

**CHARTER**  
**of the**  
**INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUP ON OCEAN OBSERVATIONS**  
**JOINT SUBCOMMITTEE ON OCEAN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**  
**COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES**  
**NATIONAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL**

**A. Official Designation**

Consistent with the Ocean Action Plan, interagency collaboration is essential to achieve ocean science and technology priorities and, in particular, for planning and coordination of an ocean observation system. However, a clear point of accountability for administration and implementation is also essential. For these purposes, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has been designated as the lead federal agency by the Administration.

The Interagency Working Group on Ocean Observations (IWGOO) is hereby established by the Joint Subcommittee on Ocean Science and Technology (JSOST) of the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) Committee on Environment and Natural Resources (CENR).

**B. Purpose and Scope**

The purpose of the IWGOO is to advise and assist the JSOST on matters related to ocean observations. As directed by the JSOST, the IWGOO will:

- coordinate with the Subcommittee on Integrated Management of Ocean Resources (SIMOR) to ensure an effective interface between those responsible for ocean observing and resource managers at the federal, state, and local levels, with a particular emphasis on interactions between the resource managers and the Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS) Regional Associations;
- collaborate with other working groups of the JSOST and CENR to ensure that ocean observing, data exchange and dissemination, and modeling efforts are based on the best input from the widest possible set of stakeholders;
- develop mechanisms to ensure ocean observations associated with other working groups are of sufficient quality to allow integration of data sets; and
- seek input on its plans and reports from the Ocean Research and Resources Advisory Panel (ORRAP) to obtain independent review of its efforts.

The scope of the IWGOO covers an end-to-end concept of ocean observations that includes:

- development of plans, strategies, tools, techniques, and systems to observe the ocean both *in situ* and remotely, for both research and practical applications;
- use of those tools, techniques, and systems for ocean observing;
- management and dissemination of any data so acquired;
- development and application of data assimilation, analysis, and modeling methods and technologies to produce information, knowledge, and useful products based on the data;

- interactions with scientific, engineering, system integration, ocean education, ocean resource, data provider, data user and management communities to assess, develop, and refine observational, monitoring outputs and analytical efforts, and research to improve the observing system and its outputs.

### **C. Functions**

The IWGOO is responsible for personnel, budgets, programs, and funding of Ocean.US. Using the resources available at Ocean.US, as needed, the IWGOO will:

1. Manage the interagency coordination of IOOS;
2. Develop and periodically update a strategic plan and an implementation plan for an interagency sustained U.S. IOOS (in the end-to-end sense defined in the scope, above);
3. Integrate U.S. (end-to-end) ocean observing efforts, including IOOS, into Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS), the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), and other international programs;
4. Coordinate JSOST ocean observing activities with SIMOR and with other Federal ocean-related and observing-related activities; and
5. Report on its plans and activities to the JSOST and to the Interagency Committee on Ocean Science and Resource Management Integration (ICOSRMI).

### **D. Membership**

All JSOST member agencies, including ex-officio members, may be represented on the IWGOO. NOAA shall chair the IWGOO and up to three Vice-Chairs shall be identified by the IWGOO and approved by the JSOST Co-Chairs. In the event the IWGOO does not identify Vice-Chairs, they will be appointed by the JSOST Co-Chairs. In order to encourage strong coordination, the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the National Oceanographic Partnership Program (NOPP) Interagency Working Group, two members appointed by SIMOR, and the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Ocean Research and Resources Advisory Panel (ORRAP), or their representatives, will be invited to be non-voting ex officio members of the IWGOO. The Ocean.US Office, NSTC subcommittees, and other Federal organizations will be invited to participate as appropriate. Contractors under non-disclosure agreements may be utilized as needed. Decisions made by the Co-Chairs of the IWGOO will be vetted by the full IWGOO, by electronic means if necessary for timeliness.

### **E. Private Sector Interface**

The IWGOO may solicit and receive ad hoc advice from non-Federal entities, including the U.S. Global Ocean Observing System Steering Committee, as consistent with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). The ORRAP may provide input and information exchange.

### **F. Termination Date**

Unless renewed by the Co-Chairs of the JSOST prior to its expiration, the IWGOO shall terminate no later than March 1, 2009.

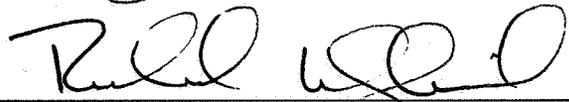
**G. Determination**

We hereby determine that the formation of the Interagency Working Group on Ocean Observations is in the public interest in connection with the performance and duties imposed on the Executive Branch by law, and that such duties can best be performed through the advice and counsel of such a group.

Approved:

  
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Margaret Leinen, NSF (Co-Chair, JSOST)

12/19/06  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Richard Spinrad, NOAA (Co-Chair, JSOST)

12/19/06  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dan Walker, OSTP (Co-Chair, JSOST)

12-18-06  
Date