

Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body Webinar: Updates and Opportunity for Input

Transcript | August 1, 2013

PART 1

Operator: Ladies and gentlemen thank you for standing by and welcome to the Webinar on Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Planning: Updates and Opportunity for Input. During the presentation session all participants will be in a listen only mode. During four discrete four question and answer sessions we'll take comments and questions for the Mid-Atlantic Planning body.

There are two ways to offer comments and questions. If you'd like to provide a comment or question verbally please dial in by phone at 1-800-686-2396 and press the 1 followed by the 4 at any time during the presentation. You will hear a three tone prompt to acknowledge your request. At that time your line will be briefly accessed by the conference operator to obtain identifying information.

You may also use the online chat feature located in the lower left corner of your screen to type a comment or question at any time. If at any time during the conference you need to reach an operator please press star 0. As a reminder this conference is being recorded Thursday August 1, 2013. I would now like to turn the conference over to Laura Cantral with Meridian Institute. Please go ahead ma'am.

Laura Cantral: Thank you Frank. Frank will be our operator helping us with the audio portion of this webinar today. So you'll hear him off and on during the course of proceedings. Good morning and on behalf of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body I'm happy to welcome you to its first public webinar.

As Frank (operator) said I'm Laura Cantral with Meridian Institute and I'll be facilitating this Web meeting. It's intended to be an interactive opportunity for the shareholders, to share information with you, and also for you, stakeholders, to share information with it.

Part of my job as facilitator is to make sure that you understand what we hope to accomplish during this meeting and also how we intend to do that. So please bear with me as I provide an overview of a few things, the agenda and our objectives, some information about the format for the webinar, and importantly how you can interact should you wish to offer a question or a comment.

But first I'd like to provide some introductions and let you know what members of the Mid-Atlantic RPB- are with us today and in interest of time I'm not going to offer them a chance to introduce themselves to you. Rather I'm going to share with you who we have as members and also alternate with us. Please be aware that you can see a full list of members and alternates and details about their affiliation on the Mid-Atlantic RPB website.

So with us today we have two of our three RPB Co-Leads. Our federal Co-Lead is Maureen Bornholdt with the Department of the Interior. Maureen also goes by Mo and you will hear me refer to her as Mo over the course of today. Our state Co-Lead is Gwynne Shultz with the State of Maryland. Not with us is Gerrod (Roddy) Smith with Shinnecock Indian Nation and it's really unfortunate that he's not with us today.

In addition to Mo and Gwynne we have Joe Atangan with the Joint Chief of Staff, Tom Bigford with the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration, David Noble with U.S. Navy, Doug Pabst with the Environmental Protection

Agency, John Walters with U.S. Coast Guard, Marilyn Lennon with the Department of Environmental Protection for New Jersey, Jack Travelstead with Virginia Marine Resources Commission and also as a member of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, Laura McKay with the Virginia Coastal Management Program.

And also with us as serving as alternates to some of our members- we have Meghan Massaua with the Department of Energy, Darlene Finch with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Leann Bullin with the Department of the Interior, Greg Capobianco with Department of State of New York and Salvatore Ruggiero with the Shinnecock Indian Nation.

Also we have Catherine McCall with the State of Maryland and I hope I got everyone. If you're a member or an alternate and I didn't recognize you, you can chat to me and I'll recognize you but we have quite a number with us today. You'll be hearing some of the voices and the names that I mentioned who'll be speaking. Not everyone will be speaking but the folks that I mentioned are here with us.

So let me go on now to talk about the objectives to this webinar. The two primary objectives of this webinar are to first provide updates to the Mid-Atlantic stakeholders about progress and next steps for regional ocean planning and also to receive input and hear questions from stakeholders about initial steps being taken by the regional planning body including topics that are likely to be discussed during the first in-person meeting of the RPB in September. We'll be sharing additional details about that meeting with you later in this presentation.

The webinar will take place in two parts. Part 1, where we are right now will go from now until noon today. And during this part we'll cover an

introduction to the Mid-Atlantic RPB and then we'll pause for our first comment period at 10:30 AM. And I'll go into a little more detail in a moment about how we're going to handle this question and comment period.

We'll then move on to stakeholder engagement and cover that topic until about 11:20 and we'll pause for another comment period that will take us to noon assuming there are enough questions and comments to fill that time. We'll take a break from noon to 1:00. The webinar will go on standby and we'll be asking those of you on the phone line to disconnect and rejoin us if you care to do so when we come back for Part 2 starting at 1:00 PM.

