

BASELINE ASSESSMENT PROJECT SUMMARY

New England's marine resources are an important source of economic and ecosystem value. Together with the region's coastal infrastructure and human use, these resources are inputs to industrial, recreational, and service sector activities that support jobs and income. They also are a source of ecosystem services that contribute to the well-being of residents and visitors.

Project Goals

In support of the Northeast Regional Planning Body's (RPB) ocean planning effort, a baseline assessment will compile existing information and conduct new analysis to characterize the region's ecosystem, economy, and cultural resources. The assessment will provide guidance on how a regional ocean plan can address pressures on resources, resource use conflicts, and support sustainable economic activity in the Northeast. The team conducting this assessment includes researchers from the Woods Hole Marine Policy Center, University of Southern Maine, University of Massachusetts Boston, and the New England Aquarium.

The goals of the baseline assessment are to: 1) describe the connections between natural resources and economic value (broadly defined) in the region at present and in the future; and 2) provide tools and considerations to the RPB as it embarks on the development of a regional ocean plan. The intent of the project is to improve understanding of marine resources as inputs to economic activity and to the generation of ecosystem services while giving RPB members and others involved in ocean planning a tool that helps evaluate how a potential planning decision might affect future resource status and economic value generation. The assessment will also identify key gaps in data and information to consider in future planning.

Project Tasks and Timeline

The assessment will include the following tasks:

1. Development and RPB review of an assessment outline: ***Sept – Oct, 2014***
(see following pages for detailed outline, which will be discussed at the Nov. RPB meeting)
2. Analysis of regional Marine Economy and Resources: ***Nov – April, 2015***
 - a. Regional, state, coastal county level economic indicators
 - b. Summary of non-market valuation studies
 - c. Summary of status/trends of marine resources and infrastructure
 - d. Map resources to economic activity and production
3. Summary of potential future considerations specific to ocean uses: ***Nov – April, 2015***
 - a. Economic trends and projections
 - b. Federal and state planning/strategic planning initiatives
 - c. Best management and construction practices (e.g. marine and coastal facilities and operations, ocean industry siting)
4. Production and review of draft and final baseline assessment: ***May – Sept, 2015***

For more information

Hauke Kite-Powell
Woods Hole Oceanographic, Marine Policy Center
hauke@who.edu

Katie Lund
Northeast Regional Ocean Council
klund@northeastoceancouncil.org