



## FY 2007 PUBLIC POLICY AGENDA FOR THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MARINE LABORATORIES

The National Association of Marine Laboratories (NAML) is a nonprofit organization of over 120 members employing more than 10,000 scientists, engineers, and professionals and representing ocean, coastal and Great Lakes laboratories stretching from Maine to the Gulf of Mexico to the west coast, from Guam to Bermuda and from Alaska to Puerto Rico. NAML labs support the conduct of high quality ocean, coastal and Great Lakes research in the natural and social sciences, education and outreach. Through national and regional networks, NAML labs --

- Promote and support basic and applied research of the highest quality from the unique perspective of coastal laboratories.
- Assist local, regional and state entities with information related to the use and conservation of marine and coastal resources using ecosystem-based management approaches.
- Recognize, encourage and support the unique role that coastal laboratories play in conducting education, outreach, and public service; and
- Facilitate the exchange of information and relevant expertise between NAML member institutions, government agencies, and the private sector.

### INNOVATION AND COMPETITIVENESS

***NAML strongly supports the President's FY 2007 American Competitiveness Initiative (ACI) and accompanying Presidential budget request which includes:***

- A doubling of the Federal commitment to basic research programs in the physical sciences over the next 10 years at the National Science Foundation and other agencies – NAML expressly supports the President's FY 2007 request of \$6.02 billion for the National Science Foundation as well as a budget in FY 2007 for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of at least \$4.5 billion;
- Improvement in the quality of education provided to our students with a strong foundation in math and science; and
- Support for universities and laboratories that provide world-class education and research opportunities.

## OCEAN COMMISSION AND INTERAGENCY RESPONSE

***NAML strongly supports implementation of the recommendations from the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and the initial efforts of the Administration's Interagency Committee on Ocean Policy to develop a response to the Commission's recommendations.***

The Commission's analysis of policies governing oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes has resulted in a collection of bold and broad-reaching recommendations for reform. Implementation of these recommendations by the Federal government will enable the U.S. to maintain and strengthen its role as a world leader in protecting and sustaining the planet's oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes. NAML is particularly supportive of the Commission's recommendation to re-align NOAA's functions to support ecosystem-based management approaches. In addition, we fully endorse the Commission's recommendations to double the federal investment in ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes research as well as its recommendation to promote a strong federal investment in ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes education, outreach, and stewardship. The Commission's recommendations are important first steps in addressing the nation's ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes needs. NAML is supportive of the initial steps taken by the Administration in response to the Commission's report - including the creation of Committee on Ocean Policy established in December 2004 by Executive Order. NAML is committed to working with those at the federal, state, and local levels to ensure full implementation of the Commission's vital recommendations.

## OCEAN, COASTAL AND GREAT LAKES RESEARCH

***NAML strongly supports enhanced support for cutting edge ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes research in the natural and social sciences, education, outreach, and related infrastructure.***

The marine sciences have much to offer the Nation as it seeks to strengthen its ability to innovate and compete in today's global economy. They are inherently interdisciplinary, push the envelope in terms of technology development, test the boundaries of our data collection and analysis systems, and offer an effective training ground for future scientists and engineers. As the Nation seeks to augment its investment in the physical sciences to increase its international competitiveness, NAML calls on policy makers to recognize the integrated and strategic relationship between all scientific and engineering disciplines and to support an enhanced investment in science and technology across the board as part of any long term economic competitiveness policy. NAML also asks that the value of **extramural research funding at all relevant federal agencies not be overlooked, but** recognized as essential to the overall progress of coastal, ocean and Great Lakes science and education.

- ***National Science Foundation Support for Ocean, Coastal and Great Lakes Research and Education:*** NAML supports increased federal funding for the National Science Foundation (NSF) consistent with the President's budget for FY 2007. Basic research and the transfer and use of the knowledge developed through research are vital for the long term economic competitiveness and national security of this Nation. It is

increasingly important for the Nation to maintain - and enhance - its scientific edge in a global community with emerging new capacities for scientific research. NSF provides vital support for basic research and education which enhances public understanding of the Nation's oceans, coastal areas, and the Great Lakes. NSF also provides important support for basic laboratory facilities, instrumentation, support systems, computing and related cyberinfrastructure, and ship access. The final report of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy makes several recommendations on the need to develop and enhance ocean, coastal and Great Lakes research infrastructure. To that end, NAML strongly supports the NSF proposal to initiate support for the development of the Ocean Observatories Initiative in the FY 2007 budget request (\$13.5 million) and urges the Congress to provide \$5 million for the expansion of the NSF's Field Stations and Marine Laboratories program. This modest program provides researchers with access to state of the art instrumentation for research and education and necessary cyberinfrastructure and data management systems that compliment the Ocean Observatories Initiative.