After a quick welcome back we'll discuss the progress toward developing regional ocean planning goals with some initial thinking by the RPB and also some thoughts about identifying the geographic focus for the planning efforts. We'll pause at 1:35 for another question and comment session. At 2:00 we'll hear from the RPB about data, inform the planning process.

We'll move from that topic at 2:15 to discuss operational considerations; how the RPB is getting itself organized to do business. In particular, its development of a charter for the RPB. At 2:30 we'll have our final pause for questions and comments and then we'll do a quick summary, wrap it up, outline next steps and adjourn at 3:00 PM.

Now before I transition from the slide I would like to encourage you to think about questions and comments that you may want to pose to do that related to the topics on the agenda during the question and comment sessions that immediately follow the discussion of that topic.

So for example if you had a question or a comment about stakeholder engagement it would be nice if you would ask your question or share your

comment about that topic during the comment session that immediately follows the discussion of that topic. You are free to pose comments on any topic at any time in any of those four sessions that you care to, but if you were to tailor your remarks to the topic that's just been discussed that would help us have a more productive discussion.

I see now that we have one more RPB member who has joined that I want to identify, Andy Zemba with Pennsylvania. So now let me say a few things about the webinar format. During the webinar we'll see slides and hear presentations by the three - actually two- RPB Co-Leads and also representative of four ad hoc workgroups. RPB has organized itself into some ad hoc workgroups to stimulate some thinking and be prepared to have a discussion about ideas with you today.

These speakers will provide updates on those topics that are currently being considered and as I said we anticipate that those topics will be further discussed at an in-person meeting during September. Also as I mentioned we'll be giving you more detail about that meeting over the course in this webinar.

We'll pause after each major topic -- I think that's probably clear from the agenda review that I did -- to hear from you. The RPB is eager to hear your comments and also thought entertain your questions. You'll be able to offer the comments and questions you have through the phone or the online chat function and I'm going to talk about the mechanics of that in just a minute.

And once your comment or question has been offered to the RPB, the RPB will respond and then we'll turn to the next participant question. In other words, we're not going to be providing an opportunity for a lot of back and forth. You will pose your question or your comment and RPB will do its best

to respond to you in as much detail as it can or as is appropriate in this setting and then we'll move on to the next to hear from as many people as possible.

Okay so thank you for bearing with me with a lot of information about mechanics. I just have a few more things to say and this is important. So let me talk about the mechanics of submitting comments or questions during those Q&A sessions.

We'll go over this information again as we get to those particular session and Frank, our operator, has also reviewed some of this so hopefully it's going to sound familiar. For comments provided by the phone, you get placed in a queue on the phone line to ask a question or pose a comment. They'll be taken in chronological order and we're asking participants to please limit your remarks to two minutes so that we can take as many comments and hear from as many folks as possible.

We'll also turn to questions that are submitted via the online chat function -- that left hand corner of your screen -- where you can see a window and you chat your question or comment. We'll alternate between the phone queue and the chat queue and as time and inventory in either one of those queues permit we'll go back and forth between the two.

If you're planning to make a verbal comment, through the phone line please use the phone number that's provided here on the slide and then press 1 and 4 to indicate that you wish to get in the queue before offering a comment.

If you're not planning to offer a verbal comment or question we ask that you please listen to the webinar via the audio function on your computer and not get on the phone line. That'll just ease our logistics in managing the webinar. So if you're not planning to talk on the phone you can listen and then still have

the option to chat if you'd like to do that online. If at any portion of this webinar you think of a question and you really want to get on the phone line you're welcome to dial this number at any time.

For those of you who are looking at the chat window you may see a button that says raise your hand. We'll not be paying attention to that. We're not using that function so if you're trying to hand your hand it will not do any good because we're not using that function.

Finally -- and this is also important -- as part of the RPB's commitment to transparency this webinar, as Frank noted is being recorded. A full recording, a transcript, the slide presentation, a complete list of the chat comments and questions will be part of the public record and available to you.

And one final thing about getting in line for a question via the phone, if you get in the queue to offer a question or comment during a particular session and time doesn't permit us to get to you, you can either stay in the queue and be recognized during the next comment session or you can chat your comment into the chat window, and it'll be preserved as part of the written record or you can email it to the RPB at midatlanticrpb@boem.gov.

