

From: **MidAtlanticRPB, BOEM** <boemmidatlanticrpb@boem.gov>  
Date: Tue, Jul 19, 2016 at 7:46 AM  
Subject: Fwd: Please Include ERAs in the Final Ocean Action Plan  
To: rockawaylight@msn.com

Thank you for submitting comments on the Draft Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Action Plan; we will post them on our website. The MidA RPB will consider all public comments in revising the Draft Plan, and will submit a final Plan to the National Ocean Council for its concurrence this fall. Please check our website <http://www.boem.gov/Ocean-Action-Plan/> for additional information.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **KnowWho Services** <noreply@knowwho.services>  
Date: Tue, Jul 19, 2016 at 7:42 AM  
Subject: Please Include ERAs in the Final Ocean Action Plan  
To: [midatlanticrpb@boem.gov](mailto:midatlanticrpb@boem.gov)

Dear Robert LaBelle,

Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body Members-- Protecting and planning for the future enjoyment and health of our oceans and those who use them are paramount in my opinion. I live right down the block from this glorious Atlantic Ocean and it is vital that we protect her. Please be mindful of the trust we place in you to do a really intelligent plan to manage our oceans so they are healthy and productive for our future generations.

Thank you

Sincerely,

Ellen Mendonca  
117 Beach 117th Street  
New York, NY 11694-  
[rockawaylight@msn.com](mailto:rockawaylight@msn.com)  
(631) 923-7866

From: **MidAtlanticRPB, BOEM** <boemmidatlanticrpb@boem.gov>  
Date: Tue, Jul 19, 2016 at 2:17 PM  
Subject: Fwd: Please Include ERAs in the Final Ocean Action Plan  
To: adndomains@yahoo.com

Thank you for submitting comments on the Draft Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Action Plan; we will post them on our website. The MidA RPB will consider all public comments in revising the Draft Plan, and will submit a final Plan to the National Ocean Council for its concurrence this fall. Please check our website <http://www.boem.gov/Ocean-Action-Plan/> for additional information.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **KnowWho Services** <noreply@knowwho.services>  
Date: Tue, Jul 19, 2016 at 1:32 PM  
Subject: Please Include ERAs in the Final Ocean Action Plan  
To: [midatlanticrpb@boem.gov](mailto:midatlanticrpb@boem.gov)

Dear Robert LaBelle,

Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body Members--

Thank you for completing a draft of the first comprehensive plan for our oceans in the Mid-Atlantic. We applaud your hard work and commitment to listening to stakeholders like myself in shaping this plan over the last three years.

But it is precisely all of that hard work that is at risk if the final plan is not specific enough or doesn't significantly change how our oceans are managed to keep them healthy and functioning into the future.

Please use all of the data now available to you and delineate where the most productive areas of the ocean are located. Without that information how will we know where to place future projects like offshore wind farms?

The ocean planning process represents a rare opportunity to look into the future and decide what we want our ocean to look like. Please create a final ocean plan for the Mid-Atlantic that gets us to your vision of a healthy, clean, thriving ocean.

Thank you

Sincerely,

Alex Neal  
PO Box 25  
Cardiff, CA 92007-  
[adndomains@yahoo.com](mailto:adndomains@yahoo.com)  
(760) 230-3552

From: **MidAtlanticRPB, BOEM** <boemmidatlanticrpb@boem.gov>  
Date: Tue, Jul 19, 2016 at 2:17 PM  
Subject: Fwd: Please Include ERAs in the Final Ocean Action Plan  
To: cagdfreedom@hotmail.de

Thank you for submitting comments on the Draft Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Action Plan; we will post them on our website. The MidA RPB will consider all public comments in revising the Draft Plan, and will submit a final Plan to the National Ocean Council for its concurrence this fall. Please check our website <http://www.boem.gov/Ocean-Action-Plan/> for additional information.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **KnowWho Services** <noreply@knowwho.services>  
Date: Tue, Jul 19, 2016 at 2:10 PM  
Subject: Please Include ERAs in the Final Ocean Action Plan  
To: [midatlanticrpb@boem.gov](mailto:midatlanticrpb@boem.gov)

Dear Robert LaBelle,

Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body Members--

Congratulations on completing a draft of the first comprehensive plan for our oceans in the Mid-Atlantic! We applaud your hard work and commitment to listening to stakeholders like myself in shaping this plan over the last three years.

But it is precisely all of that hard work that is at risk if the final plan is not specific enough or doesn't significantly change how our oceans are managed to keep them healthy and functioning into the future.

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Thank you

Sincerely,

Stefanie Wallner  
190 Nebraska Ave apt 5-15  
Trenton, NJ 08619-  
[cagdfreedom@hotmail.de](mailto:cagdfreedom@hotmail.de)  
(609) 379-9028

From: **MidAtlanticRPB, BOEM** <boemmidatlanticrpb@boem.gov>  
Date: Tue, Jul 19, 2016 at 2:47 PM  
Subject: Fwd: Please Include ERAs in the Final Ocean Action Plan  
To: elmaschal@gmail.com

Thank you for submitting comments on the Draft Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Action Plan; we will post them on our website. The MidA RPB will consider all public comments in revising the Draft Plan, and will submit a final Plan to the National Ocean Council for its concurrence this fall. Please check our website <http://www.boem.gov/Ocean-Action-Plan/> for additional information.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **KnowWho Services** <noreply@knowwho.services>  
Date: Tue, Jul 19, 2016 at 2:40 PM  
Subject: Please Include ERAs in the Final Ocean Action Plan  
To: [midatlanticrpb@boem.gov](mailto:midatlanticrpb@boem.gov)

Dear Robert LaBelle,

Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body Members--

Congratulations on completing a draft of the first comprehensive plan for our oceans in the Mid-Atlantic! We applaud your hard work and commitment to listening to stakeholders like myself in shaping this plan over the last three years.

But it is precisely all of that hard work that is at risk if the final plan is not specific enough or doesn't significantly change how our oceans are managed to keep them healthy and functioning into the future.

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Thank you

Sincerely,

Emma Maschal  
4603 Long Beach Blvd  
Beach Haven, NJ 08008-  
[elmaschal@gmail.com](mailto:elmaschal@gmail.com)  
(609) 713-1144

From: **MidAtlanticRPB, BOEM** <boemmidatlanticrpb@boem.gov>  
Date: Wed, Jul 20, 2016 at 8:38 AM  
Subject: Re: Comments on Ocean Plan  
To: Kohola Leo <koholaleo@gmail.com>

Thank you for submitting comments on the Draft Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Action Plan; we will post them on our website. The MidA RPB will consider all public comments in revising the Draft Plan, and will submit a final Plan to the National Ocean Council for its concurrence this fall. Please check our website <http://www.boem.gov/Ocean-Action-Plan/> for additional information.

