



**Gulf of Maine
Council on the
Marine Environment**

Working Group Briefing Packet

Version 1 • September 8, 2010

Meeting in Saint John, NB • September 27-28, 2011



Table of Contents

Working Group September 2011 meeting agenda2

Working Group June 2011 meeting summary7

Habitat Restoration Subcommittee.....14

Sustainable Industries and Communities Committee: rejuvenation and development of a work plan.....18

Joint CA/US Association of Delegates to the GOMC on the Marine Environment19

Developing the 2012-2017 Action Plan: Council, Working Group and Committee Input20

Recommendations to improve our ability to connect with constituents: Accessing jurisdictional contact databases ...21

From a Five-year Action Plan to Annual Work Plans22

Action Plan Communications and Outreach (rollout).....23

Expanding the Readership of the *Gulf of Maine Times*26

Update: Working Group on Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning (CMSP) in the Gulf of Maine Bioregion27

State of the Gulf of Maine and Ecosystem Indicator Partnership linkages28

Update on Roll-out of NOAA's Climate Program Award: Regional Coastal Resilience Initiative29

Gulfwatch Chemical Contaminants Monitoring Program.....30

Economic impact of the Council and implementation of its Action Plan31

Report on website upgrades32



Working Group September 2011 meeting agenda

Tuesday, September 27, 2011 Ballroom C

8:30 AM	<p>Welcome, introductions, and overview of objectives for the meeting <i>Rob Capozzi, Working Group Chair, NB Department of Environment</i></p>
8:40 AM	<p>Consent agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Working Group June 2011 meeting summary acceptance (Pg. 7) ▪ Committee and subcommittee reports acceptance (Pg. 14 and Pg. 18) ▪ Emerging issues update ▪ US/Canadian Representation on USGOMA (Pg. 19) ▪ Consultation with Councillors on Action Plan and pending schedule (Pg. 20) ▪ Recommendations to improve our ability to connect with constituents: Accessing jurisdictional contact databases (Pg. 21)
begins on Pg 7	
8:45 AM	<p>Presentation of Action Plan Consultation Results <i>Theresa Torrent Ellis</i></p> <p>Background: The Action Plan Team derived a list of internal and external individuals in each jurisdiction who were identified by Working Group and Council as the individuals who most needed to know about our activities. The draft action plan was sent to these individuals with the following three questions for them to address:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What priorities of your organization align with the goals and objectives in the attached draft? 2. What is the contact information for the lead staff working on these priorities? 3. How can the GOMC effectively support and leverage your work on these issues to help you address them more quickly and efficiently? <p>Outcome/Desired Action: The Working Group is aware of the consultation results and formulates strategies to Council on how to proceed with partnering with others on Action Plan implementation.</p>
9:30 AM	<p>Overview of the Content and Status of our Action Plan Revision <i>Theresa Torrent-Ellis</i></p> <p>Background: The release of the revised Action Plan in December 2011 is on schedule. It is timely to review the content of the Plan at the start of the meeting to set the proper context for many subsequent agenda items.</p> <p>Outcome/Desired Action: WG members are aware of the contents of the 2012-2017 Action Plan.</p>
10:00 AM	Break
10:15 AM	<p>From Five-year Action Plan to Annual Work Plans <i>Rob Capozzi and David Keeley</i></p> <p>Background: At the December 2011 meeting the Council should begin discussions of Action Plan implementation via a June 2012 – June 2014 work plan proposal. In September the WG needs to consider the format for a new work plan based on previous experiences in developing and maintaining work plans (e.g., engaging committees, TAPAS, etc.)</p> <p>Outcome/Desired Action: Working Group members agree on process to update work plans, the length/time-period for work plans and preliminary recommendations for December Council Action Plan implementation proposal.</p>
Pg. 22	
10:45 AM	Revisit Action Items from June Working Group and Council meetings
11:00 AM	<p>Presentation of the Action Plan Roll Out Plan <i>Peter Alexander and Vicky Deschenes NB Environment Director of Communications</i></p> <p>Background: The Action Plan Working Group, with support from Peter Alexander, has developed a roll-out plan for the Action Plan which includes detailed contributions from our agencies and organizations communications departments.</p> <p>Outcome/Background: Each Working Group member will know the role that they need to play for an effective Action Plan release.</p>
Pg. 23	
11:45 PM	Lunch on your own in the Market Place – a listing of options will be provided



<p>1:00 PM</p> <p>Pg. 26</p>	<p>Expanding the Readership of the <i>Gulf of Maine Times</i> <i>David Keeley and Theresa Torrent-Ellis or Terri Green</i></p> <p>Background: This “roll up your sleeves” session will provide input and direction on</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How can the Council more effectively use the e-mailing lists of its member agencies to notify these people of the GOM Times and to increase dramatically the number of readers visiting the <i>GOM Times</i> web site? 2. How might we approach nonprofits and agencies outside of the GOM Council family to notify their readers/members about the <i>Gulf of Maine Times</i>? 3. How can we get more Council agencies (and others) to have a “hotlink/button” on their web site that connects their viewers to the <i>GOM Times</i> site? 4. Would it be reasonable to ask WG members to send 20 names of people/organizations in their jurisdictions to the editor? 5. Could WG and Committee members take sign-up sheets to coastal conferences and workshops that request people to provide their email address (so they can receive notices of when a new edition of the <i>Times</i> is available)? Standard postcards/notices could also be distributed at the registration desk. <p>Outcome/Desired Action: Working Group guidance that will be implemented to expand the <i>Gulf of Maine Times</i> readership</p>
<p>1:30 PM</p> <p>Pg. 27</p>	<p>Updates on CMSP Committee and NROC US/CA collaboration <i>Betsy Nicholson and Tim Hall</i></p> <p>Background: The Council decided to name a Canadian Gulf of Maine Council representative to be an ex-officio member of the Northeast Regional Ocean Council. Also at the December 2010 meeting it was decided to establish a crosscutting Coastal Marine Spatial Planning Committee that will track, connect, and leverage activities and policies in the Gulf of Maine. They will work to draft a terms of reference for this new group.</p> <p>Outcome/Desired Action: The Working Group is updated on the Coastal Marine Spatial Planning Committee and the ex-officio Canadian member of the Northeast Regional Ocean Council.</p>
<p>2:00 PM</p>	<p>Break</p>
<p>2:15 PM</p>	<p>Update on Regional Inter Organizational Ocean and Coastal Collaboration <i>Theresa Torrent-Ellis</i></p> <p>Background: In the June 2011 meeting the Council decided to participate in an effort to explore collaboration with other regional groups with the Maine State Planning Office taking the lead.</p> <p>Outcomes/Desired Actions: The Working Group is updated on the status of the consultation in progress.</p>
<p>2:45 PM</p> <p>Pg. 28</p>	<p>Strengthening State of the Gulf Reporting and ESIP linkages <i>Melanie Maclean/Tim Hall/Kathryn Parlee/Susan Russell-Robinson</i></p> <p>Background: DFO has lead the SOE reporting effort while DOI/EC have lead ESIP. With the pending release of the new Action Plan it is timely to clarify ongoing interaction between ESIP and SOE reporting; to identify a US co-chair for SOE, and to describe DFO’s ongoing support to SOE among others.</p> <p>Outcome/Desired Action: WG will develop recommendations to Council</p>
<p>3:45 PM</p>	<p>Committee and Subcommittee engagement <i>Rob Capozzi and Justin Hustin</i></p> <p>Background: In an effort to ensure the continued engagement of committees and fulfill the outcomes of the new action plan, it is proposed that we consider a more formalized reporting and dialogue protocol which would provide the WG and Council with regular updates of individual committee work plans, activities, and accomplishments.</p> <p>Outcomes/Desired Action: 1. Working Group will discuss ways to increase information flow between the Council and the Committees with the objective of creating greater committee engagement at a time when travel and attendance to meetings is more difficult. 2. The SICC will present a summary of their activities and goals for the new AP.</p>



4:15 PM	Update on Roll-out of NOAA's Climate Program Office Grant <i>Julia Knisel</i> Background: This summer USGOMA received a large grant from NOAA to fund various products and activities related to BMPs and municipal adaptation approaches, providing technical assistance grants, and developing adaptation resiliency and adaption tools. Outcomes: Information Item—Julia will provide details on the expected deliverables of this large grant, which includes research and documentation of BMPs and municipal adaptation approaches, providing technical assistance grants, and develop adaptation resiliency and adaption tools.
Pg. 29	
4:30 PM	Items removed from Consent Agenda
4:45 PM	Adjourn
6:30 PM	Group Dinner at local eatery



Wednesday, September 28, 2011 Ballroom C

<p>8:30 AM</p> <p>Pg. 30</p>	<p>Gulfwatch's future <i>Peter Wells and Christian Krahfors</i> Background: This discussion will examine current Gulfwatch status and issues including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What funding mechanisms can be used to support Gulfwatch? 2. How is the Gulfwatch sub-committee going to be renewed over time? 3. What are the implications to GOMC and to Canada if the program ceases? <p>Outcome/Desired Action: Working Group direction on the future of Gulfwatch, its support, management, and implementation.</p>
<p>9:15 AM</p>	<p>Coordinating Action Plan Habitat Goal 1 initiatives <i>Anita Hamilton and Slade Moore</i> Background: At its June meeting, the Working Group discussed the need to better coordinate the current four Habitat Subcommittees:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Habitat Conservation 2. Habitat Monitoring 3. Habitat Restoration 4. Gulf of Maine Mapping Initiative <p>In the past, the co-chairs of the four sub-committees comprised the overarching Habitat Committee and conducted conference calls and shared information via their HC@GulfofMaine.org listserve.</p> <p>Outcome/Desired Action: Working Group guidance on Habitat Goal 1 Committee and Subcommittees.</p>
<p>10:00 AM</p>	<p>Break</p>
<p>10:20 AM</p> <p>Pg 31</p>	<p>Economic impact of the Council and implementation of its Action Plan <i>Rob Capozzi and David Keeley</i> Background: At its June 2011 meeting, the Council requested the Working Group to explore how economic data (e.g., "return on investment" of Council programs, leveraging of Council investments, economic value of coastal economy, etc.) can be presented in the new Action Plan. Some preliminary discussions with economists resulted in their recommendation that the WG refine the questions/issues it is trying to describe, to present suggestions of how to proceed at the December Council meeting and to host an "economic session" in conjunction with the March WG meeting in Boston. Robert Johnston, Clark University economics professor, has offered to facilitate this session pro-bono.</p> <p>Outcome/Desired Action: Working Group recommendations to Council on how to quantify the value of the GOMC's activities to the region's economy.</p>
<p>11:00 AM</p> <p>Pg. 32</p>	<p>Report on website upgrades <i>Jennifer Hackett and Jim Cradock</i> Background: At its June 2011 meeting, the Working Group provided input on GulfofMaine.org functionality and were provided with an orientation. It agreed to continue the discussion at the fall meeting including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Integrating Social Media opportunities for specific outcome purposes, 2. Addition of more images to enhance pivotal pages, and 3. Determining the relationship of and any duplication between Committees and Projects links. <p>Outcome/Desired Action: Working Group input to guide further website and information technology tool refinement.</p>
<p>12:00 PM</p>	<p>Working Lunch – we will be taking your orders in the morning <i>Presentation by the Fundy Bay Keeper</i></p>
<p>1:00 PM</p>	<p>Sharpening our communication and development efforts: Water Words That Work <i>Eric Eckl and Theresa Torrent-Ellis</i> Background: In June 2011 the Council accepted the Communications Strategy and requested work commence on its implementation. MSPO has contracted with Eric Eckl and his team from Water Words That Work to help our communications and development efforts through two services - a Communications Checkup and a Target Audience Profile. http://waterwordsthatwork.com</p> <p>Outcome/Desired Action: Working Group will help answer some questions to inform this effort.</p>



