

Readout of the Third Ocean Policy Committee Meeting

May 12, 2022

Today, the Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), Brenda Mallory, and the head of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), Dr. Alondra Nelson, convened the third Biden-Harris Administration meeting of the Ocean Policy Committee (OPC). During today's meeting, OPC members tasked its Ocean Science and Technology (OST) and Ocean Resource Management (ORM) subcommittees with developing an overarching OPC Environmental Justice Policy that will guide the OPC's ongoing work to incorporate the principles of Environmental Justice across all ocean policy efforts.

OPC members had an initial discussion about the importance of conducting effective and appropriate coordination with Tribal Nations and Indigenous communities and building on the Administration's actions that are underway (like the application of Indigenous and Traditional Ecological Knowledge, as appropriate) when developing OPC work products, which include an Ocean-Climate Action Plan, a National Strategy for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, the development of spatial data, decision-making tools and practices. The OPC will work with Tribal Nations and Indigenous communities to identify best practices for national and regional engagement on ocean policy matters, following examples developed by the West Coast Ocean Tribal Caucus in their [Guide for Agencies working with West Coast Tribes on Ocean & Coastal Issues](#) and other sources.

The OPC received an update from the National Ocean Mapping, Exploration, and Characterization (NOMECE) Council on the geographic and subject matter priorities for exploration and characterization of the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone, for which a public comment period closed on May 2, 2022. The OPC discussed several ways [the report](#) can be used to advance U.S. goals in ocean exploration and characterization, including identifying knowledge gaps and informing agency budget formulation. NOMECE will carefully consider the public comments and OPC discussion as it continues to develop the final priorities report, which will be made public later this year.

The OPC also received three updates on ongoing activities. First, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Administrator anticipates issuing a solicitation for nominations for members for the Ocean Research Advisory Panel as early as July 2022. Second, the upcoming [OST Opportunities and Actions Roundtable](#) will engage the non-Federal community in a discussion on July 19, 2022 on the three cross-cutting priorities detailed in the report [Opportunities and Actions for Ocean Science and Technology](#): climate change, resilient science and technology infrastructure, and a diverse and inclusive blue workforce. Third, the ORM has convened work groups to implement the major action items of its workplan to maximize the benefits of co-use of the ocean, develop ocean-based climate solutions, and provide strategic direction to the U.S. ocean science and technology enterprise.

More on the OPC: The OPC is a Congressionally mandated, Secretary-level interagency body to coordinate ocean science and technology and management policy efforts across the Federal

government. The products and initiatives of the OPC also engage ocean stakeholders to advance Administration priorities including combating climate change, advancing Environmental Justice, building the clean energy economy, and achieving a healthy ocean.

OPC membership is comprised of the following Departments, Agencies and Offices:

Departments

- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Commerce
- Department of Defense
- Department of Energy
- Department of Homeland Security
- Department of the Interior
- Department of Justice
- Department of State
- Department of Transportation

Executive Office of the President

- Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy
- Assistant to the President for Economic Policy
- Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism
- Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
- Council on Environmental Quality
- Office of Domestic Climate Policy
- Office of Management and Budget
- Office of Science and Technology Policy
- Office of the Vice President

Agencies and Service Branches

- Committee on Maritime Transportation Systems
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council
- Joint Chiefs of Staff
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- National Science Foundation
- Office of the Director of National Intelligence
- Office of the Special Presidential Envoy for Climate
- United States Army Corps of Engineers
- United States Coast Guard
- United States Navy