On Tue, Jul 19, 2016 at 4:35 PM, Kohola Leo <[koholaleo@gmail.com](mailto:koholaleo@gmail.com)> wrote:

***Koholā Leo***  
PO Box 819  
Waimea, HI 96796

Robert P. LaBelle, MidA RPB Federal Co-Lead  
BOEM  
45600 Woodland Road  
Mailstop: VAM-BOEM DIR  
Sterling, VA 20166

July 19, 2016

Dear Mr. LaBelle,

Koholā Leo is a whale conservation group based in Hawai'i.

Thank you for asking for comments on the draft Mid Atlantic Regional Ocean Action Plan. This is a giant step forward and we commend the effort that has gone into this. After reviewing the document, it appears that, so far, the only real action proposed is to get everyone in one room talking to each other, but a long march starts with a single step.

Please don't forget the issue of ocean noise, especially from Navy active sonar. Ship noise and ocean sound blasting are one of the two major threats to cetaceans. The Navy usually gets a free pass in these meetings. They shouldn't. They must obey the law like the rest of us.

The other great threat to whales is that they drown in fishing nets. These two problems are often swept under the table as too controversial. Often these meetings start out dealing with non-controversial issues first while the big threats to the ocean get put on the shelf for later.

Our whales and our ocean need attention.

Thank You,

Gordon LaBedz  
Chair, Koholā Leo

--

For the Whales,  
Koholā Leo

[www.whalevoice.org](http://www.whalevoice.org)

From: **MidAtlanticRPB, BOEM** <boemmidatlanticrpb@boem.gov>  
Date: Wed, Jul 20, 2016 at 8:40 AM  
Subject: Fwd: Please Include ERAs in the Final Ocean Action Plan  
To: vicechair@nyc.surfrider.org

Thank you for submitting comments on the Draft Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Action Plan; we will post them on our website. The MidA RPB will consider all public comments in revising the Draft Plan, and will submit a final Plan to the National Ocean Council for its concurrence this fall. Please check our website <http://www.boem.gov/Ocean-Action-Plan/> for additional information.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **KnowWho Services** <noreply@knowwho.services>  
Date: Tue, Jul 19, 2016 at 9:58 PM  
Subject: Please Include ERAs in the Final Ocean Action Plan  
To: [midatlanticrpb@boem.gov](mailto:midatlanticrpb@boem.gov)

Dear Robert LaBelle,

Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body Members--

Congratulations on completing a draft of the first comprehensive plan for our oceans in the Mid-Atlantic! We applaud your hard work and commitment to listening to stakeholders like myself in shaping this plan over the last three years.

But it is precisely all of that hard work that is at risk if the final plan is not specific enough or doesn't significantly change how our oceans are managed to keep them healthy and functioning into the future.

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Thank you

Sincerely,

Adlin Hadad  
511 E 78TH STREET, APT 5A  
New York, NY 10075-  
[vicechair@nyc.surfrider.org](mailto:vicechair@nyc.surfrider.org)  
(305) 494-0116

From: **MidAtlanticRPB, BOEM** <boemmidatlanticrpb@boem.gov>  
Date: Wed, Jul 20, 2016 at 1:04 PM  
Subject: Fwd: Please Include ERAs in the Final Ocean Action Plan  
To: beth.kwart@gmail.com

Thank you for submitting comments on the Draft Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Action Plan; we will post them on our website. The MidA RPB will consider all public comments in revising the Draft Plan, and will submit a final Plan to the National Ocean Council for its concurrence this fall. Please check our website <http://www.boem.gov/Ocean-Action-Plan/> for additional information.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **KnowWho Services** <noreply@knowwho.services>  
Date: Wed, Jul 20, 2016 at 10:49 AM  
Subject: Please Include ERAs in the Final Ocean Action Plan  
To: [midatlanticrpb@boem.gov](mailto:midatlanticrpb@boem.gov)

Dear Robert LaBelle,

Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body Members--

Congratulations on completing a draft of the first comprehensive plan for our oceans in the Mid-Atlantic! We applaud your hard work and commitment to listening to stakeholders like myself in shaping this plan over the last three years.

But it is precisely all of that hard work that is at risk if the final plan is not specific enough or doesn't significantly change how our oceans are managed to keep them healthy and functioning into the future.

Please use all of the data now available to you and delineate where the most productive areas of the ocean are located. Without that information how will we know where to place future projects like offshore wind farms?

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Thank you

Sincerely,

Beth Kwart  
125 N Derby Ave  
Ventnor City, NJ 08406-  
[beth.kwart@gmail.com](mailto:beth.kwart@gmail.com)  
(609) 680-2574



From: **MidAtlanticRPB, BOEM** <boemmidatlanticrpb@boem.gov>  
Date: Wed, Jul 20, 2016 at 1:04 PM  
Subject: Fwd: Please Include ERAs in the Final Ocean Action Plan  
To: clayulman@yahoo.com

Thank you for submitting comments on the Draft Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Action Plan; we will post them on our website. The MidA RPB will consider all public comments in revising the Draft Plan, and will submit a final Plan to the National Ocean Council for its concurrence this fall. Please check our website <http://www.boem.gov/Ocean-Action-Plan/> for additional information.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **KnowWho Services** <noreply@knowwho.services>  
Date: Wed, Jul 20, 2016 at 11:59 AM  
Subject: Please Include ERAs in the Final Ocean Action Plan  
To: [midatlanticrpb@boem.gov](mailto:midatlanticrpb@boem.gov)

Dear Robert LaBelle,

Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body Members--

Congratulations on completing a draft of the first comprehensive plan for our oceans in the Mid-Atlantic! Please continue your diligent efforts so that I can continue to enjoy Maryland and Delaware beaches with my kids.

Please use all of the data now available to you and delineate where the most productive areas of the ocean are located. Without that information how will we know where to place future projects like offshore wind farms?

The ocean planning process represents a rare opportunity to look into the future and decide what we want our ocean to look like. Please create a final ocean plan for the Mid-Atlantic that gets us to your vision of a healthy, clean, thriving ocean.