1:30 PM	Action Plan Next Steps
2:00 PM	Boat Trip to Musquash River Estuary Marine Protected Area
4:30 PM	Adjourn

September 27-30, 2011

Bay of Fundy Ecosystem Partnership and Atlantic Coastal Action Program Saint John

Ninth BoFEP Bay of Fundy Science Workshop

"Protecting the Watershed and Estuaries of the Bay of Fundy; Issues, Science, and Management

Delta Brunswick Hotel, Saint John, NB



Working Group June 2011 meeting summary

Working Group Members present

Rob Capozzi, NB Department of Environment; Ted Diers, NH Department of Environmental Services; Jennifer Hackett, Department of Fisheries and Oceans; Tim Hall, Department of Fisheries and Oceans; Anita Hamilton, Department of Fisheries and Oceans; Russell Henry, NB Department of Fisheries, Agriculture, and Aquaculture; Christian Krahorst, UMass Boston; Ellen Mecray, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Betsy Nicholson, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Jackie Olsen Environment Canada; Kathryn Parlee, Environment Canada; Ann Rodney, US Environmental Protection Agency; Susan Russell-Robinson, US Geological Survey, Department of Interior; Theresa Torrent-Ellis, ME State Planning Office; and Peter Wells, Dalhousie University/Bay of Fundy Ecosystem Partnership.

Working Group Members present via webinar/conference call

Justin Huston, NS Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture; Julia Knisel, MA Office of Coastal Zone Management; and Carlyne Marshall, Environment Canada.

Others present

Peter Alexander, Talking Conservation; Martin Boulerice, NB Department of Environment; Jim Cradock, Yellahoose; Daniel Diz, World Wildlife Fund Canada; David Keeley, The Keeley Group; Cindy Krum, Krum Steele Consulting; Melanie MacLean, Department of Fisheries and Oceans; Becca Newhall, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Matt Nixon, Maine Coastal Program; Bettina Saier, World Wildlife Fund Canada; and Michele L. Tremblay, naturesource communications.

Others present via conference call

Slade Moore, Maine Coastal Program and contractor, GOMC Habitat Restoration Partnership; and Prassede Vella, MA Office of Coastal Zone Management.

Introductions

Theresa Torrent-Ellis called the meeting to order and the participants introduced themselves. Jackie Olsen will be accepting the 2011 Environment Canada People Management Award on Wednesday of this week. Last month, Tim Hall accepted the National Managers Community Leadership Award in Toronto.

Consent Agenda

The consent agenda was accepted.

Decision: The Working Group accepted the consent agenda.

Action Agenda

GOMC Communication Strategy

Peter Alexander, Talking Conservation presented the *Communication Planning for the Gulf of Maine Council* strategy on behalf of the Council's Outreach Committee. The strategy contains

- Communication goals,
- Revises the current publication policy and protocol to include audience definition,
- Communication guidelines,
- New fact sheet,
- Talking points, and
- Implementation plan for communications strategy (not yet written).

Melanie MacLean presented the postcard and banners (one is in the US and one is in Canada) that Department of Fisheries and Oceans developed with the GOMC Outreach Committee. Points raised during the discussion include using these new tools to orient new Councillors or to bring to meetings to provide exposure for the Gulf of Maine Council. There should be a prominent place for these materials on www.GulfofMaine.org. Funding for communications and to support the production of materials should be included in all funding proposals.

The US Department of Interior is not satisfied with the current GOMC communications productions so it cannot release funding. The new contract between the US Gulf of Maine Association and the US Department of Interior will address these issues. Relative to distribution, the new green media tool can sort contacts by jurisdiction but there is a need for provinces, states, and other agencies to be provided with the information that they need to distribute through their own outlets media releases and other information.

The small group responsible for developing the Council's communication strategy is composed of [first] Debbie Buott-Matheson [and subsequently] Terri Green, both of Environment Canada, and Theresa Torrent-Ellis with additional participation from Catherine Schmitt, Maine Sea Grant. The Working Group feels that those involved with

this effort should be expanded beyond the small group (above) to utilize fully the resources that the Council has at its disposal and to broaden the perspectives for the strategy. There is also a concern that the Outreach Committee does not fully represent all of the provinces, states, and other GOMC agencies and that the membership should be reviewed and expanded. The Canadian Steering Committee has three candidates for the Outreach Committee and committed to providing full Canadian jurisdictional and federal agency participation and in-kind services. A concern was raised that this would require committed staff time and facilities and that they would need to be coordinated. This may be addressed by the funding in all proposals that should be dedicated to communication. The specific plan to measure accomplishments must be included in the outreach component of all proposals or they will likely not be funded. Some felt that before the Working Group could recommend that the Council accept and adopt the communication strategy, additional detail for implementation, including three- to-twelve-month specific details, must be specified. Some felt that the Council should simply be alerted to the strategy's status so that they are aware of the document's development and will be more receptive to accepting it at the December 2011 meeting. Additional detail should include what costs and other resources are needed to implement the approaches outlined. Tangible outcomes would stem partly from the plan implementation and partly from the Council's committees' and subcommittees' work. The document may be acceptable as a strategy but more detail is needed for it to be a plan. The *Gulf of Maine Times* offers an immediate opportunity for specifics, details, and implementation and should be included in the strategy. Further information is available in the meeting briefing note posted at http://www.gulfofmaine.org/council/internal/docs/gomc_wg_june_2011.pdf. The PowerPoint presentation is posted at <http://www.gulfofmaine.org/council/internal/presentations/201106/>.

Decision: The Working Group accepted the *Communication Planning for the Gulf of Maine Council* strategy including the revised publication policy and protocol.

Action: The Working Group will recommend that the Council accept the *Communication Planning for the Gulf of Maine Council* strategy including the revised publication policy and protocol and that the Council direct the Outreach Committee to implement and oversee the communication strategy.

www.GulfofMaine.org-what you need and where you can find it

Jennifer Hackett, Canadian Co-chair, Information Management Committee and contractor Jim Cradock, Yellahoose presented snapshots of the Council's website, which is the primary tool for the Council's internal and external communications. Jennifer is currently serving as the Canadian (and "sole co-chair") of the Information Management Committee. A United States co-chair is needed. The purpose of the presentation is to assure that Working Group members are conversant with the website and how to find information that is posted there. Additionally, the Working Group is asked to provide input to assure that the information that they need is online. Jennifer presented statistics of the Council's recent website "hits" including the top five pages

5. State of the Gulf of Maine with 5,788 hits,
 4. *Gulf of Maine Times* with 9,889,
 3. Splash or home page with 10,634,
 2. Knowledgebase with 21,259,
 1. EcoSystem Indicator Partnership with 248,553, and
- Honorable mention to the Council's meeting page in tenth place with 1,840 hits.

Issues raised and suggestions made include

- www.gulfofmaine.org homepage cosmetic updates to improve user's first impression and find-ability of components with recommendations to specifically improve
 - a. left side bar to reduce the length of "In the Spotlight" features
 - b. right side bar "Highlights" to see "Current News"
 - c. homepage webpage body to consolidate and improve consistency of applications/data/portal products
- URL "breadcrumb" review to ensure consistency with current Web Content standards.
- There is some concern that the splash or index page is too long and requires too much scrolling to reach the bottom
- Improve use-ability for Media, e. g. include RSS feed for Media sidebar link, Media Room could be on its own page vs. at the bottom of the publications page
- The Gulf of Maine Summit link does not work—should this information exist on the Council's site?
- The "Contact us" page should provide the current Secretariat as is the case on other pages
- Improve two-way links between GOMC pages and *Gulf of Maine Times* pages, e. g. the *Gulf of Maine Times* pages do not include the navigation bars that are present on other Council pages
- The *Gulf of Maine Times* and Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment Facebook page can be viewed by registered users and visitors alike
- Add explicit links/clicks to applications and data
- The ESIP convened a workshop and published a usability study on what was monitored and indicators in the Gulf of Maine but the maps couldn't easily be distinguished.



The Working Group noted that there is a lot of content and information on the Council's website so a simplified or shorter entry or splash page would require more "mining" or "drilling" to find information. The alternative is to have a longer or larger splash page but to freshen the website visually with rotating images or other regularly updated graphic information. Grouping information by audiences such as academia, government, students would be helpful to website visitors. The revision effort should be conducted in conjunction with the *Communication Planning for the Gulf of Maine Council* strategy implementation. The website navigation "spotlight" elements could be simplified as one immediate deliverable. http://www.gulfofmaine.org/council/internal/docs/gomc_wg_june_2011.pdf. The PowerPoint presentation is posted at <http://www.gulfofmaine.org/council/internal/presentations/201106/>.

Action: The Information Management Committee will develop a budget for revisions should be developed and implemented in the current or future core services contracts.

Action: The Information Management Committee will work with the Outreach Committee on the revision to assure consistency with the *Communication Planning for the Gulf of Maine Council* strategy.

Action: The following items will be added to a future Working Group agenda for a decision after further discussion, led by the Information Management Committee: 1) Integrating Social Media opportunities for specific outcome purposes, 2) Addition of more images to enhance pivotal pages, and 3) Determining the relationship of and any duplication between Committees and Projects links.

