

## Crosscutting Initiatives

**T**HE GULF OF MAINE COUNCIL'S ACTION PLAN 2012-2017 IS ORGANIZED AROUND THREE LONG-TERM GOALS that focus on improving and sustaining the ecological and socioeconomic health of the Gulf of Maine region. The Action Plan also addresses several important themes that span across the three goals.

**Climate Change** A changing climate and extreme weather events are major regional issues that are already affecting the Gulf of Maine, and the impacts are expected to intensify in coming years. The Gulf of Maine Council is playing an active role in increasing understanding of the impacts and building regional capacity for adaptation. The Council's [Climate Change Network](#) brings the latest climate change science, impacts, and adaptation information to the Gulf of Maine community.

**Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning** The Canadian and U.S. governments are implementing coastal and marine spatial planning (CMSP) as part of a framework to support ecosystem-based management and sustainable use of ocean resources. Many activities of the Gulf of Maine Council contribute to the implementation of CMSP in the region. The Council's [Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning Committee](#) investigates and makes recommendations on roles and activities for the Council in CMSP, and it tracks and exchanges information on CMSP policies and activities on both sides of border.

**Information Exchange and Knowledge Sharing** A primary purpose of the Council is to facilitate regional information exchange and knowledge sharing among people engaged in coastal and marine management. This function is particularly important because in the Gulf of Maine region management responsibility is divided among numerous government agencies in two countries, three states, and two provinces. Examples of related Council activities are the [Gulf of Maine Times](#), [Climate Change Network](#), [Ecosystem Indicator Partnership](#), [State of the Gulf of Maine Report](#), and [Habitat Restoration Web Portal](#).

**Data Management** Many government agencies and non-government organizations engage in research and monitoring in the Gulf of Maine, but data are often distributed among many sources and may be difficult to access. To facilitate data integration and management applications, the Council conducts targeted efforts to compile, manage, and disseminate regional-scale datasets related to the Council's priorities. Examples include the [Ecosystem Indicator Partnership](#) (ESIP) and [Gulfwatch](#).

### Council Watch List

In addition to the issues that are specifically highlighted and addressed in the goals and crosscutting initiatives of this Action Plan, the Gulf of Maine Council actively monitors other issues relevant to its mission. These may be recurring issues or emerging issues such as those contained in the [State of the Gulf of Maine Report](#) and specifically the [State of the Gulf Emerging Issues](#) theme paper. As needed, the Council takes action, conducts information gathering, and facilitates communication and knowledge sharing on these related issues.

**Ecosystem Indicators** The Council is leading a collaborative, regional program to develop, deploy, and communicate science-based, management-relevant indicators for the Gulf of Maine through the [Ecosystem Indicator Partnership](#) (ESIP). The indicators enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of management efforts at regional, sub-regional, and local scales.

**Environmental Monitoring** Scientific monitoring of environmental conditions in the Gulf of Maine is required for effective management in the region. The Council conducts the [Gulfwatch](#) contaminants monitoring program, supports monitoring initiatives, hosts the [ESIP Monitoring Map](#), and provides management-relevant information based on monitoring data.