Thank you

Sincerely,

Clay Ulman  
915 Breezewick Cir  
Towson, MD 21286-  
[clayulman@yahoo.com](mailto:clayulman@yahoo.com)  
(443) 226-7716

From: **MidAtlanticRPB, BOEM** <boemmidatlanticrpb@boem.gov>  
Date: Wed, Jul 20, 2016 at 1:05 PM  
Subject: Fwd: Please Include ERAs in the Final Ocean Action Plan  
To: surf4marc@gmail.com

Thank you for submitting comments on the Draft Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Action Plan; we will post them on our website. The MidA RPB will consider all public comments in revising the Draft Plan, and will submit a final Plan to the National Ocean Council for its concurrence this fall. Please check our website <http://www.boem.gov/Ocean-Action-Plan/> for additional information.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **KnowWho Services** <noreply@knowwho.services>  
Date: Wed, Jul 20, 2016 at 12:15 PM  
Subject: Please Include ERAs in the Final Ocean Action Plan  
To: [midatlanticrpb@boem.gov](mailto:midatlanticrpb@boem.gov)

Dear Robert LaBelle,

Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body Members--

Congratulations on completing a draft of the first comprehensive plan for our oceans in the Mid-Atlantic! We applaud your hard work and commitment to listening to stakeholders like myself in shaping this plan over the last three years.

But it is precisely all of that hard work that is at risk if the final plan is not specific enough or doesn't significantly change how our oceans are managed to keep them healthy and functioning into the future.

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Thank you

Sincerely,

Marc Pentecost  
458 Leslie Ter  
Virginia Beach, VA 23452-  
[surf4marc@gmail.com](mailto:surf4marc@gmail.com)  
(757) 509-7368

From: **MidAtlanticRPB, BOEM** <boemmidatlanticrpb@boem.gov>  
Date: Thu, Jul 21, 2016 at 7:32 AM  
Subject: Fwd: Please Include ERAs in the Final Ocean Action Plan  
To: elainebecker@yahoo.com

Thank you for submitting comments on the Draft Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Action Plan; we will post them on our website. The MidA RPB will consider all public comments in revising the Draft Plan, and will submit a final Plan to the National Ocean Council for its concurrence this fall. Please check our website <http://www.boem.gov/Ocean-Action-Plan/> for additional information.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **KnowWho Services** <noreply@knowwho.services>  
Date: Thu, Jul 21, 2016 at 1:56 AM  
Subject: Please Include ERAs in the Final Ocean Action Plan  
To: [midatlanticrpb@boem.gov](mailto:midatlanticrpb@boem.gov)

Dear Robert LaBelle,

Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body Members--

Congratulations on completing a draft of the first comprehensive plan for our oceans in the Mid-Atlantic! We applaud your hard work and commitment to listening to stakeholders like myself in shaping this plan over the last three years.

But it is precisely all of that hard work that is at risk if the final plan is not specific enough or doesn't significantly change how our oceans are managed to keep them healthy and functioning into the future.

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Thank you

Sincerely,

Elaine Becker  
2514 Sharmar Rd  
Roanoke, VA 24018-  
[elainebecker@yahoo.com](mailto:elainebecker@yahoo.com)  
(540) 400-6129

From: **MidAtlanticRPB, BOEM** <boemmidatlanticrpb@boem.gov>  
Date: Mon, Jul 25, 2016 at 8:21 AM  
Subject: Fwd: Please Include ERAs in the Final Ocean Action Plan  
To: John Weber <jweber@surfrider.org>

Thank you for submitting comments on the Draft Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Action Plan; we will post them on our website. The MidA RPB will consider all public comments in revising the Draft Plan, and will submit a final Plan to the National Ocean Council for its concurrence this fall. Please check our website <http://www.boem.gov/Ocean-Action-Plan/> for additional information.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **KnowWho Services** <noreply@knowwho.services>  
Date: Fri, Jul 22, 2016 at 2:50 PM  
Subject: Please Include ERAs in the Final Ocean Action Plan  
To: [midatlanticrpb@boem.gov](mailto:midatlanticrpb@boem.gov)

Dear Robert LaBelle,

Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body Members--

Good job on completing a draft of the first comprehensive plan for our oceans in the Mid-Atlantic! This was a difficult but worthwhile endeavor. Three years of listening to stakeholders and working with agencies etc should not go to waste!

But that it what is at risk, if you don't make this plan specific enough so it can be used as a tool to protect ocean resources.

We need all of the data to be used to delineate where the most productive areas of the ocean are located. Without that information how will we know where to place future projects like offshore wind farms?

The ocean planning process represents a rare opportunity to look into the future and decide what we want our ocean to look like. Please create a final ocean plan for the Mid-Atlantic that gets us to your vision of a healthy, clean, thriving ocean.

Thank you

Sincerely,

John Weber  
313 Lareine Ave  
Bradley Beach, NJ 07720-  
[jweber@surfrider.org](mailto:jweber@surfrider.org)  
(732) 567-1787

**From:** MidAtlanticRPB, BOEM <boemmidatlanticrpb@boem.gov>  
**Date:** Tue, Jul 26, 2016 at 7:27 AM  
**Subject:** Re: Recommendations re: the draft Northeast Ocean Plan and the Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Action Plan  
**To:** "Chase, Alison" <achase@nrdc.org>

Thank you for submitting comments on the Draft Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Action Plan; we will post them on our website. The MidA RPB will consider all public comments in revising the Draft Plan, and will submit a final Plan to the National Ocean Council for its concurrence this fall. Please check our website <http://www.boem.gov/Ocean-Action-Plan/> for additional information.

On Mon, Jul 25, 2016 at 4:01 PM, Chase, Alison <[achase@nrdc.org](mailto:achase@nrdc.org)> wrote:  
Attached please find a revised version. One signer was inadvertently left off the last version and has been added here; no other changes have been made to the letter.

**From:** Chase, Alison  
**Sent:** Monday, July 25, 2016 3:28 PM  
**To:** '[comment@neoceanplanning.org](mailto:comment@neoceanplanning.org)'; [KelseyLeonard@shinnecock.org](mailto:KelseyLeonard@shinnecock.org); [Robert.LaBelle@boem.gov](mailto:Robert.LaBelle@boem.gov); Gwynne Schultz -DNR- ([gwynne.schultz@maryland.gov](mailto:gwynne.schultz@maryland.gov)); '[MidAtlanticRPB@boem.gov](mailto:MidAtlanticRPB@boem.gov)'  
**Cc:** Chase, Alison  
**Subject:** Recommendations re: the draft Northeast Ocean Plan and the Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Action Plan

Attached please find a letter from the science community expressing support for an ecosystem-based approach to regional ocean planning and for the identification and conservation of important ecological areas/ ecologically rich areas.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions on this letter at 212.727.4551.