GOMC 2007-2012 Accomplishments Summary

Matt Nixon, Maine Coastal Program presented the resources that he identified. He requested that Working Group members provide information on any missing resources because he has only been working with the Council for one year. The challenge is being able to tell the story of tangible outcomes (such as improved water quality) vs. simple outputs (such as the number of water quality sites where data were collected). These metrics are difficult to determine in the short term and come with a relatively high cost for long-term analysis. The Council has endeavored to follow the Eastern Research Group (a consultant contracted by the Council for logic model work) recommendations but the cost is high for this level of analysis. It would be useful to analyze how each of those recommendations has been implemented. The NOAA Coastal Services Center has a new course to help users tailor metrics and measures. Working Group members requested that these accomplishments be linked to the current Action Plan's numbered activities such as 1.1 or 3.2. This linkage would be useful for the Councilors to see the progress on Action Plan initiatives. Canadian participants have provided a model for alignment of each agency's mandate relative to the Council's Action Plan. The Council should have access to one alignment document for both Canadian and United States agencies for easy reference and updating. The Council's once has an online tool called SAM (Supporting Activities Matrix) that may be a worthy model to re-visit as an alignment and tracking tool. The following suggestions were made for additional accomplishments to be listed in the draft working document

- The State of the Gulf of Maine should be added to the accomplishments summary
- The Action Plan and Habitat Restoration Partnership Grants program as well as other financial assistance (note that an US Environmental Protection Agency intern provided a full analysis about the outcomes and outputs for the last round of Action Plan Grant Program projects)
- Habitat Classification Workshop and consensus document produced by the Habitat Conservation Subcommittee
- Reported successes and other results from the Habitat Restoration Partnership grants
- The eel grass report should be linked to Habitat Restoration Subcommittee not the Habitat Conservation Subcommittee
- For the ESIP, it should read "indicator reporting tool implemented" (not just "tool")
- The Gulfwatch Contaminant Monitoring Subcommittee and the ESIP can produce lists of presentations that it has made in the last five years along with numbers of peer reviews.
- Media and other online hits should be tracked for Council publication in media outlets and citations and other links to Council products and resources
- Website hits and other outreach statistics could be included
- A statement that reflects the actual contaminant and other environmental conditions may be useful as an outcome of the Council's work

Further information is available in the meeting briefing note posted at http://www.gulfofmaine.org/council/internal/docs/gomc_wg_june_2011.pdf. Additional documents are posted at <http://www.gulfofmaine.org/council/internal/presentations/201106/>.

Action: Betsy Nicholson will provide information to the Working Group on the Coastal Services Center's new metrics and measures training course for GOMC committee and subcommittee co-chairs.

Action: Working Group members will provide to Matt Nixon their additions and corrections to the *Accomplishments Summary*.

Action Plan Alignment with Agency Priorities

Theresa Torrent-Ellis and David Keeley, The Keeley Group, using a handout provided at the meeting, asked the Working Group members to work as agency groups to rate the priorities based on those of their agencies and

determine if the activities are appropriate implementation. The results of the morning priority exercise are as follows (only high and low priorities with percentage or respondents having that viewpoint are listed below), therefore, not all outcomes and activities are listed and rated. Since each agency collectively provided its input, the sample is relatively small so the ratings can be changed significantly by one response.

Desired five-year outcome	Activity	High	Low
Water quality protection			50%
Habitat Conservation		90%	
	Inform decision-makers and stakeholders on the uses and benefits of ecosystem-based management	50%	
	Manage Gulfwatch		70%
Ecosystem Health Indicators and Reporting		70%	
	Produce and disseminate ecosystem indicator products that are responsive to manager's needs	50%	
	Facilitate the exchange of innovative approaches used by CA/US regional adaptation initiatives (climate change)	70%	
Environmental and Resource Stewardship		60%	
	Engage partners and facilitate region-wide information exchanges, e.g. socio-economic evaluation, land-use planning, coastal and marine spatial planning, nonpoint source reduction, working waterfronts, community value criteria, local green economy initiatives	70%	
	Support region-wide information exchanges, e.g. sharing of energy policies, practices, technologies	60%	

Further information is available in the meeting briefing note posted at http://www.gulfofmaine.org/council/internal/docs/gomc_wg_june_2011.pdf. Additional draft documents are posted at <http://www.gulfofmaine.org/council/internal/presentations/201106/>.

Council Action Plan – Review of tasks that implement proposed activities

Theresa reviewed the Action Plan purpose and mission statement as well as the three goals 1) protect and restore habitat, 2) foster environmental and human health, and 3) support vibrant communities. The elements of outreach activities and information management services are embedded in these goals. The Working Group asked if the purpose of this work is to determine whether or not the goals or activities stay in the Plan or if it is to assure that there is nothing missing in the Plan. Some felt that not everything needs to be a high priority for all agencies to be included in the Action Plan. However, others felt that at some point there has to be a focus on critical mass of high priorities in the Council Plan that can link back to their respective agencies' work. Some priorities may be low but if there are opportunities such as funding, the activities may be implemented before some that are high priorities. The Working Group members broke out according to the three Action Plan goal areas with the assignments to

1. Review, refine, and add activities,
2. Identify audiences (including internal) so that Council activities can support agency initiatives and the priority for internal communications to foster this connection, and
3. Evaluate methods.

Habitat conservation was a strong focus for the Council but in the last few years has not. The Council may consider working with the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers to determine how the Council may better collaborate on an effort. There are several gaps in how coastal and marine spatial planning (CMSP) is incorporated in several efforts. The Council's ad-hoc committee is working on CMSP coordination. The CMSP approach or implementation is not strictly a Council initiative because it is being managed in jurisdictions and through federal agencies. However, guidance from individual GOMC committees and subcommittees can make the connections on how the CMSP integrates with the Council's work. The Council's Action Plan activities are where the Council's CMSP support activities will be integrated. Coastal and marine spatial planning connects the Council's goals and provides approaches to its activities.

The three breakout groups' revisions and recommendations will be incorporated into the next draft of the Action Plan working document.

Further information is available in the meeting briefing note posted at http://www.gulfofmaine.org/council/internal/docs/gomc_wg_june_2011.pdf. The draft document is posted at <http://www.gulfofmaine.org/council/internal/presentations/201106/>.

Action: The Maine Secretariat will incorporate the collective input from the three goal breakout groups into the next draft of the Action Plan working document.

The US Gulf of Maine Habitat Conservation and Restoration Plan

Ted Diers, NH Department of Environmental Services and Jackie Olsen, Environment Canada, with support from Peter Alexander presented an update on the progress to date. A needs assessment was conducted for conservation and restoration efforts in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine agencies. The compilation report demonstrated that \$3 billion would be needed to implement activities in the first five years. A strong case has been made for the Gulf of Maine in Washington, DC Capitol Hill with negotiations resulting in legislation to create the New England Coastal Program Office. United States Congresswoman Pingree (D. ME) and Senator Collins (R. ME) are involved in the effort. This is not a Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment initiative. Similar efforts have yielded results in the Great Lakes, Chesapeake Bay, and Long Island Sound. Rhode Island's coastal plan has been revised and is included with a request for additional funds so the Conservation and Restoration Plan goes beyond the Gulf of Maine and has become a true New England initiative. The Long Island Sound study would not be usurped but there may be collaboration between the efforts. If the creation of the New England Coastal Program Office is discussed at the Council level, federal members would not be able to participate in the discussions or decisions.

Pat Hinch has produced a compilation or inventory of compatible or similar interests in Canada. The report could be updated with new information. This is a complementary effort which would align with the Council's Action Plan priorities.

Further information is available in the meeting briefing note posted at http://www.gulfofmaine.org/council/internal/docs/gomc_wg_june_2011.pdf.

Action: The New England Coastal Program Office status (informational only) will be made available at the June 2011 Council meeting.

Exploring ways to enhance regional collaboration

David Keeley provided a history of collaboration in the Gulf of Maine. A former Councillor expressed concern that there were too many organizations that were perceived of as overlapping or redundant, with many of the same professionals attending multiple meetings. Several years ago, a facilitated session was convened in Dartmouth, NS and a report produced that outlined the groups, their missions, and their potential intersections and overlapping work. Since then, additional groups and organizations have formed in the Gulf of Maine region so it may be time to review the changes and how existing groups have been interacting. The objective would be to enhance and maximize the groups' communication, cooperation, and collaboration. Ru Morrison, Gulf of Maine Councillor, participated in recent discussions. The Canadian Association has had similar discussions. Options include additional memoranda of agreement, blending organizations' committees, or full organizational mergers. The idea of a "blue-ribbon commission" (heretofore referred to as "ad-hoc group") was raised. The ad-hoc group would examine the groups that exist and how their work intersects and overlaps. During the process, gaps may be identified with those gaps representing opportunities. The ad-hoc group would provide a suite of options or recommendations. Bruce Smith, a consultant conducted a study (on behalf of the Council, paid for by Department of Fisheries and Oceans) on groups and their missions and activities. The first step would be for the Northeastern Regional Association of Coastal Ocean Observing Systems, Northeast Regional Ocean Commission, and Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment to designate individuals to meet to discuss options. The Regional Committee on Oceans Management, Atlantic Climate Adaptation Solutions Association (administers the Regional Adaptation Collaboration or RAC), and Bay of Fundy Ecosystem Partnership could be included in the next step of the process. The reasons to move forward with this effort should be articulated as questions including how to avoid duplication maximize work and scarce resources, and what is the next step in the process such as identifying duplication of effort and programmatic gaps. New ideas are needed to frame this process as an opportunity vs. re-visiting older issues. There is a concern that there are issues that are complicated and cause concern with many groups relative to full mergers. The Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment volunteers must represent the Council (not the agency or organization of their "day job"). Further information is available in the meeting briefing note posted at http://www.gulfofmaine.org/council/internal/docs/gomc_wg_june_2011.pdf.

Action: The first step of the enhancing regional collaboration would be for Northeastern Regional Association of Coastal Ocean Observing Systems, Northeast Regional Ocean Commission, and Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment to each identify three to four designees. The volunteers should include a Canadian federal agency, US Federal agency, one NGO, and two provincial agencies to participate on a commission. Questions should be framed and answered vs. asking the commission for recommendations. A paid or donated professional should be identified and secured to facilitate the effort. The Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment designee nominations are Tim Hall (with Jackie Olsen as an alternate), Russ Henry, Justin Huston, Don Hudson (Priscilla Brooks will be tapped if Don is unable to participate), and Betsy Nicholson.

Action: The ME State Planning Office will be the lead on implementing the enhancing regional collaboration recommendations (as outlined in the briefing note through October 2011) and provide a facilitator.



