid-Atlantic ocean.

9) (*Critical ocean infrastructure*) Facilitate greater understanding of the current and potential future location of submerged infrastructure, such as submarine cables (e.g., for communication and electricity) and pipelines.

   Example action: Engage the submarine cables and submerged pipelines industries to understand their current and projected needs for ocean space, and conduct an inventory of obsolete structures.

The MidA RPB encourages public input on this draft document. Please send comments in writing to MidAtlanticRPB@boem.gov by **April 15, 2014**. *To facilitate a dialogue, the MidA RPB is also planning a variety of in-person and online public input opportunities for early 2014. Details about these opportunities will be posted on the RPB website (www.boem.gov/Mid-Atlantic-Regional-Planning-Body/) in the coming weeks. Members of the public can also request to receive email updates from the RPB by sending a message to MidAtlanticRPB@boem.gov.*