Sincerely,

Alison Chase

**ALISON CHASE**  
*Senior Policy Analyst*

**NATURAL RESOURCES  
DEFENSE COUNCIL**  
40 W 20TH STREET  
NEW YORK, NY 10011  
T 212.727.4551

ACHASE@NRDC.ORG

NRDC.ORG

Please save paper.

Think before printing.

July 25, 2016

Mr. Grover Fugate  
Executive Director  
Rhode Island Coastal Resources  
Management Council  
Stedman Government Center, Suite 3  
4808 Tower Hill Road  
Wakefield, Rhode Island 02879

Mr. Richard Getchell  
Tribal Outreach Coordinator, Former Tribal Chief  
Aroostook Band of Micmac Indians  
7 Northern Road  
Presque Isle, Maine 04769

Mr. Robert LaBelle  
Senior Advisor to the Director  
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
45600 Woodland Road  
Mailstop: VAM-BOEM DIR  
Sterling, Virginia 20166

Ms. Kelsey Leonard  
Shinnecock Indian Nation  
P.O. Box 5006  
Southampton, New York 11969

Ms. Betsy Nicholson  
Northeast Regional Director  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric  
Administration  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
55 Great Republic Drive  
Gloucester, Massachusetts 01930

Ms. Gwynne Schultz  
Senior Coastal and Ocean Policy Advisor  
Maryland Department of Natural Resources  
580 Taylor Avenue, E2  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

*Submitted electronically*

Dear Northeast and Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body Co-Leads:

Thank you and the other Northeast and Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body (Northeast and Mid-Atlantic RPB) representatives for your leadership in drafting the nation's first regional ocean plans to help protect ecosystem health and promote sustainable use. We value your efforts over the past several years to draft plans that outline steps state and federal agencies, fisheries managers, and tribes are willing to take to improve our often uncoordinated ocean decision-making structures. These groundbreaking plans advance ecosystem-based management (EBM), an integrated approach endorsed by the nation's leading scientists which "considers the entire ecosystem [in order to] ... maintain [it] in a healthy, productive and resilient condition so that it can provide the services humans want and need."<sup>1</sup> We urge you to build beyond the information sharing and use coordination aspects inherent in such a holistic concept to fully embrace EBM's key requirement to "emphasiz[e] the protection of ecosystem structure, functioning, and key processes" in the final plans.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> McLeod, K.L., J. Lubchenco, S.R. Palumbi, and A.A. Rosenberg. 2005. *Scientific Consensus Statement on Marine Ecosystem-Based Management*, available at [http://www.compassonline.org/science/EBM\\_CMSP/EBMconsensus](http://www.compassonline.org/science/EBM_CMSP/EBMconsensus).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

As a result of your collaboration with the Northeast Regional Ocean Council and Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean to develop marine life and use data portals, the draft plans and the future of the RPBs are rooted in a commitment to use best available science. There is significant value in the species-level models that have been created to assist the planning processes and in the synthetic data products that are being developed to identify areas of ecological richness and importance. These data and associated maps, such as those that portray distribution and abundance of ecologically and biologically grouped species and the multi-taxa core abundance areas where more than 50 percent of a region's fish, birds, marine mammals, and corals can be found over the course of a year, improve our shared understanding of the natural system's connections and functioning, and will help inform cumulative impacts analyses and establish a baseline by which we can evaluate changes brought about from a rapidly changing climate.

We urge you not to stop here, however, and to commit to identify and conserve all important ecological areas (IEAs, in the Northeast)/ ecologically rich areas and region-wide ecological features (ERAs, in the Mid-Atlantic), defined as "habitat areas and species, guilds, or communities critical to ecosystem function, recovery and resilience."<sup>3</sup> Ensuring that the work is completed to identify special ocean places would advance both plans' shared goal of a healthy ocean ecosystem and we request that you include short, definitive deadlines for completion of this synthesis work. Many of us have participated in expert forums, such as the Ecosystem-Based Management Work Group, to clarify what makes a place ecologically important, and also to identify where key decisions may be necessary to ensure the equitable maintenance of and access to ocean ecosystem services. We believe that there is sufficient information to identify a full suite of Northeast and Mid-Atlantic IEAs/ERAs using available data now.<sup>4</sup> We stress the importance of and strongly recommend identification of these areas and the inclusion of associated maps and other information on the portals by the close of 2016. The draft plans acknowledge the ongoing need to administer and update the portals with new information. Because EBM must be adaptive, the promise of better data in the future should not prevent the creation and use of tools like IEAs/ERAs in the present to guide decision-making at all levels of government and for stakeholders.

Additionally, each federal and state agency should commit to using the IEA/ERAs and the core abundance areas to inform and guide their decision-making processes. Agencies should identify management measures they can take, under their existing authorities, to protect these areas from uses that are incompatible with their primary function of ensuring broader ecosystem health. There is extensive documentation of various resource/ use conflicts within existing scientific literature that can serve to inform agencies as to what stressors could be mitigated in order to ensure a healthy ecosystem.

We appreciate your efforts to enable EBM through the measures recommended above and with proposals in the draft plans to develop ecosystem health monitoring and evaluation programs. We

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<sup>3</sup> The draft *Northeast Ocean Plan* at 53, available at: <http://neooceanplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Draft-Northeast-Ocean-Plan-Full.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> Appendix 3 of the draft *Northeast Ocean Plan* identifies five components of ecological importance: areas of high productivity; areas of high biodiversity; areas of high species abundance; areas of vulnerable marine resources; and areas of rare marine resources. Currently, the Northeast RPB has only committed to "illustrating" one or two of the five components by the end of 2017, pending future data collection efforts and adequate funds. (See, for example, the *Northeast Ocean Plan* at 55).

encourage you to reach out to us and other scientists and subject matter experts to provide further feedback on issues requiring scientific advice and thank you for your efforts to help protect our ocean resources for this and future generations.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jennifer E. Bender  
Executive Director, Marine Studies Consortium  
Director, Center for Aquaculture Education  
and Training at UMass Boston  
Adjunct Professor, Boston University

Dr. Donald Boesch  
President and Professor  
University of Maryland Center for  
Environmental Science

Dr. David O. Conover  
Professor  
School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences  
Stony Brook University

Dr. Keith Dunton  
Assistant Professor  
School of Science  
Monmouth University

Dr. Les Kaufman  
Professor of Biology  
Boston University Marine Program  
and Marine Conservation Fellow  
Betty and Gordon Moore Center  
for Science and Oceans  
Conservation International