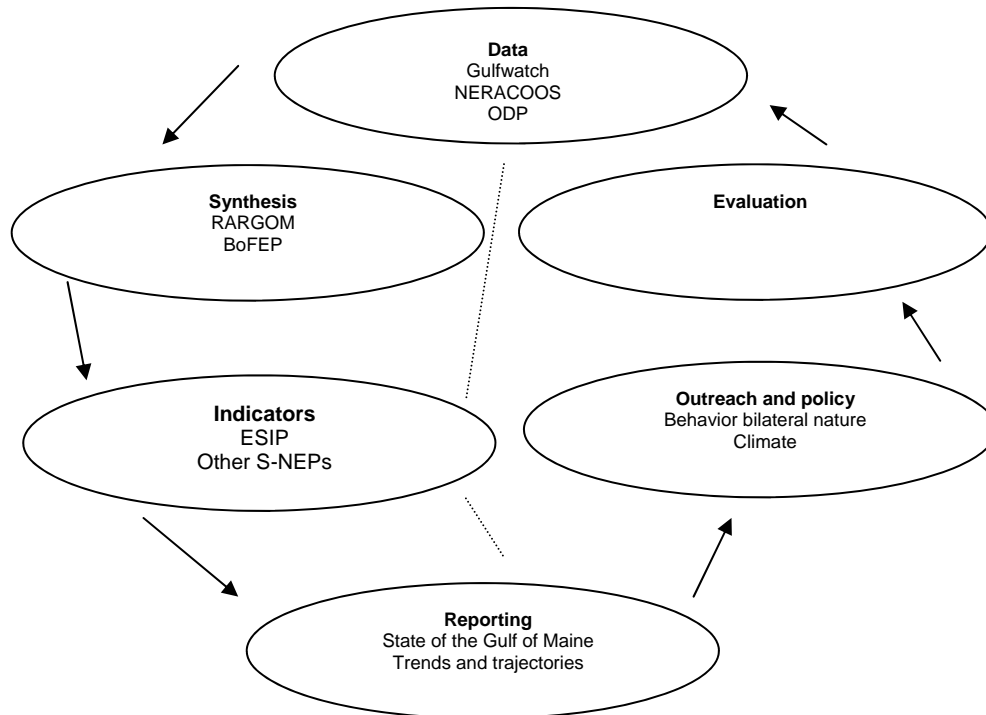
FY 2012 budget review

Cindy Krum, US Gulf of Maine Association (USGOMA) presented the financial report beginning with the summary sheet and provisional budget. A new climate change two-year grant of \$285,000 has been awarded by NOAA that is not included in the budget. This grant will result in additional indirect funds. This is the second year that we have included unconfirmed funding sources in the provisional budget such as MA (likely) and NH (uncertain, may be in the form of contracts for services) dues. This year's Habitat Restoration Partnership Grants program spent less because fewer grants were completed than originally anticipated. The largest change is Council Coordination and Fund Development as a part of Core Services has been cut 13%. Because Management and Finance (MandF) decided that information management could not be cut and the *Gulf of Maine Times* funding is dependent on income specifically for this program, only the Council Coordination and Fund Development portion of core services has been reduced. The US Gulf of Maine Association administration has been cut by 12%. There is an increase in the *Gulf of Maine Times* to produce three issues. The EcoSystem Indicator Partnership is a seven-month contract. New NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service IV (year two) habitat restoration partnership grant program funding is confirmed at \$400,000. A condition of the grant is the USGOMA providing match partially by dues of \$7,500 per year over four years. The fiscal agent administrative fee shown in the income section of the budget is the estimated income from charging a 10% administrative rate fee to act as a fiscal agent for Regional Association for Research on the Gulf of Maine (RARGOM). The \$1,750 administrative fee for RARGOM is based on the recommendation to charge half the indirect rate that is then rounded up or down to the nearest whole number. Acting as fiscal agent for RARGOM or other agencies such as Northeast Regional Ocean Council (NROC) could help the organization because the more money that is managed through the USGOMA, the lower the indirect rate percentage. The USGOMA has spent less than \$500,000 in the last year so a United States A-133 audit is not required so there would not be a basis for the "look-back" method of determining a new indirect rate. Management and Finance has been making decisions about how funds are allocated and plans to adjust budgets that are presented to the Council if additional funds are received. The budget is on the Council's consent agenda. Rob indicated that the NB Department of Environment has a team including Martin Boulerice and two additional staff working on logistics. The ME State Planning Office will continue to provide staff to the New Brunswick Secretariat. The reserve account balance must be maintained between \$120,000 and \$100,000. Out of the reserve account, \$2,569 is allocated to the USGOMA for its operations. Gulfwatch funding through Environment Canada is not certain. Environment Canada has allocated \$15,000 for core services but is not certain about the fund availability due to the political environment. Innovations such as the bus (to transport US meeting participants to Saint John, NB in March 2011) provided by US Geological Survey as well as selecting lower cost meeting venues and locations that are located near airports is important. The September 2011 meeting is problematic for US federal agencies given their fiscal year close and budget cycle.

Decision: The Working Group recommends the Council accept the draft budget and task Management and Finance with making adjustments as financial conditions change.

Gulf of Maine Council Action Plan 2012-2017 (continued)

Matt Nixon revised the Action Plan working document with input from the breakout sessions and additional information provided by committee and subcommittee co-chairs and project leads. Theresa Torrent-Ellis led the discussion to review the breakout groups input and next steps. During the discussions about Goal 1, there was concern expressed that there were three habitat "committees." There are actually four habitat subcommittees, Conservation, Habitat, Monitoring, and the Gulf of Maine Mapping Initiative with an overarching Habitat Committee comprised of the co-chairs of each of its subcommittees. Jackie Olsen and Ted Diers have engaged interim co-chairs where leadership is needed to re-invigorate the Council's committees and subcommittees. There is a concern that the current budget may not be adequate to support the activities that are proposed in the Action Plan, including committee and subcommittee implementation of the Council's objectives. A crosswalk may be required to assure that the budget conforms with the Action Plan goals, objectives, and activities. The Council should be able to quantify the support, match, and in-kind resources to implement the Council's objectives. During the discussions on Goal 2, the model of Data (Gulfwatch), Synthesis, Indicators (ESIP), Reporting (State of the Gulf of Maine), Outreach and policy, and Evaluation that the Council conduct is unique and accomplishes what no other regional organization is currently doing. This model was presented as a circular diagram (see below) with additional connections and will be incorporated into the Action Plan. It can be used as a sort of logic model to reformulate the Action Plan, strategy, that constitutes an ecosystem based management approach. Thresholds may need to be incorporated in the diagram, possibly in the "Reporting" oval but it is challenging because each jurisdiction has its own. However, trends or trajectories can be identified where there are common indicators.



During the discussions about Goal 3, the Working Group review and revision of the Action Plan working document illustrated that the many important activities within the three goals of the current Action Plan did not have adequate funds allocated to implement them. Stewardship is the primary theme of this Goal. “Sustainable communities” should be interpreted as “human communities” (not be explicitly worded as such in the Goal statement).

The Working Group discussed several of its original purpose statements including “from the land to the sea.” Using the watershed map vs. the coastal-only graphic image can help with getting across the watershed message. The Working Group acknowledges that while there is recognition of the importance of the entire Gulf of Maine watershed, the Council’s focus is the coastal environment.

The renewable energy watch list item was revised to include additional examples of outputs and activities including research status papers or updates at meeting presentations. Marine mining and extended continental shelf activities were added to the issues watch. The State of the Gulf of Maine emerging issues paper can serve as guidance for the Action Plan watch list. The watch list may have been meant as a “parking lot” during the Action Plan process but the “evergreen” (dynamic) emerging issues paper should encompass them and doesn’t need to be in the Plan anymore. There may be merit to retaining it for quarterly revisits or check-ins by the Council. This may be a method of keeping track of the topics. This could be a standing agenda item for emerging issues.

Next steps for the process include recommending that the Council accept the Action Plan schedule and agree on the audiences and partners to whom the Action Plan will be distributed for comment and release. The Action Plan will be made available electronic only as a suite of webpages (not a PDF). Peter Taylor, Waterview Communications has been contracted by the ME State Planning Office to produce the Action Plan. Peter Alexander, Talking Conservation has been contracted by the ME State Planning Office to provide services for the communications strategy and Action Plan communications services.

The ME Secretariat revised the Action Plan working document with the Working Group’s input. http://www.gulfofmaine.org/council/internal/docs/gomc_wg_june_2011.pdf. The draft document is posted at <http://www.gulfofmaine.org/council/internal/presentations/201106/>.

Action: The next Working Group meeting agenda will include a discussion of how to coordinate the four habitat subcommittees through the overarching Habitat Committee or consider other models.

Action: The Working Group will consider conducting a crosswalk to assure that the Council’s budget supports and implements its Action Plan.

Action: Working Group and Council agendas will carry a standing item for updates on emerging issues, drawing from the Council’s Action Plan watch list and the State of the Gulf of Maine emerging issues paper.

Note: Where available, PowerPoint presentations, referenced handouts, and revised documents can be found at <http://www.gulfofmaine.org/council/internal/presentations/201106/>.

Summary prepared by Michele L. Tremblay, natresource communications

Habitat Restoration Subcommittee

Recent Activities

1. GOMC-NOAA Habitat Restoration Grant Partnership Coordination

The Partnership's primary focus is to build widespread, community-based capacity for restoration of habitats supporting NOAA Trust Resources. This is accomplished by providing restoration grants, project development and management expertise, technical restoration services, and internal capacity to administer and coordinate the Partnership. Partnership members engage in monthly (at least) conference calls on the first Tuesday (1:00-2:30 pm EST) of each month to discuss management and progress of subaward projects, new project development, administrative procedures, and issues of relevance to restoration in the GOM. The Partnership's efforts are supported by NOAA Restoration Center staff (John Catena, Matt Bernier, Mat Collins, Eric Hutchins, and Jack Terrell), the U.S. Gulf of Maine Association (Cindy Krum, Lori Hallett) and Jurisdictional Leads and Technical Leads from each of the state/provincial jurisdictions. The Partnership's Jurisdictional Representatives are:

- Canada: Anita Hamilton – GOMC Habitat Restoration Subcommittee Co-Chair, Habitat Assessment Biologist, Department of Fisheries and Oceans
- Massachusetts: Hunt Durey – Acting Deputy Director, Division of Ecological Restoration, Massachusetts Department of Fish & Game
- Maine: Slade Moore – Habitat Restoration Coordinator, Maine Coastal Program
- New Hampshire: Ted Diers – Director, New Hampshire Coastal Program

2. Selection of 2011 RFP Restoration Projects

Nine new projects totaling \$414,533 (Table 1) were selected for funding as a result of the GOMC-NOAA Habitat Restoration Partnership's 2011 RFP. Each of these projects will provide non-federal matching contributions to their GOMC awards at a 1:1 ratio by applying cash, in-kind services, or some combination of both.

