



NOAA Blue Economy Strategic Plan 2021-2025

The NOAA Blue Economy Strategic Plan aims to:

- Strengthen and improve NOAA data, services, and technological resources that contribute to the American Blue Economy,
- Collaborate with partners to support the growth of American business and entrepreneurship that contributes to the development and sustainability of the blue economy across the United States, and
- Identify and support the growth of sectors of the Blue Economy that will help accelerate the nation's economic recovery.

Demonstrated Leadership in Advancing the U.S. Blue Economy

The Blue Economy is growing, and critical to national prosperity, resource conservation, and security. NOAA expands and strengthens the American Blue Economy by leading agency-wide initiatives in the following areas:

1. Marine Transportation
2. Ocean Exploration
3. Seafood Competitiveness
4. Tourism and Recreation
5. Coastal Resilience

NOAA further supports the growth of Blue Economy sectors by leveraging dynamic public-private partnerships, innovative STEM education & outreach, transformative ocean science, and emerging technologies to monitor and maximize sustainable economic contributions of our ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes resources.

Since 2017, NOAA has supported advancing the American Blue Economy as a top budget and outreach priority. The agency has had a leading role in implementing the National Ocean Policy of 2018, 2018 National Strategic Plan for STEM Education, 2019 Presidential Memorandum on Mapping the U.S. EEZ and Shoreline & Nearshore of Alaska, 2020 National Strategy for Mapping, Exploring, & Characterizing the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone, 2020 Executive Order on Promoting Seafood Competitiveness and Economic Growth, 2020 Federal Strategy for Addressing the Global Challenge of Marine Litter, and several NOAA conservation, science and technology (S&T), and mapping strategies.

Through these and other initiatives, such as designating and expanding National Marine Sanctuaries, using uncrewed systems to continue ocean operations during the COVID-19 pandemic, and quantifying economic contributions of agency programs, NOAA has been actively advancing the Blue Economy, and preparing the nation for an economy that is increasingly dependent on data and technology.

The 5-year NOAA Blue Economy Strategic Plan is aligned with these initiatives, and includes recommendations from the Ocean Exploration Advisory Board Blue Economy Subcommittee's Interim Report on Accelerating Growth of U.S. Blue Economy outlining preliminary steps NOAA can take to contribute to the doubling of the U.S. Blue Economy over the next decade. The Plan also includes efforts that are planned or in progress across NOAA line and staff offices, which continue to demonstrate NOAA's leadership in addressing commitments established during the 2019 White House Summit on Ocean S&T Partnerships. In addition to providing a framework for agency-wide contributions to the 5 pillars of NOAA's Blue Economy initiative (**Goals 1-5**), this Plan outlines actions to maximize NOAA's ability to contribute data and services and engage with multisector partners by improving cross-cutting internal focus areas and leveraging external opportunities to advance Blue Economy sectors (**Goals 6-7**).

Strategy Goals

1. Advance NOAA Contributions to Marine Transportation Optimize Marine Highway Infrastructure

- Distribute Precision Marine Navigation data
- Develop products to enhance safety & utility
- Improve operational marine weather forecasts

Improve Marine Navigation

- Maximize observations for navigation services
- Provide accurate water level measurements
- Modernize National Spatial Reference System
- Innovate tools for port safety & efficiency

Describe Marine Commerce

- Provide marine economy data
- Characterize data for transportation & industry

2. Map, Explore & Characterize the U.S. EEZ

Coordinate & Execute Mapping

- Complete ocean mapping campaigns
- Archive, inventory, & make available expedition data

Perform Exploration & Characterization

- Develop priorities
- Leverage funding & partnerships
- Archive & make accessible expedition data
- Develop data collection & quality standards
- Report campaign progress

Streamline Permitting & Authorization

3. Implement the Executive Order on Promoting Seafood Competitiveness & Economic Growth

Promote U.S. Fishing & Seafood

- Engage regional fisheries management councils
- Develop an American Seafood Campaign
- Inform investments & advocacy
- Leverage citizen science networks & data
- Advance Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management

Combat IUU Fishing

- Implement the Port State Measures Agreement
- Advance S&T for detection & monitoring

Grow Domestic Aquaculture

- Streamline permitting
- Develop Aquaculture Opportunity Areas
- Improve regulatory transparency
- Establish Regional Aquaculture Training Centers

4. Expand Tourism & Recreation Opportunities in the America's Oceans, Coasts, & Great Lakes

Increase Options & Access

- Expand & designate new National Marine Sanctuaries
- Improve access to coastal recreation areas
- Assessing & addressing access opportunities
- Support accessible, sustainable recreational fishing
- Develop partnerships for safety & messaging

Improve Ocean Health

- Assess, restore, & protect coral reefs
- Implement the National Marine Debris Strategy

Understand & Communicate Economic Value

5. Enhance the Resilience of America's Oceans, Coasts, & Great Lakes Coastal Communities

Inform & Communicate

- Increase Support for the Parametric Insurance Sector
- Develop coastal & economic data-comparisons & tools
- Create & deliver regional normal calculations products
- Develop marine oil spill remediation satellite products

Manage & Model Data

- Update local & regional digital elevation models
- Operationalize Coastal Wind & Water Events Database
- Improve coastal relief models & ocean climatologies

Advance Cross-cutting Strategies

- Develop an Integrated Water Prediction strategy
- Expand opportunities for increasing resilience
- Develop an Ecosystem Forecasting Portfolio strategy

6. Improve Cross-cutting Internal Focus Areas to Grow the American Blue Economy Sustainably

Measure Contributions

- Develop internal metrics
- Conduct valuation reports
- Measure Ocean Economy growth & trends

Increase Literacy

- Develop an Economically Literate Workforce

Streamline Internal Processes

- Evaluate contracting, acquisitions, stewardship
- Increase ROI of NOAA Programs
- Expand & Accelerate S&T Transitions

7. Leverage Cross-cutting External Opportunities to Grow the American Blue Economy

Enhance & Leverage Strategic Partnerships

- Develop Policy & Legislation

- Communicate & Engage

- Expand Extramural Research

One-NOAA Approach

The United States is an ocean nation, and our future prosperity and security depend upon the understanding, health, and sustainable use of our Oceans, Coasts, and Great Lakes. NOAA's data and services are powering our economic recovery in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The cross-cutting actions in this plan leverage partnerships, emerging S&T, and internal & external outreach, and will accelerate and grow these contributions.