

**JSOST Gulf Coast Briefing  
Louisiana State University  
September 6, 2006**

**Comment:** There is no mention of education in the short-term priorities. I realize this is an ocean research priorities plan, but education is an important topic. It was noted that at the recent NEON conference, ocean education was left out because it is not located in “everyone’s backyard”. We need to get a hold of terrestrial types to let them know that kids need to know about oceans, especially since it covers ~70% of the Earth’s surface.

**Response:** We are not leaving education out of the plan, it is just not explicitly stated in the near term priorities. A priority of the document is the translation of science to the public, not just to staffers but to the general public including education projects, etc. There is an IWG on Ocean Education that is working on ocean education. There were a few JSOST folks who felt we needed an ocean education section and others felt that this was a research priorities plan and an education section was not needed. In the end we have called education out as a cross-cutting element and set it up in the front of the document.

**Comment:** Pleased to see that you stressed basic research as a fundamental issue that needs to continue. However, the Implementation Plan focuses on accountability and performance measures (mission oriented) and sometimes performance measures do not work with the basic research concept. We need to be careful how we express this concept in the Implementation Strategy. We need to figure out a way to be consistent across this concept.

**Response:** There are metrics for basic research (peer review, publications). There should be measure of effectiveness and measures of performance. How do we do this to support basic research? This is an important question. We will need to identify measures (potential transformation?).

**Comment:** Applaud the group; this is a challenging endeavor. Number one recommendation is that the Federal government keeps telling people that there will be a national plan and an implementation strategy; let people know that this is their chance to get involved. This country is lucky to have the opportunity to do this and we still need to spread the word.

**Response:** How do we get the diverse community to respond; must be sensitive to the fact that this won’t be perfect from the start but we must keep working on it to get everyone’s feedback. We are dealing with an awareness issue on the Federal side as well. The heads of some ocean agencies are well aware of what is happening with this plan.

**Comment:** The core initiative of Sea Grant for the last 48 years is very important; how did we miss the boat on this and not get involved in this process, especially since we are involved in the major universities. We are not profiled or recognized in this plan. How do we make an impact without wasting a lot of time?

**Response:** Does not feel Sea Grant has missed the ball on this. Sea Grant was discussed as a vehicle for education and in other parts of the plan. However, the Sea Grant

references may not be as strong as they could be, but we tried to avoid specific program references. This issue is actually why we are doing these briefings; to raise awareness and establish more lines of communication. We understand your concern, although I wouldn't be that concerned about no references in this briefing, and compel you to ask this question within the Sea Grant network; maybe Sea Grant could provide a collective set of comments.

**Comment:** Looking at the near term priorities, amazed to see that forecasting is there but building an ocean observing system is not.

**Response:** The ocean observing system is identified as a cross-cut theme and an overarching element. We have very specific research concepts that depend on ocean observing systems and I'm sure there will be a complementary element to these (i.e. there is a need for a complex ocean observing system). However, the urgency factor and the need to have specific priorities that resonate with folks played a part in identifying the near term priorities.

**Comment:** There is no mention of the ocean and weather; the ocean has a tremendous impact on the weather. This should be put in the ocean and climate theme. People are more concerned about hurricanes than they are climate change. Was there a reason why this is left out?

**Response:** Not left out. We talk about ocean and weather in the natural hazards theme (such as droughts, seasonal climate forecasting, etc.). Those things that are defensible in terms of natural hazards are where we will see the weather issues. There are several documents out that specifically discuss weather and ocean research.

**Comment:** People would rather make atmospheric measurements than ocean measurements.

**Response:** We need to emphasize this point and realize that ocean observations may be more difficult to make.

**Comment:** We need to focus on the oceans role in climate. Folks continues to segregate these two issues and we need to bring back them together. We have noticed that there is not much "ocean" in the global climate change program. There needs to be more collaboration among climate folks and ocean folks.

**Response:** A few members of the JSOST noticed that we needed to discuss climate/ocean issues with the CCSP (since they are not focusing on oceans). We are pushing hard for collaboration amongst the groups, but we need to determine the correct means to do this. The JSOST would love to see some specific recommendations in the public comments.

**Comment:** The OAP made the point to focus on ecosystems but the focus is becoming too narrow for coastal managers (e.g. we are losing the view of the gulf as a large ecosystem).

**Response:** This is a very good point. Where is the intersection with the aligned priorities and the national priorities? How do we get multiple entities to coordinate

amongst themselves? The Gulf of Mexico alliance is a good example of a working regional group and we need more groups like this.

**Comment:** We didn't hear very much mention of the Aqua box. Are they still involved? CEQ is a direct line to the Whitehouse so this is an important opportunity for the ocean community.

**Response:** The Aqua box is still very involved. They actually approved the priorities plan framework. The change in Administrations in the next two years might bring about lots of change to this group, so we need to build a strong set of priorities now.

**Comment:** Concerned about the lack of involvement with the Navy in oceanographic research, which translates into concern over the oceanographic fleet. This needs to be a priority. Where are we on this? How do we get research vessels if we are not fighting a naval war?

**Response:** The ORPP is an unconstrained plan (no constraints on people, etc). However, for research we need people, ships, institutions, etc. Specific people in Navy need to be engaged. The operational side of Navy has been involved, but not the fleet side. One of the components of this process is FOFC and they will be specifically asked for input on the Implementation Strategy. We need to find the right people to make these arguments too.

**Comment:** This document does not mention \$.

**Response:** We are waiting to discuss the specifics of the research until the Implementation Strategy. Our task was to develop priorities in an unconstrained matter. Now that we have set priorities, we can start the implementation, such as requesting money, making trade offs, etc.

**Comment:** What about the emphasis on the international community and multinational programs. Where does international cooperation and joint programs fit in?

**Response:** One of the criteria is for the US to take a leadership role. But, we need to think that if these are the priorities, how to we optimize the programs out there? Where can we plug things in? And to do this we need an inventory of what is already happening.

**Comment:** There seems to be more and more pressure for folks to get more done with less money and this problem probably won't go away anytime in the near future. We need to express these issues within the document. Implementing this plan will require a commitment.

**Response:** We can't get more done with less money so we need to focus on the performance metrics; how well are we performing and how well are we managing. We need to go back to why we are developing the plan which goes back to what is in the US Commission on Ocean Policy (USCOP). Discussing what really needs to be done beyond what is currently happening is a way to justify the USCOP recommendations.

**Comment:** Ecosystems are discussed quite a bit in the document. Defining ecosystems requires a basic knowledge of the interactions of the communities, etc. This level of basic biology should not be skipped over.

**Response:** Good point. Suggest taking a look at the document to see if this is covered.

**Comment:** The Estuarine Research Federation will be supplying comments as well.