Proj. #	State/ Prov	Project name	Organization	Award (\$)
11-01	NS	Clementsport Dam Removal and Restoration	Clean Annapolis River Project	70,000
11-02	ME	Shoreys Brook Dam Removal and Stream Restoration	Great Works Regional Land Trust	50,000
11-03	MA	Tidmarsh Farms / Beaver Dam Brook Restoration - Design and Permitting	Mass Dept of Fish and Game, Division of Ecological Restoration	80,000
11-04	MA	Forge Pond Dam Fish Passage Feasibility Analysis and Preliminary Design	Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries	51,701
11-05	ME	Mill Street Dam Feasibility Study	Atlantic Salmon Federation	32,832
11-06	ME	Kennebec Barrier Survey, Phase II	Kennebec Estuary Land Trust	23,000
11-07	ME	Hawks' Mill Dam Fish Passage Feasibility Study	Atlantic Salmon Federation	23,000
11-08	ME	Muscongus Brook Culvert Replacement: Construction	Kennebec County Soil & Water Conservation District (KCSWCD)	44,000
11-09	MA	Curtis Pond Dam Removal Construction	Town of Danvers	40,000
				414,533

3. Administration/Oversight of Ongoing Habitat Restoration Projects

Since its inception in 2002, the GOMC-NOAA Habitat Restoration Partnership has completed 86 projects and currently has an additional 18 projects underway and under contracting (Figure 1). Total awards are \$3.4 million, which are expended across all jurisdictions of the Gulf. The allocation of project awards among jurisdictions is a consequence of several factors; not least among them are impacted habitat amounts (i.e. need) and/or capacity to

mobilize community-based projects and competitive proposals within each jurisdiction. Most projects have “on the ground”, physical restoration as their aim (Figure 2). Together, these projects have rehabilitated salt marshes, intertidal and subtidal communities, and riparian and riverine environments (Table 1). Much of the Partnership’s work has focused on re-establishing passage for diadromous fish species (e.g. river herring, Atlantic salmon, American eel, etc...), and resident aquatic organisms (Table 2).

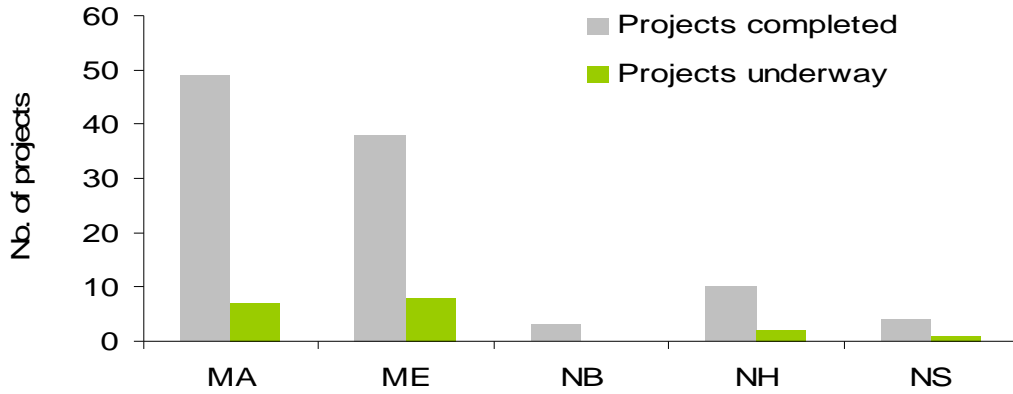


Figure 1. GOMC-NOAA restoration projects by jurisdiction and activity, 2002-2011.

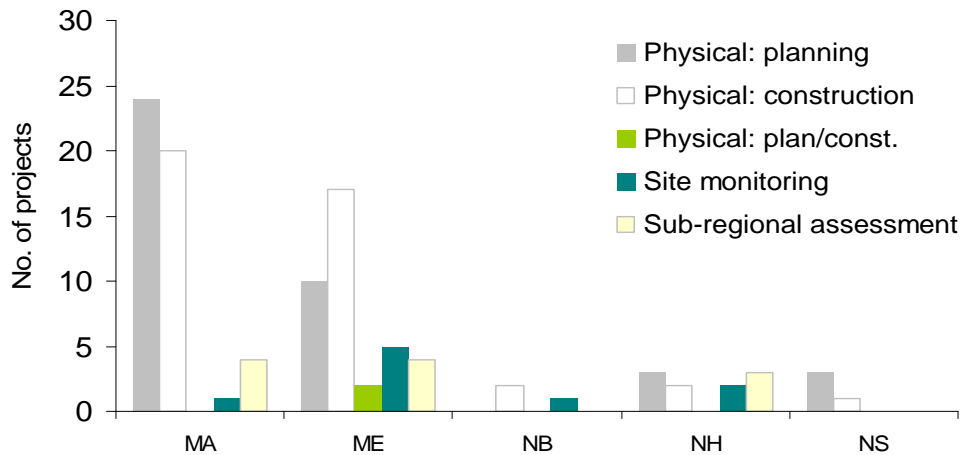


Figure 2. GOMC-NOAA Restoration projects, by type and jurisdiction, 2002-2011.



Table 1. Performance of GOMC-NOAA physical habitat improvement projects by jurisdiction, 2002 - September 2011. Actual and projected amounts for only completed projects are provided.

State / Prov.	Physical habitat improvements									
	Subtidal acres (non-stream)		Intertidal acres (non-veg)		Intertidal acres (salt marsh)		Channel/riparian acres		Channel/riparian miles	
	Actual	Proj	Actual	Proj	Actual	Proj	Actual	Proj	Actual	Proj
MA	8.0	8.0	1.0	1.0	249.8	263.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
ME	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	281.0	281.0	7.0	7.0	0.0	0.0
NB	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	36.0	36.0	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.6
NH	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.3
NS	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	74.0	74.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	8.1	8.1	1.0	1.0	640.8	654.9	7.7	7.7	0.9	0.9

Table 2. Performance of GOMC-NOAA projects for re-establishing diadromous fish access, by jurisdiction, 2002 - September 2011. Actual and projected amounts for only completed projects are provided. Potential stream miles include tributary streams that may be blocked by road-stream crossings or natural barriers.

State/ Prov.	Diadromous fish access re-established							
	Stream miles (verified)		Stream miles (potential)		Stream acres		Lake/pond acres	
	Actual	Proj	Actual	Proj	Actual	Proj	Actual	Proj
MA	2	2	0	0	0	0	21	21
ME	62	69	106	106	0	0	2,570	2,570
NB	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NH	14	14	5	5	0	0	0	0
NS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	78.3	85.2	111.0	111.0	0.2	0.2	2,590.9	2,590.9

GOMC-NOAA Partnership support is provided to restoration projects via a team approach. A Jurisdictional Representative and (in Massachusetts) Technical Leads provide technical and administrative oversight for each project. NOAA staff, the Habitat Restoration Coordinator, and USGOMA provide additional, cross-jurisdictional administrative support to grant recipients.

4. Support of the GOMC action planning process

Participation in the Action Planning process continues through involvement of the Canadian Co-Chair and the Habitat Restoration Coordinator.

Anticipated Activities

1. Continue GOMC-NOAA Habitat Restoration Partnership coordination
Contingent upon continued availability of funding, developing and administering new Partnership subaward projects will remain a primary focus of the Habitat Restoration Sub-committee.
2. Develop and release the 2012 habitat restoration RFP
This fall a new RFP round will be announced. A press release, revision of the current RFP, activation/testing of the online grant application system, and review of Letters of Intent will comprise initial activities associated with the new grant round.



3. Support GOMC Action Plan development
The Partnership will continue to support HRSC-focused Action Planning activities. The Habitat Restoration Coordinator is working with the GOMC-NOAA Partnership to develop materials that will highlight restoration achievements over the 2007-2012 period.
4. The Habitat Restoration Coordinator (HRC) will increase Maine's restoration capacity and coordination by continuing the work of the Maine Interagency Stream Connectivity Work Group
The HRC and Work Group participants have several key initiatives under way and planned, including development of:
 - o pilot projects to infuse technical and funding support into high priority barrier removal projects on municipal and timberlands
 - o statewide prioritization approach for sequencing barrier removals on streams
 - o a Maine stream connectivity web interface
 - o outreach to raise awareness of principles for building ecologically functional stream crossings
 - o training for dam removal project managers
 - o development of a statewide aquatic conservation strategy

For more information about the HRSC's work, contact Slade Moore at 207-837-3805 or slade.moore@maine.gov



Sustainable Industries and Communities Committee: rejuvenation and development of a work plan

Background

The Sustainable Industries and Communities Committee (SICC) has been inactive for some time. The Committee has recently been rejuvenated with a call for interested participants. There are currently representatives from the five jurisdictions, as well as federal and non-government partners.

The Committee met in a conference call on Sept. 1, 2011. The purpose of the call was to discuss the role of the Committee under the new Action Plan (2012-2017) and to brainstorm for activities the Committees could undertake to make a doable contribution towards the outcomes of the Plan.

Possible activities and next steps

The Committee is developing a list of possible future activities, leading to a concrete Work Plan. The Committee also recognizes its obligations to continue the work done previously, especially with respect to the awards for Industry and Sustainable Communities. Areas of possible interest include:

- Education/information on adaptation of communities and industries to climate change
 1. information materials for residents/industries at risk
 2. use of Gulf of Maine Times for a series of articles on climate change adaptation
- Assessment of vulnerability of industry/resource users
- Use of the Action Plan Survey results to identify 'audience' for any materials produced
- Engagement of industry and resource users

Action or outcomes requested

1. The Committee is making a general call for participants, particularly those who have specific industry or community interests.

Submitted by Jane Tims and Theresa Torrent-Ellis, Co-chairs, Sustainable Industries and Communities Committee

Joint CA/US Association of Delegates to the GOMC on the Marine Environment

Working together to provide nonprofit governance

Background

The action item for this initiative that was recorded in the June 15, 2011 GOMC Meeting Summary was:

“The combined governance ad-hoc group will implement its recommendations and next steps with a presentation of recommendations and an implementation plan at the December 2011 Council meeting.”

Following are the recommendations and next steps referenced in the Council’s action item above:

Recommendations:

- Establish one association with joint membership to maximize efficiency and collaboration, while maintaining two associations for legal and financial reasons.
- Task the “ad-hoc group” to create a plan for establishing joint association membership, including securing necessary in-kind support/funding to undertake this work.

Next Steps:

- Ad-hoc Committee (listed at the end of this document) secures capacity/support to undertake planning.
- Ad-hoc group to present options on the structure, membership and role of the joint CA-US association at the September WG meeting.
- Final recommendations and implementation plan presented at the December Council meeting.

