



A Partnership for Effective and Efficient Ocean Resource Solutions in the Mid-Atlantic Region

About Us

The Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean (MARCO) is a partnership established in 2009 by a governors' agreement among New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia. MARCO plays a unique role in the region; it is the only multi-jurisdictional, coordinating body to use ocean planning to address a holistic suite of ocean management and conservation issues with a collective voice.

What We Do

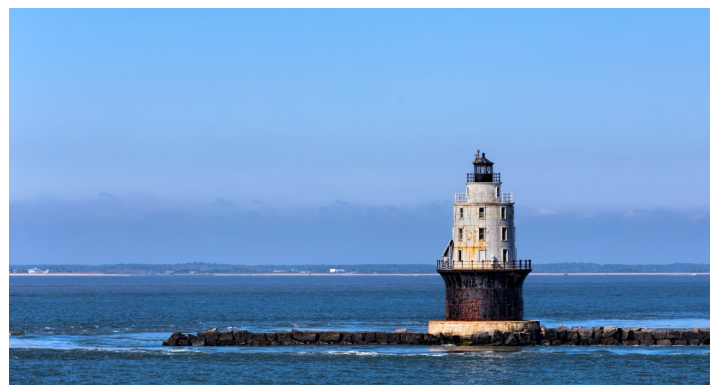
The vitality of the ocean and coastal waters of the Mid-Atlantic provide a wealth of economic and environmental services to local communities, states, and the nation. As the region's population increases and ocean uses intensify, the Mid-Atlantic is faced with a new generation of ocean management challenges and opportunities that span state boundaries.

Through this lens, MARCO uses regional ocean planning to help states understand and support ocean industries, address inequities, prepare for climate change, and improve our ocean and coasts' health.

MARCO's sphere of influence and connections includes ocean champions and leaders in the region's federal agencies, indigenous nations, and non-governmental organizations who possess the interest and the authority to effect meaningful change.

Activities

- **Drives urgently needed attention** to the ongoing and emerging challenges and opportunities in ocean management and conservation.
- **Shares information about regional priorities and planned activities** to facilitate a deep engagement around long-standing regional ocean issues, a dialogue that helps decision-makers understand the needs of various stakeholder groups and vice-versa.
- **Manages the publicly available Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal** and online spatial data toolkit, which consolidates available data and enables users to visualize and analyze ocean resources and human use information. It has become an indispensable tool for public stakeholders and government decision makers at all levels to access the same best available spatial information.
- **Generates new data and information** about regional priorities and planned activities.
- **Provides a platform for collaboration** among indigenous nations, federal agencies, states, regional fisheries management bodies and other stakeholders. Decision makers and stakeholders share the same information, build their trust in scientific data, and thus reduce conflict in ocean use planning and management.



Ocean and coastal opportunities and challenges MARCO will address in 2021-2023



Build trust in regional ocean science and data with stakeholders, such as the commercial and recreational fishing industry.



Promote stakeholder engagement in **offshore renewable energy** policies and research.



Develop mapping and other data tools to identify important habitat areas for conservation.



Coordinate sand and sediment planning efforts that benefit communities and wildlife.



Promote **sustainable fisheries management** through enhancements of portal data and accessibility, and advances on climate-related fisheries information.



Inform regional **ocean-related climate change** adaptation and mitigation strategies.



Bolster understanding of **ocean and coastal recreation** on regional economic vitality and sustainable resource use.



Launch new efforts to **reduce marine debris** through research and educational materials.

Creating a Sustainable Blue Economy

Throughout 2021-2023, MARCO will drive ecologically sustainable, regenerative, and climate-smart actions that support and revitalize our region's coastal and ocean economy.

This **sustainable blue economy** approach will ground MARCO's current and future work streams and priorities by:

- 1) Partnering with academia and other stakeholders to conduct the Mid-Atlantic region's first-ever **blue economy assessment**. It will illuminate the current and potential role our ocean and coasts play in fostering a robust economy and community well-being.
- 2) Bringing together diverse, regional and national experts, to **provide specific recommendations** on approaches to bolster our regional economy and create jobs.
- 3) **Amplifying blue economy messages** resulting from the assessment and expert recommendations to the public and state and federal decision makers. Messages will include actionable links to policy initiatives being contemplated or underway.
- 4) **Launching a series of topic-specific strategies and actions** that initiate the expert recommendations and are based on the findings of the blue economy assessment.

Building New Partnerships

Since its inception, MARCO has pursued regional collaboration around its priorities through deep engagement with our partners. MARCO's 2021-2023 work plan lays out an ambitious set of actions to build on our work, and therefore we are seeking to add new partners whose technical capacities, ability to engage stakeholders, and advocacy for regenerative ocean policy approaches align with our mission, including:

- private philanthropies investing in ocean health and climate policy in the U.S.;
- new government agencies at the federal, state, and local levels;
- corporate and other private sector partners in the region whose investment and job creation activities align with a sustainable blue economy approach;
- academic and other technical experts with critical skills and knowledge; and
- a diverse range of NGO partners.

For more information and to discuss potential partnership opportunities, please contact info@midatlanticocean.org.

