

National Ocean Policy Implementation Plan

Shipping and ports

Our economy is fueled by the maritime trade and shipping industries, which transports the majority of our imports and exports. The maritime trade and shipping industries depend on safe, secure and navigable waterways and suitable port infrastructure.

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 that will benefit the shipping industry, including:

- Provide more accurate charts for safe and efficient navigations;
- Conduct Waterway Analysis and Management System and Port Access Route Studies to support decisions on waterways management and other navigational priorities;
- Improve predictions about sea level rise and effects from severe weather, to help ports reduce their vulnerability; and
- Provide better weather forecasting, including in the Arctic.

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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Shipping, ports and harbors

Excerpts from the Implementation Plan:

“The safety and security of our people, property, and the marine environment and the viability of maritime commerce rely on safe, efficient, and secure navigation and waterways management systems. This includes effective planning for and response to emerging threats to our ports and harbors from illegal human activities, climate change, and extreme weather events or other natural disasters.”

“Ocean industries are a major employer. In 2010, U.S. commercial ports supported more than 13 million jobs.”

“Real-time information on waterway conditions from ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes observing systems such as the Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System directly supports the daily operations and efficiency of maritime commerce nationwide, as well as local and regional businesses that rely on the marine environment.”

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.