Report on Progress

Since the June, 2011 Council meeting the ad-hoc group has convened once. They addressed the next steps listed above in the following manner:

1. Ad-hoc group members committed to providing in-kind support to aid in preparing a document on the structure, membership and role of the joint CA-US association for the December Council meeting.
2. The GOMC Management and Finance committee is currently reviewing funding for contract support by the Association of US Delegates to the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment (US Association) Executive Director.
3. The ad-hoc group decided that the first priority was to determine a complete list of questions and coordinate legal reviews for both the Association of Canadian Delegates to the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment (CA Association) and the US Association. The Maine State Planning Office has offered up to \$2,000 to cover costs of the US Association legal review. Canadian ad-hoc group members are checking into the availability of in-kind legal assistance for the CA Association.
4. The ad-hoc group is not prepared to present additional information on the structure, membership and role of the joint CA-US association at this September, 2011 Working Group meeting.
5. The group will continue to communicate via email and hold conference calls to develop a document on the structure, membership and role of the joint CA-US association for the December, 2011 Working Group and Council meetings.

Action or outcomes requested

None are requested at this time.

Submitted by the ad-hoc group - Don Hudson, US Association Board President, Jackie Olsen, Environment Canada, Rob Capozzi, New Brunswick Environment, Justin Huston, Nova Scotia Fisheries and Aquaculture, Ted Diers, New Hampshire Department of Environmental Service, Theresa Torrent-Ellis, Maine State Planning Office, Ru Morrison, NERACOOS (USGOMA Board member) with contractor support from Cynthia krum, US Association Executive Director

Developing the 2012-2017 Action Plan: Council, Working Group and Committee Input

Date	Request/Activity	AP Working Group
12/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GOMC – guidance to WG on assessing AP progress and initial framework for new Plan 	
3/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WG – review support for current Council activities; identify current & emerging jurisdictional priorities; determine process, objectives and scope for new Plan; 	
6/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WG - focus of Plan on Council vs. others; assess & report on results of previous 4-years; modified logic model; Plan update vs. “new” Plan; internal and external (partner) engagement process; identify jurisdictional priorities; etc.) GOMC – acts on WG recommendations; establish Plan priorities; 	
Fall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committees – co-chair interviews and committee members solicited about current activities, insights/lessons-learned, and 2012-2017 needs/priorities 	
10/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WG – create 20-year vision; consider committee recommendations; create Plan development schedule; resolve cross-cutting services; 	Action Plan Working Group formed by the GOMC and meets nine times to guide development of the Plan
12/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WG – establish priorities by goal area; winnowing criteria; logic model; discuss rationale for participation; finalize 20-year vision; cross-cutting and emerging issues; items in Watch List; etc.) GOMC acts on WG recommendations 	
3/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WG – develop communication materials; vision & mission statements; desired activities and outcomes; foster committee engagement; recommend internal and external-partner review process; 	
6/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WG - alignment with agency priorities; proposed outcomes and activities; Watch List contents; partner consultation process; AP development and production schedule; etc.) GOMC acts on WG recommendations 	
8/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GOMC, WG and Committees – receive 1st full draft of AP for comment Federal agencies commence work on Federal Resolution of support 	
9/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WG – review partner consultation results; finalize production schedule; comment on 2007-2012 accomplishments report; discuss December to March rollout strategy; commence discussions of implementation strategies; discuss December to March roll-out, etc. Secretariat communiqué informs GOMC, WG and Committees of progress 	
10/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GOMC, WG and Committees – receive 2nd full draft of AP for comment & final sign-off 	

Production Schedule:

Internal Action Plan comment period closes October 15th; Secure NB Premier Preface for Plan & Federal Resolution of Support October 30th; Produce final Plan November 15th & commence work on Action Plan web page; Complete and upload new AP web page to Council web site (e.g., new Plan, AP “At a Glance”, 2007-2011 Accomplishments summary, AP talking points/elevator speech, etc.) December 1st;

Action Plan Release and Communications:

Release 2012-2017 AP in New Brunswick & in each jurisdiction December 8th – 15;

Submitted by David Keeley

Recommendations to improve our ability to connect with constituents: Accessing jurisdictional contact databases

Background

For the roll-out and implementation of the Council's 2011 Communications Plan and the 2012-2017 Action Plan to be successful, the Council must be able to reach and engage prospective partners and inform people/organizations of our progress. Currently the Council has three primary tools to contact its constituents when it wants to notify and engage people: the Gulf of Maine Times, PeopleFinder, and the Non-government Directory. They are fundamental to effective Council communication.

Currently there are 670 entries in the NGO Directory. A quick review of each entry in the NGO Directory reveals the fields are incomplete and in some instances the information is over 10-years old. At present this tool is inadequate (at best) and inaccurate (at worst). In short, relying on this tool provides the Council with a false sense of security when it uses the Directory to connect with its constituents and partners.

Possible Activities and Next Steps

Option A: Update current data/entries

Examples of tasks to be performed include: reviewing current entries, conducting web research to glean new/accurate data when available, making phone calls, sharing applicable data with each jurisdiction to confirm accuracy, asking current entries to update their information, paring back data fields to the bare minimum, etc.

Once the existing data is updated it is important to make the directory more complete – many important partners and interested parties are not currently in the Directory. Examples of tasks to be performed include: working with knowledgeable jurisdictional staff to identify priority organizations not contained in the Directory (and using information in their list-serves), conducting web research, collecting and entering new data, etc.

The final step is to make software and database modifications to the NGO Directory. Examples of tasks to be performed include: merge the NGO Directory with PeopleFinder (e.g., create a single address book); add vCard uploads; create the ability to link to RSS/XML feeds, LinkedIn, etc.; add the ability to upload a logo; create a "Share this feature"; etc.

The budget to conduct this work, whether it is cash or an in-kind donation of staff time, ranges from \$3,000 to \$10,000 depending on the scope of work. And this would need to be repeated on a 3-5 year cycle to have a reliable (accurate and complete) database. This approach may not be sustainable or cost-effective.

Option B: Rely on databases maintained by the jurisdictions

The state/provincial/federal agencies and non-profit organizations represented on the Council currently invest staff time (and funding) in maintaining constituent databases that are comparable in nature to the NGO Directory. The Council could create an administratively painless and secure method for the Council to access agency/organization databases when it needs to connect with its constituents.

The budget required for this option is minimal. Some IT tools to connect the Council with its members databases would need to be created at inception. Ongoing costs would be negligible.

Actions or outcomes requested

1. The Working Group understands the Council's need to have effective outreach tools and the implications of relying on old contact databases.
2. The agencies describe how often they conduct contact updates, who/types of organizations on their respective lists, the logistical hurdles of providing the Council access to them and the primary contact for the databases.
3. The Working Group crafts a recommendation to Council on how to proceed.

Submitted by the Action Plan Team



From a Five-year Action Plan to Annual Work Plans

Background: Every five years the Council creates a 5-year Action Plan. It then creates a template for annual (or 18-month) work plans and requests its committees to prepare work plans. In 2007-08 the Council produced an 80-page work plan that proved to be unwieldy to use and to keep current. As an alternative the Council created the web based tool TAPAS as a mechanism to describe and report on Council funded activities in a 1-2 page format. (Key sections include: program description, deliverables, secured funding, funding proposals, people involved, etc.) Currently there are thirteen categories/projects and the information is updated a few times a year.

Lessons-learned from previous efforts to develop and maintain work plans include:

- Committees with dedicated funding (e.g., a grant, a federal agency contribution for a specific task, etc.) place limited value in creating a work plan, following Council templates, for that task;
- Committees with no funding for work plan tasks find the process of creating a work plan frustrating/unfulfilling;
- To write competitive funding proposals a work plan is a key ingredient.
- The Council has not effectively used work plans as a core element of managing its portfolio and committees tell us they do not get adequate feedback.
- With tight budgets it has been difficult to provide funds for contractor time to aid in preparing and updating work plans/TAPAS

A few purposes of annual (or 18-month) work plans include:

- A work plan provides written documentation of what will be done (e.g., outputs/deliverables and outcomes/results), when the work will be performed and by whom, what the budget is and sources of funding.
- Councilors, Working Group members and others can monitor progress based on a written work plan, identify sources of partners and contributions, and assess progress.
- Work plans are an element of the logic model process and provide the basis of a periodic program evaluation.
- They contribute to the fund development process by providing the basis for funding proposals.

Possible activities and next steps

At the December 2011 meeting the Council should begin discussions of Action Plan implementation via a June 2012 – June 2014 work plan proposal. In September the WG needs to consider the format for a new work plan based on previous experiences in developing and maintaining work plans (e.g., engaging committees, TAPAS, etc.) and determine a way to produce the work plans without contractor support (i.e., currently contractor contracts do not have funds allocated to the development of work plans).

Action or outcome requested: Working Group members agree on process to update work plans without contractor support, the length/time-period for work plans and prepare preliminary recommendations to the Council for consideration at their December meeting. If contractor support is needed the Working Group will determine a method to include that in contracts.

Submitted by David Keeley

Action Plan Communications and Outreach (rollout)

Background

In its more than 20 year history the Gulf of Maine Council has learned the importance of integrating communications strategies into its work in order to keep key audiences informed and to highlight successes and benefits of projects undertaken by Council member and partner organizations. In implementing the 2012-2017 Action Plan the Council will maximize both internal and external awareness about the new plan and its projected benefits. The cornerstone activity for the rollout will be a December 7, 2011 media event at the New Brunswick Museum, 277 Douglas Avenue, Saint John, New Brunswick featuring Rob Capozzi and New Brunswick Environment Minister, Margaret-Ann Blaney. (see attached overview from Vicky Deschenes).

Possible activities and next steps

We plan to do additional media outreach in each jurisdiction, ranging from something as simple as a press release to a full-blown press conference where staff capacity exists. We will highlight past and anticipated success stories relevant to each jurisdiction, focusing on specific benefits to the environment and the economy wherever they can be quantified.

We will also make ongoing use of a number of media and communication vehicles:

- 1) Gulf of Maine Times—The Times will regularly feature the projects and successes of Council member and partner organizations.
- 2) Electronic Mail—the Council will update and expand its electronic mailing list of Agency and NGO partners with a goal of providing a monthly update about projects, programs, news and announcements important to Council constituents.
- 3) Website—as projects identified in the Action Plan are completed they will be featured in brief on the Gulf of Maine Council website with links to more in-depth articles in the GOM Times.
- 4) Leverage Member and Partner Communications Capacities—many Council member and partner organizations have substantial communications budgets, staff, and capacities. Wherever partner organizational priorities and actions are in alignment with Action Plan priorities, we will engage their communications capacity to raise awareness of programs and successes among key audiences.
- 5) Media outreach—in the past, many of the Council's activities and successes have gone unheralded. In order to raise awareness both internally and externally about the work of the Council and the many benefits it provides to its partners and to the ecosystem and economy of the region, the Council will routinely distribute press releases about program and project successes. These may be targeted to a particular political jurisdiction, or to regional, national, and international media outlets.