Okay, so I think that takes care of our agenda review and related mechanics. Thank you for bearing with me for all of that detail. It's now time to turn to the fun stuff and I'd like to turn this over to the RPB to get our first session, which is the introduction to the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body.

During this session we will hear from Mo Bornholdt, Gwynne Schultz. We'll not be hearing from Roddy. We'll also be hearing from John Andrechik with the National Ocean Council Office and our first speaker will be Gwynne Schultz. Please go ahead Gwynne.

Gwynne Schultz: Good morning and thank you for joining us today to learn more about the progress and next steps of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body. I believe we're all joining together today because of our deep love of and connection to the ocean. This connection may stem from our appreciation the fish and wildlife and other natural resources that the ocean supports, the cultural treasures that are important to understanding our past and that many of our livelihoods depend on the resources that are in, above or below the ocean. I also believe that we all joined today's webinar because we know there are better ways to manage the ocean. There are more opportunities to streamline government decision making and improve efficiency. We also want to make sure that this ocean planning process does not in some way negatively impact us, our constituents or the businesses in the regions that depend on the ocean.

Our ocean and our uses of the ocean are not static. We see both opportunities and challenges on the horizon. Examples include the potential development of offshore wind energy facilities, the expansion of commercial shipping and the increasing stress on our marine species.

The members of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body, including state, federal, tribal, and fishery management council representatives, are confident that by working together this ocean planning process can help the region not only sustain our existing uses but also prepare the region for new and expanding uses that we hope will ensure stronger coastal communities and economies and we hope our work will result in a healthier ocean coastal ecosystem.

We will work to make better and more informed decisions about the use of ocean space and also make smarter use of our constrained public resources. We want to do this work together with stakeholders and the public.

The Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body is composed of representatives from the Mid-Atlantic States including New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia.

It includes the federally recognized tribes in the regions including the Shinnecock and Oneida Indian Nations. Also included is the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council and nine federal agencies with ocean interests.

The 24 individuals listed on this slide are the official representatives serving on the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body. This information is also posted on our website -- Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body website -- and we encourage you to reach out to these members to share your thoughts.

The work of the-- Regional Planning Body -- will be challenging, but we're not starting from scratch and are fortunate that some of the essential groundwork has already been initiated.

We'll benefit from the work conducted via existing small-scale sector-specific activities. One example of a sector specific planning effort is the work led by Department of Interior and the States as part of their work to identify suitable areas for offshore wind energy develop.

With regard to region-wide efforts a significant amount of work has been undertaken by MARCO and that's the Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean. This is a partnership of five Mid-Atlantic States, New York, New

Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia and was established by the Governors in 2009.

At that time the States identified four priority issues that they believe would benefit from a shared regional approach, interstate collaboration and coordinated problem solving. During the past four years MARCO has been collaborating with federal agencies, key partners and stakeholder groups to address the shared priorities that include: the sustainable development of renewable energy in offshore areas, protection of important marine habitats, preparing coastal communities for the impacts of climate change, and promoting improvements in ocean water quality.

Successful ocean planning depends on good data and information, active participation of many individuals with a variety of perspectives and effective intergovernmental coordination. On this slide you can see that some of the essential elements of ocean planning -- data, participation and coordination -- have already been initiated. This work has created a solid foundation for much of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body's future work.

Early on MARCO -- the Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean -- realized that it needed good data and information about the ocean, including natural and physical resources and existing human uses. That realization led to the development of MARCO's Ocean Data Portal and you'll have an opportunity to learn more about the portal during the afternoon session of this webinar.

The States have engaged stakeholders as well as key federal, tribal, fishery management council and academic representatives over the course of their work and just this past April a very successful Regional Planning Workshop

was held. The formal establishment of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Planning Body was announced during this workshop.

As we look to the future, the recently established Regional Planning Body and MARCO are encouraged by the new opportunities for collaboration especially with regard to engagement with Mid-Atlantic stakeholders and the enhancement of the regions MARCO Ocean Data Portal.

Well at this point we were hoping to have Roddy Smith from the Shinnecock Indian Nation to provide a few opening remarks but in his absence he's asked me to provide you with some insight. The Shinnecock Nation wants to share with you their perspective and understanding of marine planning. The Shinnecock Nation is located in Eastern Long Island, in a portion of what was their ancestral home for many centuries.