Dr. Chris Kennedy  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Environmental Science  
and Policy  
George Mason University

Dr. Arthur H. Kopelman  
SUNY Distinguished Service Professor and  
Professor of Science  
Department of Science and Mathematics  
Fashion Institute of Technology, State  
University of New York  
and President, Coastal Research and  
Education Society of Long Island

Dr. Robert Kopp  
Associate Professor of Earth and Planetary  
Sciences  
Rutgers University

Dr. George Kraemer  
Professor of Environmental Studies  
Purchase College, State University of New York

Dr. Scott D. Kraus  
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Chief Scientist, Marine Mammals  
John H. Prescott Marine Laboratory  
New England Aquarium

Dr. Maureen K. Krause  
Associate Professor of Biology  
Former Chair, New York Marine Science  
Consortium  
Hofstra University

Dr. Simon A. Levin  
George M. Moffett Professor of Biology  
Princeton University

Dr. Romuald N. Lipcius  
Professor of Marine Science  
Virginia Institute of Marine Science  
College of William & Mary



Dr. Janet Nye  
Assistant Professor  
School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences  
Stony Brook University

Dr. Christine O'Connell  
Associate Director  
Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science  
Stony Brook University - School of Journalism

Dr. Michael L. Pace  
Professor  
Department of Environmental Sciences  
University of Virginia

Dr. Malin Pinsky  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Ecology, Evolution, and Natural  
Resources  
Rutgers University

Dr. John Reinfelder  
Professor  
Department of Environmental Sciences  
Rutgers University

Dr. Michael R. Roman  
Director  
Horn Point Laboratory  
University of Maryland Center for  
Environmental Science

Dr. Andrew A. Rosenberg  
Director, Center for Science and Democracy  
Union of Concerned Scientists

Dr. Jonathan H. Sharp  
Professor Emeritus  
School of Marine Science and Policy  
University of Delaware

Dr. Dan Silver  
Executive Director  
Endangered Habitats League

Dr. Robert S. Steneck  
Professor of Oceanography, Marine Biology  
and Marine Policy School of Marine Sciences  
University of Maine  
Pew Fellow in Marine Conservation  
Darling Marine Center

Dr. R. Lawrence Swanson  
School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences  
Stony Brook University

Dr. John T. Tanacredi  
Professor of Earth and Environmental Sciences  
Department of Biology, Chemistry and  
Environmental Studies  
Director, Center for Environmental Research  
and Coastal Oceans Monitoring  
Molloy College

Dr. John Waldman  
Queens College  
City University of New York

Dr. Judith Weis  
Professor Emerita  
Department of Biological Sciences  
Rutgers University

Dr. William M. Wise  
Director, New York Sea Grant  
Stony Brook University

Dr. Jon Witman  
Professor of Biology  
Ecology and Evolution  
Brown University

From: **MidAtlanticRPB, BOEM** <boemmidatlanticrpb@boem.gov>  
Date: Tue, Jul 26, 2016 at 7:54 AM  
Subject: Fwd: Please Include ERAs in the Final Ocean Action Plan  
To: amy\_stettler@yahoo.com

Thank you for submitting comments on the Draft Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Action Plan; we will post them on our website. The MidA RPB will consider all public comments in revising the Draft Plan, and will submit a final Plan to the National Ocean Council for its concurrence this fall. Please check our website <http://www.boem.gov/Ocean-Action-Plan/> for additional information.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **KnowWho Services** <noreply@knowwho.services>  
Date: Tue, Jul 26, 2016 at 7:46 AM  
Subject: Please Include ERAs in the Final Ocean Action Plan  
To: [midatlanticrpb@boem.gov](mailto:midatlanticrpb@boem.gov)

Dear Robert LaBelle,

Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body Members--

Congratulations on completing a draft of the first comprehensive plan for our oceans in the Mid-Atlantic! We applaud your hard work and commitment to listening to stakeholders like myself in shaping this plan over the last three years.

But it is precisely all of that hard work that is at risk if the final plan is not specific enough or doesn't significantly change how our oceans are managed to keep them healthy and functioning into the future.

Please use all of the data now available to you and delineate where the most productive areas of the ocean are located. Without that information how will we know where to place future projects like offshore wind farms?

The ocean planning process represents a rare opportunity to look into the future and decide what we want our ocean to look like. Please create a final ocean plan for the Mid-Atlantic that gets us to your vision of a healthy, clean, thriving ocean.

Thank you

Sincerely,

Amy Stettler  
30 River Rd  
Beaver, PA 15009-  
[amy\\_stettler@yahoo.com](mailto:amy_stettler@yahoo.com)  
3102101140

From: **MidAtlanticRPB, BOEM** <boemmidatlanticrpb@boem.gov>  
Date: Thu, Jul 28, 2016 at 7:26 AM  
Subject: Fwd: Please Include ERAs in the Final Ocean Action Plan  
To: yardumsmyth@gmail.com

Thank you for submitting comments on the Draft Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Action Plan; we will post them on our website. The MidA RPB will consider all public comments in revising the Draft Plan, and will submit a final Plan to the National Ocean Council for its concurrence this fall. Please check our website <http://www.boem.gov/Ocean-Action-Plan/> for additional information.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **KnowWho Services** <noreply@knowwho.services>  
Date: Wed, Jul 27, 2016 at 6:18 PM  
Subject: Please Include ERAs in the Final Ocean Action Plan  
To: [midatlanticrpb@boem.gov](mailto:midatlanticrpb@boem.gov)

Dear Robert LaBelle,

Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body Members--

Congratulations on completing a draft of the first comprehensive plan for our oceans in the Mid-Atlantic! We applaud your hard work and commitment to listening to stakeholders like myself in shaping this plan over the last three years.