Actions or outcomes requested

- 1) Approve the approach proposed
- 2) Approve press release template
- 3) Alert communications people and other relevant colleagues about rollout plan (and put them in touch with Peter Alexander if they are not already connected).

Submitted by Peter Alexander, Theresa Torrent –Ellis and Vicky Deschenes

Official Launch

**Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment
Action Plan 2013-2017
New Brunswick Department of Environment
August 2011**

What:

New Brunswick Environment Minister, Margaret-Ann Blaney, with officials of the Gulf of Maine Council will proceed at the official launch of the 2013-2017 Action Plan of the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment.

Robert Capozzi, Chair of the Gulf of Maine Council Working Group and New Brunswick representative will act as MC during the ceremony. Refreshments and light snacks will be served.

Minister Blaney will make a short statement about the new action plan, which will be followed by a statement from (...) active member of the Council.

There will be a photo opportunity at the end of the ceremony for the media and the public.

The ceremony should be 30 minutes long.

When and Where:

On December 7, 2011 at 5h30 p.m. (Atlantic time) during a ceremony in the lobby of the New Brunswick Museum, 277 Douglas Avenue, Saint John, NB, E2K 1E7.

Logistic:

Communications New Brunswick will provide all the technical equipment for the launch: screen, laptop and projector, a podium and a sound system (if necessary). Appropriate flags and two pull-up banners of the Council will be installed near the podium

The podium will be set in the lobby of the Museum with a screen behind it on which will be projected the cover page of the 2013-2017 Action Plan.

Invitations to stakeholders and guests will be sent in November. Invitations will be prepared by the New Brunswick Department of Environment and sent by e-mail.

Communications:

The Communications Branch of the New Brunswick Department of Environment will write a news release, key messages and speaking points for Minister Blaney.

The Canadian and American media will be invited for the launch. Since the launch will be at supper time, it will make it difficult for some media to be present, the news release and the Action Plan will be distributed in advance to get as much media exposure as possible. Minister Blaney will give a series of radio interviews the next morning.

The new Action Plan will be posted online on the New Brunswick Department of Environment's website and the Gulf of Maine Council.

Contact:

Vicky Deschênes, Director of Communications, New Brunswick Department of Environment, (506) 457-7202,
Vicky.deschenes@gnb.ca



SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE (NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION!!!)

Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment [letterhead]

Contact: (state or provincial contact person)
(GOMC rep)

DATE

For Immediate Release

Massachusetts to See Big Environmental Improvements, Economic Benefits Under New Plan

[City, MA] Massachusetts is in line for some major environmental and economic benefits from a new Action Plan created by the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment. According to Slade Moore, Habitat Restoration Coordinator for the Maine Coastal Program—a program funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)—Massachusetts has already seen \$ millions in benefits since the Governors and Premiers in the region created the Gulf of Maine Council more than 20 years ago to improve communication, planning, and implementation of restoration plans for coastal ecosystems.

“[quoting one or two significant achievements in MA from the past]” said Moore. “Every five years we review the work of the Council and develop a new Action Plan. The new (2012-2017) Action Plan builds on the work of the past 20 years and focuses on three broad strategic goals: restore and conserve key ocean and coastal habitats, improve environmental and human health, and maintain economically-healthy working waterfront communities.” These goals will guide and support the development and implementation of a wide array of projects in Massachusetts, ranging from installing fish ladders on dams to monitoring for chemical contaminants throughout the region through the unique *GulfWatch* program.

“The Council plays a key role in the region,” said Robert Capozzi, of the New Brunswick Ministry of the Environment. “By fostering inter-jurisdictional and cross-disciplinary communication and planning the Council helps ensure more efficient use of tax-payer dollars, and helps ensure that the people and communities of both Canada and the US can enjoy healthy, vibrant coastal ecosystems and economies.”

More about the Gulf of Maine Council can be found at www.gulfofmaine.org



Expanding the Readership of the *Gulf of Maine Times*

Background

The *Times* remains an unbiased source of information about research and happenings in the Gulf of Maine/Bay of Fundy. It helps people understand, appreciate and preserve the region's diverse and complex watersheds and marine environments. It is currently produced three times/year and there are periodic updates between new editions. Over the past year 89,000 people relied on the *Times* (about 7500/month). They tell us they are involved in crafting legislation, creating policy, enforcing laws, educating students, conducting research, recreating and working along its shores. And they hail from all walks of life including industry, education, conservation, science, recreation, and health. Major themes addressed in the *Times* include fisheries and natural resource management; community programs, school curriculum and lecture series; science and research; and climate change. To extend the usefulness of the articles they are archived and key word searchable.

In 2009 the Council made the decision to produce solely an electronic version and we now send an email to over 3,000 "subscribers" each time a new edition has been uploaded. It costs \$15,000 per edition plus periodic e-zone updates for an editor, freelance writers, maintenance of the *Times* web site and project management. Our page of sponsors proudly displays the logo, a web link and brief narrative about the fourteen organizations.

Possible activities and next steps: This "roll up your sleeves" session will provide input and direction on:

1. How can the Council more effectively use the e-mailing lists of its member agencies to notify these people of the GOM Times and to increase dramatically the number of readers visiting the *GOM Times* web site?
2. How might we approach nonprofits and agencies outside of the GOM Council family to notify their readers/members about the *Gulf of Maine Times*?
3. How can we get more Council agencies (and others) to have a "hotlink/button" on their web site that connects their viewers to the *GOM Times* site?
4. Would it be reasonable to ask WG members to send 20 names of people/organizations in their jurisdictions to the editor?
5. Could WG and Committee members take sign-up sheets to coastal conferences and workshops that request people to provide their email address (so they can receive notices of when a new edition of the *Times* is available)? Standard postcards/notices could also be distributed at the registration desk.

Action or outcomes requested: Working Group provides guidance that will be implemented to expand the *Gulf of Maine Times* readership.

Submitted by David Keeley

Update: Working Group on Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning (CMSP) in the Gulf of Maine Bioregion

Background

In June 2011 the Gulf of Maine Council approved the permanent establishment of the CMSP Working Group. The core Working Group members are co-chairs Betsy Nicholson (NOAA) and Tim Hall (DFO), Jack Wiggan (UHI/UMB), Priscilla Brooks (CLF), Rob Stephenson (RARGOM/DFO), Shannon Dionne (NOAA), Scott Coffen-Smout (DFO) Glen Herbert (DFO), Bettina Saier (WWF Canada) and Matthew Nixon (State of Maine). Since the June Council meeting the CMSP WG has met once by conference call and the co-chairs have provided input for the upcoming Action Plan.

Status on Progress

The Working Group provides a forum for sharing information on CMSP developments in both countries through the ongoing development of a discussion paper organized around the following topics:

- Comparative summary of CMSP in Canada and the US, including definitions, legislative basis, key elements, and current and planned implementation activities
- Identification of common elements and differences between the two countries to determine minimum criteria for CMSP approaches
- Gap analysis to determine missing elements and priority needs for CMSP in the Gulf of Maine bioregion
- Identification of Council roles and activities to support and advance CMSP, focusing on those things that the Council is uniquely best able to accomplish.

The following activities were recommended and accepted as forming the basis for the ongoing work of the CMSP Working Group. These will be used to guide the development of an annual work plan and the input to the 2012 – 2017 Action Plan.

- Identification of bioregional considerations in marine spatial planning and development of bioregional objectives/priorities
- Identification and comparison of existing efforts, approaches etc.
- Identification, engagement or informing stakeholders or the public
- Identification, engagement or consultation with scientific or technical experts
- Evaluation of potential management scenarios on a bioregional basis
- Communication and evaluation of processes, plans or products
- Bioregional level assessments (including data gathering) and data sharing products
- Garnering and/or demonstrating bioregional support from federal, state and provincial governments, non-governmental partners and stakeholders
- Prioritization and communication of specific shared data and research needs in bioregion (e.g., seafloor mapping)
- Recommend how existing transboundary groups (e.g., NERACOOS, GOMMI, RARGOM) could contribute to advancing MSP in bioregion
- Sharing experiences and knowledge on identification of ecologically and biologically significant areas

Recommendations

The Working Group plans the following activities for 2012 and is seeking the support of the GoMC Working Group.

- Coordinate input on CMSP related activities for the 2012 – 2017 Action Plan,
- Coordinate information sharing, cross-participation and potential collaborative activities and events between USA and Canada in the Gulf of Maine related to CMSP,
- Develop a 2012 annual Work Plan to be submitted to the GOMC at the December 2011 meeting.

Submitted by Ad-Hoc Working Group on Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning

State of the Gulf of Maine and Ecosystem Indicator Partnership linkages

Background

There has been significant discussion and interest at the Gulf of Maine Council Working Group meetings on strengthening the linkages between the State of the Gulf of Maine Report and the Ecosystem Indicator Partnership (ESIP).

The Ecosystem Indicator Partnership (ESIP) is a committee of the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment. ESIP is developing indicators for the Gulf of Maine and integrating regional data for a new Web-based reporting system for marine ecosystem monitoring. Activities of ESIP initially center on convening regional practitioners in six indicator areas: coastal development, contaminants and pathogens, eutrophication, aquatic habitats, fisheries and aquaculture, and climate change.

The State of the Gulf of Maine (SoGoM) Report aims to provide information on priority concerns for the region, which can be used for environmental management, decision-making and education. It is a part of the larger reporting effort within the Gulf, which includes the Ecosystem Indicator Partnership. The report is a modular, living, web-based document that will be updated continually over time. It includes an introductory overview and a series of theme or issue papers. The Gulf of Maine in Context provides an overview of the natural and socioeconomic environment. Theme papers provide a more in depth look at important issues identified by the Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment. Theme papers will be developed incrementally. Theme papers cover the six indicator areas identified by ESIP, in addition to biodiversity. Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) currently oversees the development of the State of the Gulf of Maine Report and has dedicated a full time position for State of the Environment Reporting until March 31, 2012.

Possible activities

- ESIP indicators and data should inform relevant SoGoM theme papers.
- ESIP indicators and data should be used for SoGoM theme paper updates.
- Indicators identified through the SoGoM theme papers should be considered by ESIP for future reporting.
- Work plans for ESIP and the SoGoM should be developed to complement one another.

Action or outcomes requested

1. DFO will maintain the lead editorial role for the State of the Gulf of Maine Report as a member of the Gulf of Maine Council. DFO will be responsible for coordinating the updating of theme papers and the coordination of the editorial board, whose membership is drawn from the GOMC membership. The State of the Gulf of Maine Editor will provide an annual Work Plan to the Working Group and Council.
2. Editorial committee membership requires review and updating. We also recommend reviewing the current review process.
3. Reporting to the Gulf of Maine Council on State of the Gulf of Maine activities will occur through the DFO representative on the Gulf of Maine Council and Working Group.
4. To strengthen linkages between State of the Gulf of Maine and ESIP, it is recommended that the editor of the State of the Gulf of Maine Report has a seat on the ESIP Management Board.