Throughout their history they've maintained a deep connection, dependence and respect for the oceans and the coast. While the Shinnecock Nation is interested in all elements of sound management of our shared ecosystems their greatest concern is about climate change. Here are some of those concerns.

One is food security because they have relied for centuries on the living bounty of the ocean they see that bounty declining. Second is fisheries management in the context of changing oceans, changes that include ocean acidification and shifts in the migratory patterns of marine life. Third is habitat restoration. Fourth is sea level rise, particularly given their location. And finally renewable energy development.

In addition to bringing a focus on these key issues from a process and dependence perspective, they welcome the opportunity for providing a voice for coastal state recognized tribes in the region in the marine planning process,

and welcome any federally recognized tribes in the region that choose to be part of the process.

Although all federally recognized tribes in the region have been invited to participate, it is their understanding only the Oneida Indian Nation has expressed interest in both the Great Lakes and the Mid-Atlantic Region.

Working as partners at the table through a regional planning process is a new role for most of the tribes including the Shinnecock Nation. They're hopeful that this process will lead to meaningful improvements in the way oceans are managed and that it will make all of us collectively better stewards of our oceans.

The Shinnecock believe all present have a common interest in improved governance of our shared ocean and coastal resources and we must become better steward for the sake of this and future generations.

So now I would like to turn to Jon Andrechik.

Jon Andrechik: Thank you Gwynne and I want to take a minute to thank the members of the Regional Planning Body for inviting me to be with you this morning. My name is Jon Andrechik and I'm with the National Ocean Council Office and I just wanted to share a few words with you about the national context for this effort.

As you may be aware in 2010 President Obama created the National Ocean Policy by executive order which was really a combination of nearly a decade of work by two bipartisan ocean commissions, an ocean policy task force to really study and look at the issue of the ocean policy and based on their recommendations the President created an ocean policy in 2010.

Part of that ocean policy includes an opportunity for regions to come together and coordinate on regional marine planning. The framework for marine planning as Gwynne mentioned it's an opportunity for all levels of government including federal agencies, states, tribal governments and local governments and the fishery management councils to come together in concert with all of you -- the stakeholders and the public -- to better coordinate and support regional priorities.

One thing that's important to note is that your region is provided the flexibility in this effort to really define the scope, scale and content of what you'd like to address through your marine planning. And now let's take a few minutes to talk about two recently released documents recently released since the April regional ocean planning workshop that Gwynne mentioned.

The first is the National Ocean Policy Implementation Plan which was released on April 16. And you can think of this really as the work plan for the National Ocean Council moving forward over the next several years. It outlines actions that federal agencies will work together on to help support the goals of the National Ocean Policy which include bolstering our ocean economy, improving our ocean health, supporting local communities and strengthening our safety and security. It also includes an opportunity again for regions to come together and address their ocean priorities through the marine planning effort.

The second document that --- recently released on July 19 is the Marine Planning Handbook. The Marine Planning Handbook is really an operational guide for regions who've chosen to establish regional planning bodies and pursue marine planning through that effort.

The Marine Planning Handbook really strives to strike a balance between national consistency and regional flexibility when pursuing marine planning. And again the point about the scope, scale and content of marine plans and marine planning is defined by you the region to solve problems that the region cares about in ways that work best in your region is really the focus of the Handbook while ensuring that certain national goals of marine planning which we've defined in the Handbook are still met. And now it's time to turn over to Maureen Bornholdt, the federal Co-lead for the RPB, who will provide an RPB overview.

Maureen Bornholdt: Thank you Jon and good morning. This is Mo Bornholdt the federal Co-Lead. I'm presently working with the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, an agency within the Department of the Interior, and I want to give you an overview right now with regard to the RPB.

There's been a lot of questions as to what's the regional planning body and so we're going to talk a little bit this morning about what it is and what's its ability to operate in ocean planning to function. RPBs aren't regulatory bodies and don't have independent decision making authority over federal, state, or tribal activities in the region.

But Regional Planning Bodies can significantly enhance stakeholder and public engagement throughout the planning process such as participation in the identification regional objectives, stakeholder workshops and in making any marine plans the RPB produces available for public review and this RPB, the Mid-Atlantic RPB takes very seriously that we want to engage and enhance that opportunity for public input and stakeholder outreach and input.