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Thank you

Sincerely,

Alexander Smith  
24 Richards Dr  
Sag Harbor, NY 11963-  
[yardumsmyth@gmail.com](mailto:yardumsmyth@gmail.com)  
(631) 338-4944

From: **MidAtlanticRPB, BOEM** <boemmidatlanticrpb@boem.gov>  
Date: Thu, Jul 28, 2016 at 7:27 AM  
Subject: Fwd: [Draft MidA Regional Ocean Action Plan]  
To: catherine@gothamwhale.org

Thank you for submitting comments on the Draft Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Action Plan; we will post them on our website. The MidA RPB will consider all public comments in revising the Draft Plan, and will submit a final Plan to the National Ocean Council for its concurrence this fall. Please check our website <http://www.boem.gov/Ocean-Action-Plan/> for additional information.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Catherine Granton of Gotham Whale** <[noreply@123contactform.com](mailto:noreply@123contactform.com)>  
Date: Wed, Jul 27, 2016 at 6:47 PM  
Subject: [Draft MidA Regional Ocean Action Plan]  
To: "[MidAtlanticRPB@boem.gov](mailto:MidAtlanticRPB@boem.gov)" <[MidAtlanticRPB@boem.gov](mailto:MidAtlanticRPB@boem.gov)>

<b>Name</b>	Catherine Granton of Gotham Whale
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:catherine@gothamwhale.org">catherine@gothamwhale.org</a>
<b>Message</b>	Gotham Whale, a non-profit Citizen Science organization, see the value of Ocean Planning but adjures the committee to include Citizen Science contributions & would like to see the process for submitting data streamlined & more accessible. Thank you.
<b>Address</b>	United States

The message has been sent from 107.77.76.31 (United States) at 2016-07-27 18:47:33 on Internet Explorer 11.0  
Entry ID: 3

Powered by [123ContactForm](#)

From: **MidAtlanticRPB, BOEM** <boemmidatlanticrpb@boem.gov>  
Date: Fri, Jul 29, 2016 at 7:34 AM  
Subject: Fwd: Please Include ERAs in the Final Ocean Action Plan  
To: jennifer.tozzi@verizon.net

Thank you for submitting comments on the Draft Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Action Plan; we will post them on our website. The MidA RPB will consider all public comments in revising the Draft Plan, and will submit a final Plan to the National Ocean Council for its concurrence this fall. Please check our website <http://www.boem.gov/Ocean-Action-Plan/> for additional information.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **KnowWho Services** <noreply@knowwho.services>  
Date: Thu, Jul 28, 2016 at 7:42 PM  
Subject: Please Include ERAs in the Final Ocean Action Plan  
To: [midatlanticrpb@boem.gov](mailto:midatlanticrpb@boem.gov)

Dear Robert LaBelle,

Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body Members--

Congratulations on completing a draft of the first comprehensive plan for our oceans in the Mid-Atlantic! We applaud your hard work and commitment to listening to stakeholders like myself in shaping this plan over the last three years.

But it is precisely all of that hard work that is at risk if the final plan is not specific enough or doesn't significantly change how our oceans are managed to keep them healthy and functioning into the future.

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Thank you

Sincerely,

jennifer tozzi  
1141 Carlow Dr  
Toms River, NJ 08753-  
[jennifer.tozzi@verizon.net](mailto:jennifer.tozzi@verizon.net)  
(000) 000-0000

From: **MidAtlanticRPB, BOEM** <boemmidatlanticrpb@boem.gov>  
Date: Fri, Jul 29, 2016 at 9:01 AM  
Subject: Re: comments on Mid-Atlantic Plans  
To: jweis@andromeda.rutgers.edu

Thank you for submitting comments on the Draft Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Action Plan; we will post them on our website. The MidA RPB will consider all public comments in revising the Draft Plan, and will submit a final Plan to the National Ocean Council for its concurrence this fall. Please check our website <http://www.boem.gov/Ocean-Action-Plan/> for additional information.

On Fri, Jul 29, 2016 at 8:49 AM, Judith S. Weis <[jweis@andromeda.rutgers.edu](mailto:jweis@andromeda.rutgers.edu)> wrote:  
Attached are my comments on the plan.  
Thank you.

Judith S. Weis  
Professor, Emerita

Comments on Mid-Atlantic Ocean Plan Dr. Judith S. Weis, Dept. of Biological Sciences, Rutgers University, Newark NJ07102. jweis@andromeda.rutgers.edu

Some general points

Protecting our ecologically and economically valuable ocean life should be the top priority of the plan. It is paramount to conserve areas of high biodiversity and ecologically important areas where most of the marine organisms are found and other ecologically important areas, as described in the plan's Appendix 4 Draft Framework for Identification of Ecologically Rich Areas. It is important to establish a deadline for identifying areas critical for the long-term health of the region's marine life. Knowing the location of ecologically important areas helps all stakeholders make better decisions. It is also important to establish objectives and indicators for ocean health and evaluate if the plan is achieving the goal of a healthy ocean. If it is not achieving its goals, it will be necessary to use adaptive management and modify actions.

## Chapter 2

### 2.3 Healthy Ocean Ecosystem

On page 37 you state "... plastics and other marine debris are also accumulating in our ocean waters, raising concerns about entanglement, suffocation, and toxins entering the food chain." Two points: (1) While plastic may be one source of toxic chemicals into the food chain, it is probably a minor one compared to sediments and "normal" food. You have no other mention of toxics in this section, and there is still concern over accumulation of methylmercury, PCBs, etc. in marine life. Furthermore, "chemicals of emerging concern" such as pharmaceuticals are as yet unregulated, and increasing in our waters, with documented effects on marine life (Daughton and Ternes, 1999). I think chemical pollutants are worth a section on their own, equivalent to the ones on marine debris and ocean acidification. While sediment contamination is primarily a coastal/estuarine issue, biomagnification through the food web causes large carnivores to accumulate the highest concentrations, and these large fish and marine mammals are ocean dwellers. (2) Terminology: the word "toxins" refers to chemicals made by rattlesnakes, jellyfish, poison ivy, bees etc. It is the incorrect word for manmade chemicals that might stick onto pieces of plastic. The correct term could be toxics, toxic chemicals, chemical pollutants, etc. The term "toxin" is frequently misused in the popular press, but it should not be misused in this report.

**Action 3** I appreciate your emphasizing the need for a focus on ocean acidification. I draw your attention to a relevant report on OA (of which I was the lead author) from the Science Advisory Board of the NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection. The report can be accessed at the NJDEP website.  
[http://www.state.nj.us/dep/sab/SAB%20OA%20Report\\_FINAL%20Approved%20\(08-12-15\).pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/dep/sab/SAB%20OA%20Report_FINAL%20Approved%20(08-12-15).pdf)

**Action 4** Marine Debris – While clean ups are temporary fixes, the only viable long term solution is source reduction. We need to persuade governments to ban single use plastics such as Styrofoam cups, plastic bags, etc., or put a fee on them. While some municipalities and states have moved forwards on some of this, many are recalcitrant. If the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body spoke out on this issue, it might help.