Submitted by Melanie MacLean, Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Update on Roll-out of NOAA's Climate Program Award: Regional Coastal Resilience Initiative

Background

In 2010, GOMC and the Northeast Regional Ocean Council (NROC) conducted a climate change needs assessment for the region extending from the Bay of Fundy to Long Island Sound. The assessment confirmed that a top priority for the region is to stimulate innovation and increase the pace of municipal responses to a changing climate. Since the vast majority of land use decisions in this region are made at the local level, working directly with coastal municipalities on climate change adaptation is the most expedient way to make our coasts more resilient and hazards ready.

Based on this rationale, GOMC coordinated the development of a regional proposal with Roger Williams University School of Law, Clean Air-Cool Planet, and StormSmart Coasts Network. The proposal has three main tasks: research, compilation and dissemination of innovative municipal adaptation efforts; formation and support of the New England Coastal Resiliency Initiative – which is a \$200,000 municipal technical assistance effort, and a communications component to develop and disseminate information about the need for adaptation.

NOAA's Climate Program Office has officially awarded a grant (\$175K for year 1 and \$110K pending for year 2) to the USGOMA starting September 1, 2011 and ending August 31, 2013. Matching funds identified in the proposal total \$706,000 including \$334,000 in cash provided by Clean Air – Cool Planet via a Kresge Foundation grant and \$270,000 from Canadian partners via the Regional Adaptation Collaborative (RAC) effort. Specifically, the New Brunswick Climate Change Secretariat, the Nova Scotia Climate Change Directorate and the Atlantic Regional Adaptation Collaborative will provide information and advice, participate in project management, engage municipalities, strengthen web resources and participate in a regional workshop organized as a part of this effort.

Activity

1. Adrienne Harrison and Julia Knisel will take a leadership role in managing grant tasks for the USGOMA.
2. PIs from Roger Williams University School of Law (Susan Farady and Julia Wyman), Clean Air-Cool Planet (Jennifer Andrews and Christa Daniels), and StormSmart Coasts Network (Wes Shaw) are currently developing their scopes of work.
3. A five –state grant program coordination team has been established.
4. A \$150K request for proposals to fund innovative municipal climate adaptation efforts in Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut was quickly developed and released on September 7, 2011. For details, see stormsmart.org/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files/group-documents/77/1315418724-GOMC-NROC_RFQ_Final.pdf.
5. Due to staff changes, ICLEI is reviewing their offer to compile at least one case study, support a webinar, host a meeting, and help promote municipal networking.

Next steps for fall 2011

1. Roger Williams University School of Law will hire students to investigate municipal adaptation resources.
2. The grant program coordination team will provide feedback on letters of intent, evaluate municipal proposals, and select pilot projects.
3. Clean Air-Cool Planet and StormSmart Coasts Network will begin disseminating adaptation resources to target audiences.
4. In the fall Canadian partners will be engaged in the work to be performed by the three PIs.

Action or outcomes requested

2. Commitment from Working Group and Climate Change Network members to respond to any requests from the PIs or law school students and assist with the dissemination of resources.

Submitted by Julia Knisel, MA Office of Coastal Zone Management

Gulfwatch Chemical Contaminants Monitoring Program

Background and Update

The Gulfwatch (GW) chemical contaminants monitoring program began in 1991 to systematically monitor trace chemicals in the Gulf of Maine and Bay of Fundy using the tissues of blue mussels (*Mytilus edulis*) as an indicator of chemical presence and exposure. Annual sample collection, analyses, and reporting has continued up to 2009. Many of the contaminants monitored by Gulfwatch show little to no change in levels found in Gulf of Maine mussels, despite measures of improved environmental management of contamination. Legacy chemicals such as DDT (and residues) and PCBs are found throughout the Gulf. From a national perspective, mussels from the GOM are elevated with respect to some contaminants (e.g. Hg and Pb). Gulfwatch is part of the indicator reporting for the Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership (PREP) (http://www.prep.unh.edu/resources/pdf/2009_state_of_the_prep-09.pdf). The NHDES Shellfish Program has used Gulfwatch data in its sanitary survey reports to assist in the determination of toxic contamination in shellfish growing waters. Likewise, the Nova Scotia provincial departments and Environment Canada use the data for regulatory purposes on the safety of shellfish for human consumption, and the quality of coastal waters.

Mussels were collected in 2010, analyzed for metals but not organics. The 2010 organic samples are being archived. Currently, there is very limited funding for the GW Program which currently will cover coordination of volunteer and *in-kind* services to collect samples. Samples collected during the 2011 fall period (Sept – Oct) will be archived for future analyses.

It is the general consensus among members of the Gulfwatch Contaminants Monitoring Sub-committee that:

- Gulfwatch should not become a mere tissues archiving program.
- Given the current very modest level of fiscal support provided by the Council, sampling should be modified such that collection, processing, and analyses occur on a rotating, 3-year cycle.
- There should be better integration among monitoring and reporting efforts of the Council, such that Gulfwatch is a part of a larger, more comprehensive GOMC environmental monitoring initiative. This should also be meshed with the activities of ESIP (Ecosystem Indicators Program) and its contaminants committee.
- An analysis of the biological index measures (mussel dimensions and weight) should be done to determine if these measurements could be used as an indicator of habitat. If they are not useful, these measurements should be reduced to just mussel length and weight to reduce time for field staff.

Possible Activities and Next Steps

- Council reviews recent peer-review recommendations for continuing its contaminant monitoring program in the Gulf of Maine and Bay of Fundy region.
- Council determines importance of continuing the GW Program and makes a clear decision to do so.
- Council determines necessary level of support and directs resources to obtain appropriate level of funding (for a minimal program, 55K per year).
- Council and GCMSC explore linkages between current GOMC monitoring (e.g., Habitat monitoring) and reporting (e.g., ESIP) efforts such that GW only provides samples and data. Thus the task of reporting and synthesizing GW results would formally reside with a more broad “monitoring and reporting” entity identified by the Council.

Action or Outcomes Requested

3. A clear commitment from Council's WG and Council to continue the Gulfwatch program as a cornerstone of Part Two of the 2012-17 Action Plan.
4. Identify resources – They will identify prospective sources of support for .2 FTE for nine-months (July 2011 to March 2012). (Approximately \$10,000 US) and Analytical support (\$45K)?

Submitted by Peter Wells, Dalhousie University, Halifax, NS and Christian Krahorst, EEOS Dept, University of Massachusetts, Co-chairs, Gulfwatch Contaminants Monitoring Subcommittee (GCMSC), Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment

Economic impact of the Council and implementation of its Action Plan

Background: At its June 2011 meeting, the Council requested the Working Group to explore how economic data (e.g., “return on investment” of Council programs, leveraging of Council investments, economic value of coastal economy, etc.) can be presented in the new Action Plan. Some preliminary discussions with economists resulted in their recommendation that the WG refine the questions/issues it is trying to describe, to present suggestions of how to proceed at the December Council meeting and to host an “economic session” in conjunction with the March WG meeting in Boston. Robert Johnston, Clark University economics professor, has offered to facilitate this session pro-bono.

The “centerfold” of the 2007-2012 Action Plan displays economic information about the value of the marine sector and touches on the non-market values (e.g., ecosystem goods and services) such as nutrient cycling, carbon sequestration, and biodiversity. A challenge in presenting this information is that the data were compiled from different sources that varied in their methods and years analyzed.

Possible activities and next steps: As the Working Group considers the options (see below) a basic or initial question is “*how would the numbers/analysis be used*” (e.g., choose policies, make decisions, etc.) as this would greatly affect the study design. It would affect such things as:

- What kind of data is available?
- What are the likely conclusions that could be drawn?
- Would that be useful to the Council and to the intended audiences?
- How would the data/reports be used to make decisions?

The Working Group should consider the following questions and determine what are most pertinent to the Council’s interests.

- Jurisdictional benefit - What is the dollar return on investment (ROI) for this regional program? If my jurisdiction pays out \$___ each year (funds for dues and projects) what do I get back as a result of participating? (report results for the region and by jurisdiction)
- Economic value – What is the value of the region’s coastal and marine economy? (Although not related to the Council and its programs this would provide a context for readers.)
- Leveraging - What leveraging occurs from Council dollars invested?
 - Value of dues contributed vs. total dollars spent by the Council
 - Value of all dollars collected from Council agencies vs. external dollars (foundations, matching funds, grants, etc.) provided to support Council programs
- Impact/Results - What are the results (outputs and outcomes) for the past five-years?
 - Qualitative assessment - use evaluation/compilation of 2007-2012 products to describe the benefits of participation (e.g., access to people & innovative ideas, shape Council products to meet jurisdictional needs, etc.)
 - Habitat restoration grants program – create, display and maintain on-line metrics or narratives by jurisdiction and year. These data can be used to describe specific environmental improvements as a result of Council (and partner) actions. (A “benefits transfer” analysis can be performed.)
 - Demonstrate/intimate how past five year results may be reflective of coming five-years (e.g., anticipate these kinds of benefits)

Action or Outcome Requested: Working Group provides recommendations to Council on how to quantify the value of the GOMC’s activities to the region’s economy.

Note: It is possible that Clark University students could perform an economic analysis in the fall of 2012.

Submitted by David Keeley



Report on website upgrades

Background

At its June 2011 meeting, the Working Group provided input on GulfofMaine.org functionality and were provided with an orientation. It agreed to continue the discussion at the fall meeting including:

4. Integrating Social Media opportunities for specific outcome purposes,
5. Addition of more images to enhance pivotal pages, and
6. Determining the relationship of and any duplication between Committees and Projects links.

Possible activities and next steps

In response to the Council's June request, the following steps were taken:

- A new website development area was created by Yellahoose on www.gulfofmaine.org/new-home
- Content from the original landing page of www.gulfofmaine.org was refined by page layout location.
- Central section content was rearranged to improve 'visibility' location of:
 1. "About the" topics for first time visitors,
 2. reduce scroll,
 3. co-locate similar mapping products (ie. Habitat mapping), and
 4. reduce or eliminate duplication (ie. Directories, News, GOMT, etc).
- Content and layout, including images is rearranged for a few of the secondary pages (About the Gulf of Maine, Overview, Publications, Media Room)

Action or outcomes requested

5. Working Group input to guide further website and information technology tool refinement.

Submitted by Jennifer Hackett Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Canadian Co-chair, IT Committee and Jim Cradock@Yellahoose, GOMC Contactor