Each agency around the table will take action within its own little authority rather than the Regional Planning Body using any independent authority. As

well each of the participating agencies is responsible for providing the resources to support their own participation in regional planning. This participation assists agencies in carrying out their existing core missions by facilitating improved coordination with their federal, state, tribal and fishery management council partners.

The National Ocean Policy uses existing executive legislative authority to strengthen coordination to address ocean issues more effectively. What it doesn't do is restrict any ocean usage. It doesn't change agencies' mission or Congressional mandates for agencies. It doesn't require new legislation nor does it supersede existing agency or departmental authority. The National Ocean Policy outlines the use of the existing authority to strengthen marine stewardship.

It leads to improved coordination of ocean and coastal management efforts and all levels of government, restore the health of these resources, enhance the ocean and coastal economy and promote sustainable uses and access across all of these governments. The National Ocean Policy doesn't establish any new regulation for any ocean uses or activity nor does it require new legislation to be implemented or supersede or alter any agency or department existing authority. It's a better more coordinated and efficient way of administering the many different set of laws, policies, regulations and programs already in place.

Since the formal establishment of the Regional Planning Body this April we've started to lay down the groundwork to create regional capacity to advance marine planning in the Mid-Atlantic. As mentioned earlier we have formed ad hoc internal working groups consisting of state, federal and tribal representatives to jump start the dialogue associated with key issues facing us.

You'll hear from these work group co-champions throughout this webinar today.

These workgroups are forming initial ideas on the following topics: stakeholder engagement, regional ocean planning, goals and geographic focus, data and information and finally operational and administrative procedures. We're also planning for an inaugural in-person meeting in September that will be open to the public which will be informed by the outcome of our webinar today. We'll provide additional details about this meeting later in the webinar so stay tuned.

We're building the momentum from our April workshop that was held in Arlington, Virginia. Since then we've been working to develop and carry out initial actions on a six-month timeline. Over the next six months the Regional Planning Body members intend to establish basic operational and administrative procedures such as the Regional Planning Body charter to ensure a clear understanding of roles, responsibilities and commitment of the regional planning body members.

We also intend to foster focused discussions with stakeholders to establish overarching regional ocean planning goals, measurable objectives and milestones, and outline steps to implement the work plan. We intend to focus on creating timelines for various long term action and products that'd be developed as part of the planning process. We intend to and will create a stakeholder contactor list and establish processes and mechanisms for public and stakeholder collaboration.

We'll hold in-person public meetings to provide updates on the planning process and seek stakeholder input and identify most importantly science and data needs and coordinate efforts to begin work on the regional ecosystem

assessment. But for all these actions that I've just mentioned we'll provide opportunities for stakeholder input. We will not do this in a vacuum. The RPB will continuously monitor progress on these actions and provide timelines as necessary. And now I'd like to turn it back over to Laura Cantral.

Laura Cantral: Thank you Mo. So at this point we are prepared to take questions and comments in the first of the four question and comment sessions we've structured for this webinar. Remember that you have two options for submitting your comment or question. If you wish to make a verbal comment on the phone and you're not already dialed in, now would be the time. You see the phone number up on the screen. Dial that number and then dial 1 and 4 to get into the queue or you can type your comment or question into the chat window on the left side of your screen. So I'm going to check with Frank now to see if we have any callers on the line.

Operator: There are no questions at this time.

Laura Cantral: All right so no one's calling in. Let's check on our chat queue and see what we have. All right for people chatting I'll be your interpreter and read the question for the RPB to respond to. We have a question from Jack Fulmer who is asking: Has the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body included the sport diving community and the sport diver fishery in its ocean planning?

Gwynne Schultz: Yes this is Gwynne Schultz from Maryland. We've been reaching out to obtain data from the stakeholder communities to better understand which areas of the ocean they value. Some of that geographic information can then be posted up on the MARCO portal to help inform our future activities

Laura Cantral: Thank you Gwynne. I think I'd just add to that point that Mo made earlier. This is the beginning of the process and engagement by all of the stakeholders

is very much encouraged and appreciated and welcomed so your community that includes your community. So let's see, I think we have some other questions.

Tom Bigford: Laura?

Laura Cantral: Yes?

Tom Bigford: This is Tom Bigford if I could just chime in one bit about the recreational fishing component of the question.

Laura Cantral: Absolutely.

Tom Bigford: We definitely are reaching out to recreational fishers but I'm not sure whether we've got the sport diving recreational fishing sector in that so we'll be sure to expand our discussion with the recreational sector, recreational fishing specifically to make sure we capture the divers. That's a good suggestion.