You emphasize ocean acidification and marine debris, which are important issues to be sure, but do not discuss nutrient pollution (eutrophication) which has been increasing in our area and is a serious

problem causing hypoxia problems and harmful algal blooms, mostly in our estuaries, but also in coastal waters. Furthermore, eutrophication, in addition to depleting oxygen, generates CO<sub>2</sub> and thus exacerbates OA (Cai et al. 2011). Eutrophication also deserves attention equal to OA and marine debris; it also needs management and regulatory improvements. It is important to control non-point source runoff from agriculture and lawns, which until now have been approached with voluntary “carrots” which do not appear to be effective enough to make a difference. Leaching of nutrients from septic tanks through groundwater into estuaries is another problem that we are becoming aware of, as more homes are built in coastal areas. Action is greatly needed on this problem as well. Even though it may be primarily an estuarine issue, it needs more effective management.

Given my primary emphasis on the importance of healthy ecosystems, my comments on the other sections are based on their relationships with and effects on healthy ocean ecosystems.

#### **2.4.1 National Security**

There is a conflict between certain “national security” activities by the Navy and healthy ecosystems. It has been documented over and over that cetaceans are killed, or at best deafened (which is tantamount to death for a cetacean since they depend on sound for navigation, feeding, breeding, predator avoidance, and social behavior) by naval sonar and seismic testing activities (Gordon et al.2003). These endangered animals can be injured from very long distances, so failure to observe them in the vicinity is not an adequate protective procedure. It is also very well documented that fish, squids, and other marine animals are adversely affected by these sonic disruptions (McCauley et al. 2003; Guera et al. 2004, Michel et al. 2011, Payne et al. 2007).

I am pleased that in July the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals reversed a lower court decision upholding approval for the Navy to use low-frequency sonar for training, testing and routine operations. But far more needs to be done. DOD needs to recognize these highly damaging effects of all kinds of ocean noise and deal with them seriously

#### **2.4.2 Ocean Energy**

There is a conflict between some energy development activities with healthy ecosystems. Development of wind energy is welcomed and important, but unfortunately the design of most existing turbines results in the deaths of huge numbers of birds and bats (Desholm et al.2006). There are newer designs that minimize blades and are far less destructive to biota and ecosystems (<http://qz.com/406984/this-wind-turbine-generates-power-without-blades/>); therefore, if they are available on the market, these should be encouraged by BOEM for all future projects.

#### **2.4.3 Commercial and Recreational Fishing**

An ecosystems-based approach should be used for fishery management. Fishing activities can have negative effects on healthy ecosystems in terms of altering normal food webs (Pace et al. 1999), which changes the ecology and may favor plankton blooms when too many herbivorous fish, such as menhaden, are caught.

Certain fishing gear, such as dredges and trawls can damage benthic habitats (Thrush and Dayton 2002). The Mid-Atlantic Fisheries Management Council should be commended for their actions on protecting



deep-sea corals in our area, but this should be viewed as a first step, rather than a solution to the overall problem.

Other types of gear such as lobster traps frequently entangle and injure whales or sea turtles which become snagged in the ropes. This has led to many rescue attempts of whales and dead whales washed up on the beach (Cassoff et al. 2011). Causes of death include drowning from being too weighed down to surface for air, impaired foraging during entanglement, resulting in starvation after many months; systemic infection arising from open wounds; and hemorrhage or debilitation due to severe gear-related damage to tissues. Since many of these are endangered species and protected, NOAA and others need to work to develop gear that will not entangle marine animals or else will break apart when an animal is struggling in it.

#### **2.4.4. Aquaculture**

Aquaculture is certainly a current and future source of much seafood for our country and will be developed in our area. However, as currently practiced, certain types of finfish aquaculture are deleterious to healthy ecosystems. Accumulation of fish wastes beneath cages leads to hypoxic “dead zones;” overuse of antibiotics leads to antibiotic resistance in bacteria, overuse of chemical pesticides such as anti-fish louse chemicals causes toxicity to native populations of crustaceans nearby, and reliance on fish meal made from forage fish to feed the farmed fish takes away food from natural populations of predator fish (Burrige et al 2010). There are research projects and developments that are showing that farmed fish can be raised largely on vegetarian diets (e.g. soy). Just as organic farming can be practiced on land, organic sea farming can be practiced in the water, and should be encouraged for any aquaculture that develops in the mid-Atlantic.

**2.4.5 Maritime Commerce and Navigation.** There is increasing conflict between maritime commerce and healthy ecosystems in the form of collisions between ships and cetaceans, with cetaceans at the losing end of the interaction. With whale populations increasing in the NY area, it is important to ascertain which shipping channels are most likely sites of collisions with whales. Channels that are co-located with areas where whales are found should be moved elsewhere. It must be acknowledged that whales are free to move around and will not always be found in the same locations. In addition to collisions, there is increasing evidence that the noise produced by ship engines interferes with the important vocal communication among whales (Rolland et al. 2011).

Antifouling paints on ships release an estimated one billion tons of toxic chemicals into the ocean annually. Antifouling paints received a great deal of attention in the 1980s and 1990s worldwide, resulting in the banning of tributyltin-based (TBT) paints because of their extreme toxicity. Anti-fouling coatings are intended to prevent the growth of attached organisms on ship hulls, and do this by being toxic to marine life. The coatings become depleted through water abrasion and underwater cleaning, and need to be replaced every few years. The constituents go down to the bottom where they accumulate in sediment and then marine flora and fauna. Most anti-fouling coatings used today rely on copper compounds for their effectiveness, but ‘booster’ biocides are added, some of which are banned or heavily restricted for use on land. While copper is much less toxic than TBT (which was called the “most toxic chemical” ever put in the oceans), copper is quite toxic itself, and concentrations that accumulate around busy shipping lanes are far beyond naturally occurring levels. Unlike TBT, copper does not eventually degrade to non-toxic chemicals. Wang et al (2008) found that the concentration of metals in sediments and in internal organs of shelled marine animals was very high due to the high

concentration of copper and zinc in antifouling paints. They stated that these toxic chemicals severely damage marine ecology (copper is especially toxic to marine organisms), and recommended that new antifouling paints without copper be developed. Furthermore, recent research reported in Nature (Qiu, 2016) shows that toxic chemicals, including organic anti-fouling compounds from ship hulls, are accumulating in marine organisms (amphipods) in deep oceanic trenches. A new paper (Brennecke et al. 2016) has found that metals (copper and zinc) released from antifouling paints are readily absorbed onto microplastic pieces in the water. Since microplastic pieces are readily eaten by plankton, they act as a vector for transferring these metals into the marine food web.

