

ENVISIONING THE FUTURE OF COASTAL MANAGEMENT

STAKEHOLDER DISCUSSION SUMMARY BY TOPIC: INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

TOPIC SUMMARY

Intergovernmental coordination was discussed at all five stakeholder meetings, in five breakout sessions. In addition, the need for intergovernmental coordination emerged throughout breakout discussions on a broad range of topics. From the five breakout groups, the following themes emerged:

More inter-jurisdictional and federal interagency coordination are needed - Resources (financial, relational, and technical), efficiencies, and opportunities for better coastal resource management are lost because of a lack of interagency and inter-jurisdictional coordination. Clearer mandates and/or incentives are needed for increased interagency collaboration.

Competing mandates and jurisdictions need to be addressed - There are overlaps, gaps, and competition in the mandates and jurisdictions of federal, regional, state, and local government authorities, which hinders effective collaboration.

A regional approach to coastal zone management should be considered - There is support for ecosystem based coastal and shoreline management, and for a regional approach to coastal zone management. The CZMA should address some of the challenges and support opportunities for a regional approach.

OBSTACLES

Complexity of the Issue

- Diverse issues, interests, and approaches to coastal/shoreline management across the country
- The emergence of energy concerns, climate change, and political shifts makes it difficult for decision-makers at all levels to stay current and coordinated
- Multiple jurisdictions, including local, state, regional, federal, and international
- No one group or agency is designated to manage all coastal/shoreline resources

Competing Visions and Mandates

- There is no shared vision of coastal zone management
- Some see coastal zone management as a regional issue, others a local responsibility
- Government lacks cohesive messages
- Competing agency and government mandates
- Agencies and governments are constrained by their missions and laws, and many have no mandate or incentive to collaborate or to address issues outside the narrow focus of their mission
- Permit coordination can complicate efforts
- Goals/missions of an agency are not consistently communicated from management to staff, which leads to differing interpretations of mandates

Monitoring and Enforcement

- NOAA lacks accountability to ensure that state coastal programs carry out federal law.
- There are no consequences or sanctions for failure to comply or meet federal coastal/shoreline management standards
- No common metric for measuring the success of plans, standards, or goals

Resource Constraints

- Staff turnover
- Complex system of programs and options at multiple levels with few resources to help managers to navigate options
- Lack of capacity at local level
- Sense of territoriality or competition among jurisdictions
- Lack of political will to address coastal/shoreline issues

PARTICIPANT GENERATED SOLUTIONS

Mandate Clarification

- Undertake a review of the mandates of all federal, state, local, and other coastal zone management stakeholders. Identify conflicts, areas of overlap, and areas that do not have leadership or jurisdictional authority. Based on this assessment, convene a process to resolve these issues.
- There needs to be a clearer mandate in the CZMA to identify links between federal programs, such as transportation, development, and defense, and coastal/shoreline management.

Create shared vision and goals

- Adopt a national ecosystem-based “master plan” for coastal zone management.
- At the federal level, develop well-defined measurable goals for coastal zone management issues such as water quality, habitat, flows, and aquatic invasive species that are shared by all federal agencies. These goals can be established on a regional or local basis and can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of programs across different agencies that impact coastal zone management.
- Develop criteria for valuing coastal/shoreline resources and corresponding restrictions and/or requirements, such as development levels or protection measures, for management of those resources.

Data Coordination and Sharing

- Develop a system for gathering, sharing, and storing data related to coastal/shoreline resource management, which would be gathered from and shared among multiple sources, including private sector, public sector, non-governmental, government and military stakeholders.
- Develop a system for funding and coordinating coastal/shoreline resource research so that there is less duplication of efforts and more research on diverse issues and geographic areas.

Coordinated Funding

- Strengthen the CZMA to allow funding for regional initiatives.
- Develop a system so that federal agencies, such as the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Environmental Protection Agency, Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Department of Defense, the Department of Transportation, etc. can share/pool their funds for coastal/shoreline related projects.

- Establish/identify an agency that funds coordinated interagency or inter-jurisdictional coastal zone management initiatives.

Regional Coordination

- Create regional coordination bodies that have the authority to coordinate eco-system based coastal zone management efforts.
- Create region-based committees comprised of federal, state, and county agencies who share information about their efforts.
- Develop criteria that will define “a region.”
- Mandate regional coastal zone management plans are responsive to federal objectives and state needs.

Build Capacity and Share Knowledge

- Expand the mandate of Coastal Training Programs (CTPs) to educate agencies/staff regionally.
- Create a forum for peer-to-peer information exchange between agencies at all levels of government.
- Launch a campaign/program to educate legislators about state and local concerns regarding the CZMA and coastal management programs.

Federal–state/local coordination

- Identify/establish a non-regulatory agency with authority to coordinate multi-agency efforts.
- Develop federal rules around requirements for coastal zone management plans. Offer guidance for local agencies to implement rules so that there is consistency across local jurisdictions, but enough flexibility to accommodate for different interests/conditions.