Laura McKay: This is Laura McKay and I just want to assure Jack that in our participatory GIS workshops that we've been holding around the States to collect information from recreational users, sport diving is one of 22 uses that we have been asking people about so all five States are collect that data now.

Laura Cantral: Okay thank you, any other RPB members want to chime in on that?

Greg Capobianco: Can I chime in quickly Laura? This is Greg.

Laura Cantral: Yes.

Greg Capobianco: I just wanted to respond to the question in that in some of the offshore recreation work that New York has done we did have some extensive conversations with dive associations and the individual divers that gave us their rec site locations and prioritized places that they were using more frequently that were more important to them and we've got a range of very good data from them.

I know the other states are working on organizing and collecting that data, pretty important data that ties into cultural things as well. And the sport divers as we learned are doing lots of things out there so they're an important voice.

Laura Cantral: Thank you, thanks to all who provided some input to that question so thank you for the question. We're going to move to another question coming to us via chat from Michael Jones who's asking how will the Mid-Atlantic process interface and share experience with RPBs of other parts of the U.S.?

Maureen Bornholdt: Hi this is Mo Bornholdt. I'll field that question. I think that's an outstanding question because even though we can get our regional planning launched and work on an ocean plan for the Mid-Atlantic we can't ignore the fact that there are shared ecosystems, resources and activities with our fellows to the north as well as to the south of us so we have reached out.

In fact I noticed that Betsy Nicholson is on this call. She's the Co-Lead for the Northeast Regional Planning Body. And so we'll liaison with them as well as have an ex-officio member on their RPB it is my understanding and we'll invite them possibly to be on ours as well, the same with the South Atlantic.

We know that they're just getting started. We have working relationships with those individuals and we'll share that same kind of co-working relationship and liaison relationship with them.

Laura Cantral: Okay thank you Mo. We're going to go the next question now -- also a chat question -- from David White. David's question is: In what way are commercial shipping entrants represented deep draft as well as tug and barge?

Maureen Bornholdt: That's an outstanding question as well. I think this is one of the endeavors that we're trying to make happen, hence the first question with regard to how do we or are we interacting with the sport diving sector and how do we engage with other users on the ocean who use the ocean? And we can't discount particularly in the Mid-Atlantic how important maritime commerce is to the states and to the federal entities and to local economies in the area.

We do have the U.S. Coast Guard as well as DOT (Department of Transportation) and MARAD (Maritime Administration) engaged as RPB members around the table and through them we're introduced to their stakeholders and the folks that they have constant contact with. And so as we develop our stakeholder engagement plan that you'll hear about a little later, some concepts for that and ideas, we will turn to our federal cohorts around the table to be able to provide us with access to those stakeholders so very good point.

Laura McKay: Laura McKay again. And I just want to let folks know that we in MARCO have held some initial meetings with all of the major ports in the Mid-Atlantic and we've also been working on the AIS shipping data and have analyzed that further to try to segregate things like tugs and cargo ships and we'll hopefully have some more segregate data available on the MARCO portal quite soon.

Laura Cantral: Thank you Laura. This is Laura Cantral. We offer this session to be an opportunity for questions and also for comment and we've received a

comment from Gerhard Kuska and I'm just going to share with you what Gerhard commented.

The Mid-Atlantic Regional Association Coastal Ocean Observing System, MARACOOS, is an integrated ocean observing system in the Mid-Atlantic. The collaborative body among academic, government and private sector entities to collect ---graphic and related data and to provide tailored information products that address the needs of decision makers and other stakeholders in the region from Cape Cod to Cape Hatteras. As a mutual provider of both static and dynamic data and information product. MARACOOS looks forward to supporting the efforts of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body and its members whether that is in support of the ad hoc workgroup, for example the data and information or the stakeholder engagement workgroup or indirect discussions with the RPB and its members and is interested in engaging in dialogue, to move ahead with the collaborative partnership between the Mid-Atlantic, RPB and MARACOOS.

Laura Cantral: So I believe I'm checking with my chat manager here. I think that - do we have anything? I think we have one more question -- bear with us - a question from Rick Marks. Rick is asking: How does the Mid-Atlantic RPB intend to manage, enhance, protect and restore ecosystem resiliency absent any new regulation or activity that may impact the marine environment?