Another issue is that of the potential import of invasive species in ballast water, which is released from ballast tanks when a ship is in port. New regulations are intended to reduce this vector of potentially damaging invasive species, but the effectiveness of the management procedures needs to be monitored and evaluated regularly. As ships get larger and larger, they require deeper and deeper channels, which necessitates more dredging of sediment to make room for them. Since the sediments are often contaminated, they require special treatment if they are too contaminated to be dumped in the ocean. One wonders how long this cycle of ever-increasing ship size and more dredging will go on. The time may come when they will reach bedrock and some ports like Newark and NY will have to cease operation.

#### **2.4.6 Sand Management:**

Beach nourishment allows for continued width of bathing beaches, but adding several feet of new sand on top of the beach covers over the small animals that are the food for many wading birds. While beach nourishment or other short-term approaches may provide temporary protection of shorelines, in many areas these approaches will, in the long term, prove futile as sea levels rise and exceed certain thresholds. Thought must be given as to how long we will continue to spend millions of dollars putting sand back on eroding beaches.

#### **2.4.7. Non-consumptive Recreation**

Tourism (including beach going, bird and whale watching, boating, swimming, surfing, paddle-boarding, and scuba diving) can contribute greatly to the local economy of coastal towns. However, water quality issues discussed above (e.g., marine debris, harmful algal blooms) can deter tourism and cause significant economic losses. Boaters themselves can damage habitats by boat wakes that erode edges of marshes and beaches. There should be signage and enforcement of speed limits in sheltered areas. Beach-goers themselves are frequently the source of marine debris, for example cigarette butts or remnants from picnics left on the beach (Gregory and Andrady 2003). Cigarette butts are one of the most common items found in beach cleanups. They can be ingested by marine animals, and the plastic fibers in the discarded butts are concentrated sources of nicotine and carcinogenic substances which they absorbed from the tobacco. Public beaches should all have adequate numbers of trash receptacles available (that are collected and emptied before they spill over) and warning signs and fines for those who leave litter on the beach.

Given the conflicts of aspects of these various uses (national security, energy, fisheries, aquaculture, commerce/navigation, sand management and non-consumptive recreation) with healthy ocean and coastal ecosystems, my major question is **how will decisions be made in protecting healthy ocean ecosystems, while allowing compatible uses?**

## Chapter 3

### 3.2.2. Science and Research Actions

There should be a timeline established for meetings with scientists to generate research needs and priorities.

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- ,

From: **MidAtlanticRPB, BOEM** <boemmidatlanticrpb@boem.gov>  
Date: Fri, Jul 29, 2016 at 10:12 AM  
Subject: Re: My comments on the Mid-Atlantic Ocean Action Plan  
To: Kristin Koch <kristin.zilcosky+7@njlcv.org>

Thank you for submitting comments on the Draft Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Action Plan; we will post them on our website. The MidA RPB will consider all public comments in revising the Draft Plan, and will submit a final Plan to the National Ocean Council for its concurrence this fall. Please check our website <http://www.boem.gov/Ocean-Action-Plan/> for additional information.

On Fri, Jul 29, 2016 at 10:05 AM, Kristin Koch <[feedback@lcv.org](mailto:feedback@lcv.org)> wrote:

Jul 29, 2016

Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body

Dear Regional Planning Body,

The Mid-Atlantic's ocean and bays are beautiful places for families to visit, swim, and fish. Our region's ocean is also an economic powerhouse, contributing more than \$48 billion to the region's gross domestic product (GDP) and nearly 700,000 jobs. And offshore waters serve as migratory corridors and a home for ocean life, including endangered North Atlantic right whales, sea turtles, and many fish species.

As our ocean faces growing challenges of pollution, loss of habitat, and competing industrial uses, it's critical the Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Action Plan ensure a healthy ocean today and in the future. I applaud the RPB on its work to complete this first-ever draft Ocean Action Plan. I hope you will incorporate these recommendations below that will make this Plan stronger and more reflective of me, as an ocean user and coastal citizen.

The Final Ocean Action Plan must:

- Develop a robust and effective process for engaging stakeholders in Plan implementation. Right now the draft Plan's public involvement strategies are vague and variable. Stakeholders, project proponents and agencies will all benefit through a consistent, uniform engagement strategy.
- Set a short, definitive deadline - ideally by the end of this year - to identify and post on the Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal areas offshore that are important for the health of marine life (ecologically rich areas or ERAs).
- Strengthen Federal agency commitments to the Plan's tools for

coordinating agency decisions. It is unacceptable that even a few actions outlined in the draft Plan do not have a lead federal agency or tasks the entire RPB with overseeing implementation.

With these additions to the Plan, I know our region will take a big step forward toward a healthier Atlantic Ocean.

Sincerely.

Kristin Koch  
651 Hawthorne Ave  
Bound Brook, NJ 08805-1537  
[kristin.zilcosky+7@njlcv.org](mailto:kristin.zilcosky+7@njlcv.org)

From: **MidAtlanticRPB, BOEM** <boemmidatlanticrpb@boem.gov>  
Date: Mon, Aug 1, 2016 at 10:15 AM  
Subject: Re: Comments  
To: scott smith <scotbass@hotmail.com>

Thank you for submitting comments on the Draft Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Action Plan; we will post them on our website. The MidA RPB will consider all public comments in revising the Draft Plan, and will submit a final Plan to the National Ocean Council for its concurrence this fall. Please check our website <http://www.boem.gov/Ocean-Action-Plan/> for additional information.

On Sun, Jul 31, 2016 at 12:28 PM, scott smith <[scotbass@hotmail.com](mailto:scotbass@hotmail.com)> wrote:  
Somehow the world needs to be more contentious on the whole and aware of the importance of healthy waters.  
For instance bunker oils are promoted as a great healthy product for humans and animal feeds but there's a price of over expiration of it and not enough menhaden in our waters now , which in turn creates dead zones. So I would think an ecologically rich area is the winter offshore harvesting of menhaden while their spawning by companies who have in a sense monopolized the industry . Unfortunately while some reap the benefits of it , the oceans die because of it.  
Also possibly new surfaces can be developed that are more pervious to runoff and rainwater and promote more drainage into ground instead of into waters. More contentious construction needed everywhere .  
I'm thinking more jobs can be given to people out of work to help restore waterways by planting shellfish beds , ell grass etc and help with the cleanup of the sources of pollution . I was thinking if people and fisherman loss their jobs or can't continue on because their isn't enough resources they can be given jobs like that instead .  
Possibly more plant life can also be planted near runoff areas . Something like rain gardens .  
Scott C Smith

Sent from my iPhone