

# The Bush Administration is an International Leader in Protecting Our Ocean and Coastal Resources

## International Activities

- In 2003-2004, the Administration testified in support of the Law of the Sea Convention and is working with the Senate to facilitate U.S. ratification of this important treaty.
- In February 2004, the Administration successfully negotiated the first-ever treaty that will require ships to discharge ballast water to a prescribed standard intended to minimize and ultimately to eliminate introductions of invasive aquatic species.
- In 2004, the Administration developed and transmitted to Congress legislation to implement the landmark Polar Bear Agreement, an international treaty between the U.S. and Russia that will ensure long-term, science-based conservation of the Alaska-Chukotka polar bear population.
- In 2001, the U.S. Coast Guard and NOAA assisted the Ecuadorian government to respond to the grounding of an oil tanker off the Galapagos Islands.
- In 2002, NOAA initiated an extensive ecosystem research program in the Bering Sea with Russia and Japan through the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission to understand the influence of ocean and climate changes on salmon and associated marine species.
- In 2002, at the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, NOAA, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Department of State led a successful effort to regulate international trade in sea horses, and supported successful efforts to regulate whale sharks and basking sharks, and to provide total protection for bottlenose dolphins in the Black Sea.
- In November 2003, the Department of State led international efforts to adopt multilateral trade restrictions against vessels illegally fishing for Atlantic tuna.
- In 2003, NOAA sent a team of scientists to Spain to provide consultation for responding to the oil spill from the *T/V Prestige*.
- In 2003, NOAA and Department of the Interior worked with the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species parties to improve coral reporting requirements and to address conservation needs of other coral reef species in international trade.
- In 2003 and 2004, the Department of State and NOAA trained foreign government officials and shrimp trawl fishermen in 14 countries on the use of new larger turtle excluder devices (TEDs) to help protect all species and sizes of sea turtles.
- In March 2004, the United States hosted the White Water to Blue Water partnership conference in Miami bringing together 30 governments of the Wider Caribbean Region, non-governmental organizations, international organizations, universities, and the private sector to assist Caribbean nations in managing their aquatic and marine resources. During the conference, NOAA and the U.N. Environment Program announced a collaborative agreement to establish an office within NOAA to support healthy, well-managed coastal ecosystems in the wider Caribbean region.
- The United States officially rejoined UNESCO on October 1, 2003. This new engagement in UNESCO will foster continued and expanded participation in the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission to promote international cooperation on a wide range of research, capacity-building, and educational activities related to oceans and coastal environments.