- ***NOAA Support for Ocean, Coastal, and Great Lakes Research:*** A Congressionally requested study of NOAA's research programs, entitled, *Review of the Organization and Management of Research in NOAA* completed August 2004, concluded that extramural research is critical to accomplishing NOAA's mission. The access to such enhanced research capacities provides NOAA with world class expertise not found in NOAA laboratories; connectivity with planning and conduct of global science; means to leverage external funding sources; facilitation of multi-institution cooperation; access to vast and unique research facilities; and access to graduate and undergraduate students. Academic scientists also benefit from working with NOAA, in part, by learning to make their research more directly relevant to management and policy. It is an important two-way interaction and exchange of information.

NAML strongly supports a robust NOAA extramural research activity expressed through such programs as the National Sea Grant Program, the National Undersea Research Program, the Ocean Exploration Initiative, research related to aquaculture, invasive species, and the various joint and cooperative institutes supported by NOAA. These partnership programs are not only consistent with the findings of the August 2004 review of NOAA research, but are also consistent with the NOAA strategic plan. As such they should be strongly supported and made accessible to the ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes research community on a competitive basis.

### **EDUCATION, OUTREACH & PUBLIC SERVICE**

***Ocean, Coastal and Great Lakes Science Education and Outreach*** - A strong national ocean policy can only be sustained through the development of high-quality coastal, ocean, and Great Lakes education programs that support learning at all age levels and by all disciplines. Through such efforts, NAML can highlight the relevance and utility of coastal, ocean and Great Lakes resources and demonstrate the value of and increase the use of incorporating science-based decisions in a public policy process designed to protect and enhance these resources. For that reason, NAML strongly supports the NSF Centers for Ocean Science Education Excellence program (COSEE), NSF education and human resources generally, and NOAA's Office of Education. Such programs provide a rich

environment for which collaborations and partnerships flourish. A greater understanding of the oceans and coastal ecosystems will instill in our populace a sense of stewardship for these important environments. These programs also yield a diverse workforce that includes a significant percentage from underrepresented groups. Preparing these cultural bridges would allow us to capitalize upon diverse national strengths, ensuring the flow of intellectual talent into ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes-related fields.

### **INTEGRATED OCEAN, COASTAL & GREAT LAKES OBSERVING SYSTEMS**

***Integrated Ocean, Coastal & Great Lakes Observing Systems*** - Integrated observations offer critical information on coastal processes necessary for addressing issues, such as the health of humans and marine life, weather and climate nowcasts and forecasts, homeland security, and resource management. Coastal and marine laboratories have been addressing this need. However, funding for existing subsystems is difficult to sustain, and significant additional funding is required to implement the national integrated system. Although efforts have been made in the past to coordinate Federal agencies involved in ocean and coastal research and national and international programs regarding coastal, ocean, and Great Lakes observing systems, further investment and strengthened cooperation at all levels is still needed to ensure that these systems are sustained and that they incorporate the long-term monitoring efforts of the nation's coastal and marine laboratories. NAML enthusiastically supports the development of a sustained integrated ocean observing system to be managed by NOAA.

### **PARTNERSHIPS**

***Strengthen Partnerships Between Marine Laboratories and Federal Agencies*** - Strong coordination and expanded cooperative activities between marine laboratories and federal funding agencies is necessary for the success of a given research program or center. In order to maximize the effectiveness of a national ocean policy, a collaborative effort is needed between laboratories and federal ocean-related agencies like NSF, NOAA, NASA, and EPA. NAML applauds this Administration's efforts to improve interagency coordination and cooperation with respect to ocean, coastal and Great Lakes issues through the interagency Committee on Ocean Policy and other interagency committees and working groups under the auspices of the Office of Science and Technology Policy. NAML believes these are important steps to sustain necessary interagency partnerships. NAML calls on the Administration to look for ways to expand these efforts to better include the external marine laboratory community.

***Create and Maintain Partnerships Between Like-Minded Science Advocacy Organizations*** – NAML believes that partnerships among organizations that are concerned about ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes research and education, as well as the Nation's research and development enterprise generally, are vitally important. To that end, NAML will seek to build strategic partnerships with such organizations in an effort to maximize its participation and effectiveness in the public policy process.