

Talking Points  
National Policy for the Stewardship of the Ocean, Coasts, and Great Lakes  
July 2010

- This Executive Order establishes the country's first comprehensive national policy for the stewardship of the ocean, our coasts, and the Great Lakes.
- The national policy sets the United States on a new path toward comprehensively planning for the conservation and sustainable use of the ocean.
- The Deepwater Horizon-BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico and resulting environmental crisis is a stark reminder of how vulnerable our marine environments are, and how much communities and the Nation rely on healthy and resilient ocean and coastal ecosystems.
- America's coastal regions and waters support tens of millions of jobs and account for the great majority of the national economy, totaling trillions of dollars each year.
- They also host a growing number of recreational, scientific, energy, and security activities and provide a wealth of natural resources and ecological benefits.
- Uses of the ocean are expanding at a rate that challenges our ability to manage significant and often competing demands.
- The National Policy:
  - Includes a set of overarching principles to guide ocean management decisions.
  - Creates a new National Ocean Council to provide sustained, high-level, and coordinated attention to ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes issues.
  - Prioritizes actions that seek to address some of the most pressing challenges facing the ocean, our coasts, and the Great Lakes.
- Americans want clean beaches, abundant seafood and wildlife, a robust economy, and jobs and recreational opportunities from our ocean, coastal and Great Lakes areas. The National Policy gives us a lasting foundation to help achieve this.
- The National Policy does not establish any new regulations or restrict any ocean uses or activities.
- Instead, it outlines a way to improve the coordination of ocean management efforts at all levels of government to maintain healthy resources, support ocean and coastal economies, and promote access and sustainable use.

- The Executive Order adopts a framework for coastal and marine spatial planning (CMSP), which offers a comprehensive, integrated approach to planning and managing ocean uses over the long term.
- Under this framework, regional planning bodies will bring Federal, state, and tribal partners together in an unprecedented manner to jointly plan for the future of the ocean, our coasts, and the Great Lakes.
- CMSP will be regional in scope, developed cooperatively among Federal, state, tribal, and local authorities, and include substantial stakeholder, scientific, and public input, so that it reflects local and regional perspectives.
- The National Policy adopts the *Final Recommendations* of the Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force.
- President Obama created the Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force in June 2009 to develop recommendations for enhancing our stewardship of the ocean. The Task Force was led by the White House Council on Environmental Quality and included 24 senior-level policy officials from across the Federal Government.
- The Task Force received and reviewed close to 5,000 written comments from Congress, stakeholders, and the public on its September 2009 and December 2009 reports before finalizing its recommendations.