

National Ocean Policy Implementation Plan

Agriculture and farming

Farming is an important part of America's economy, and contributes to our food security. America's farmers apply some of the highest standards in the world and have worked steadily to reduce their environmental impacts on water quality.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is a partner in the National Ocean Policy, and will continue to connect farmers with coastal managers to identify and coordinate efforts for improving water quality.

The National Ocean Policy Implementation Plan identifies specific actions Federal agencies will take to spur our ocean economy, strengthen security, and improve ocean health.



Federal agencies have committed to actions in the Implementation Plan of interest to the farming and agriculture industry, including:

- Support voluntary state programs for reducing nutrient and sediment loads to accelerate the adoption of voluntary conservation efforts;
- Establish integrated interagency monitoring, modeling, and assessment partnerships in priority watersheds, such as the Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative and Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, to better evaluate the effectiveness of land treatment practices; and
- Implement environmental market pilot projects between Federal and regional partners, like the USDA Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative, for nutrient and sediment reduction.



The Implementation Plan also supports voluntary regional marine planning, which brings together ocean users to share information to plan how we use and sustain ocean resources. Neither the National Ocean Policy nor marine planning creates or changes regulations or authorities.

The vision of the National Ocean Policy is an America whose stewardship ensures that the ocean, our coasts, and the Great Lakes are healthy and resilient, safe and productive, and understood and treasured so as to promote the well-being, prosperity, and security of present and future generations.

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Excerpts from the Implementation Plan:

“Agencies will coordinate to use and provide scientifically sound, ecosystem-based approaches to achieving healthy coastal and ocean habitats. For example, working through the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force, agencies will coordinate to address key threats to coral reef ecosystems, including impacts from land-based sources of pollution, climate change, ocean acidification, planned activities (authorized activities), and unplanned activities (such as vessel groundings and spills).”

“Agencies will also help protect, conserve, and maintain high-quality coastal waters by identifying priority areas for water quality monitoring and assessment and providing financial assistance to private landowners seeking to apply voluntary conservation practices. Other actions will reduce the impacts of hypoxia and harmful algal blooms faced by many coastal and inland States.”

The Appendix of the National Ocean Policy Implementation Plan lists the specific actions Federal agencies have committed to take.

The Implementation Plan and Appendix are available online at www.whitehouse.gov/oceans.