

**Remarks at U.S. Mission Reception  
Geneva, Switzerland  
Dr. Jane Lubchenco, Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere  
and Head of U.S. Delegation  
September 2, 2009  
As Delivered**

Thank you, Doug, for that gracious introduction, for the Mission's leadership in walking the talk with your very green building, and for organizing this lovely reception.

Thank you all very much for coming here tonight. I am deeply honored to be here, and to have the opportunity to meet all of you.

I am in Geneva this week to serve on behalf of the President as the head of the U.S. delegation to the World Climate Conference-Three. President Obama has made it crystal clear that he is committed to addressing climate change, pollution, growing clean energy and adapting to a climate changed world. This Conference is bringing high level attention to the importance of international collaboration on climate science to address the challenges of climate change. If we are going to be successful, we will need solid information, and know how to use it. I think this Conference, and its anticipated Global Framework for Climate Services, will put us on the road to that success.

This is perhaps a bit abstract – so let me give you a couple of examples of what I mean –

Imagine what farmers could do if they had drought forecasts 3-5 years out;

Imagine if city planners could match the needs of future populations, and associated demands, like water resources for example, to the development of infrastructure such as levees and dams;

Imagine if public health officials could be ready for, or even avoid, outbreaks of malaria based on longer-term forecasts of precipitation.

This conference is about not just improving science and strengthening collaboration; it's also about building connections between the scientific and the user communities, all in support of making better decisions. This is a laudable objective. I have every confidence this Conference will start us on that path.

I would like to take just a moment to introduce you to my delegation. I am quite proud of the team that the United States has sent to this meeting. The majority of our delegation is made up of scientists and experts actively participating in the technical sessions. Collectively, we represent 8 different US agencies, plus officials from the White House and from the U.S. Senate.

The strength of my delegation demonstrates the commitment of the United States to international engagement in general, and the importance of climate science and its application to user-needs specifically.

President Obama has energized us with a sense of hope and optimism, and a belief that if we work together, we can build a better world for ourselves, our children, and grandchildren.

He has also made it clear that he believes that good government depends upon good science. As the head of a science agency vested with responsibility for oceans and atmosphere, I've challenged the NOAA team to embrace the opportunities created by the President's support, that of our Congressional committees and the Secretary of Commerce, Gary Locke. Now is the time, with this inspiration and support and with the best science as our guide, for us to spur the creation of new jobs and industries, revive our fisheries and the economies and communities they support, improve weather forecasting and disaster warnings, provide credible information about climate change and ocean acidification, and protect and restore our coastal waters and ecosystems.

I come to this job from the ocean sciences community. I fell in love with the oceans during a college class in Woods Hole, Massachusetts. To a Colorado native, the sea life seemed exotic and endlessly fascinating. Little did I realize then that life in the oceans is also essential to our own prosperity and well-being.

Throughout my career, I have consistently emphasized that scientific knowledge should inform decision-making, that scientists have an obligation to communicate their knowledge in a clear, credible, relevant and useable fashion, and that management and policy decisions should focus on the common good and the long-term.

The President has pledged that we will rise to the challenges presented by a changing climate. NOAA has central roles to play in doing so -- research, synthesis, communication, management, policy and provision of services.

When I met with the President in Chicago, we discussed ways that NOAA could provide America the best climate change science, restore her ocean's vitality, recharge our economy, and help our nation transition to more sustainable ways of living. His comment was, "Let's do it!"

So, I say to each of you: let's do it!

Thank you.