Maureen Bornholdt: This is Mo, I'll take that one as well. I think that's a very good point and I think it'd be a wonderful concept with regard to the Regional Planning Body's work that brings together both the federal and states who can have the ability to regulate and manage resources. What we had not done well in the past is work outside of our individual stovepipes to be able to really augment our current existing regulatory legislative authority to do so.

I think that's the sweetener that the Regional Planning Body brings to the ocean planning efforts is that we can reach across the table, talk to one another, share resources such as data as well as get to know the other stakeholders issues and concerns. We can then maximize our existing authorities to regulate resources and activity.

Lauren Cantral: Thank you and one observation. This is going back a couple of questions now to the question about interfacing across other RPBs in other parts of the country. It's probably worth mentioning that we do have some RPB members who participate on more than one regional planning body. So that provides an additional opportunity for synergy across regions and across the work of multiple RPB.

So I think at this point we're going to transition now. Thank you very much for thoughtful comments and questions. we have three more opportunities over the course of this webinar for you to provide your input which you've heard now several times that the RPB is very interested and is committed to engaging you as this process starts to move over.

So now we're going to - and this actually is a good segue because our next topic is in fact about stakeholder engagement. And during the session we're going hear from the RPB some initial thinking about stakeholder engagement and you'll be hearing from Tom Bigford and Gwynne Schultz from Maryland and at this point I'm going to turn it over to Gwynne.

Gwynne Schultz: As noted on this first slide, stakeholder engagement will be the cornerstone of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Planning process. Members of the RPB believe that our engagement with numerous interest groups and the public will be critical to our success. As a group we'll work to ensure transparency and are committed to providing the opportunity for meaningful participation. After

my brief introduction our next speaker, Tom Bigford, will provide our thoughts and solicit your input on how to fulfill these commitments.

So earlier in today's presentation I mentioned that the Mid-Atlantic States have been reaching out to the public and various sectors to help inform our action. We kicked it off in December of 2009 when we hosted the ocean conference in New York and since that time States through MARCO and its partners, have conducted extensive outreach as listed on this slide to help address many of our data and information needs. Later today, Laura McKay will be describing some of the outreach to get additional data.

More recently MARCO hosted in collaboration with federal partners, the Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Planning Workshop. This workshop was an initial step to engage stakeholders across the region and interest groups in early thinking about the design of the ocean planning process. Please note that the workshop summary and video of the proceeding can be found on the RPB website. And now to continue our presentation, I'd like to turn to Tom Bigford.

Tom Bigford: Thank you Gwynne. I do want to talk about the engagement - stakeholder engagement but first introduce myself. I work with the Department of Commerce, specifically the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration where I work with the National Marine Fisheries Service.

Stakeholder engagement is one of the primary tasks that the regional planning body has accepted throughout this. We certainly want to work on specific issues but we want to work on those issues with stakeholders. So we'll employ the set tools we can find to connect with all sectors. A few of them are listed on the PowerPoint slide, a few of these specific tools that we're using including the website that Mo mentioned, an email that Mo also mentioned.

Webinars such as this and other ways to reach out to you, those are the ideas that we have in mind right now. So certainly we're all ears when it comes to suggestions from you about how we might expand our list, expand our efforts and maintain our primary goals or attain our primary goals of transparency and success. So be sure to take advantage of those and suggest others as we move on.

Next slide 28, public outreach and input, this is something that we've been talking about quite a bit and giving a lot of thought to. We're looking forward to that in-person meeting in September that I'll mention a little bit more of in a few minutes. But electronic means, virtual meetings, newsletters, public meetings, virtual meetings such as this, other online tools, that's going to have to become very important given how difficult it is for us to sustain travel. We don't have travel budgets like we used to and also because your schedules are very tight.

Some tools might work best for some of you and they might work really poorly for others. Meetings during the day like this might not work very well at all for those of you who might -- because of your business or you might be out on the water during the day. Connecting to a webinar from offshore might not be possible during your work day. So together we promised to reach out for input from you to listen to your suggestions and to find the right way to make sure that that communication goes back and forth both ways throughout.

We mentioned several times that the inaugural in-person Regional Planning Body meeting that's in September, you can see some of the details right there. It's basically going to be a discussion like this but in-person. The Regional Planning Body will be there; it'll be open to the public and there will be public comment session.

So we'll make sure that the details get out to everybody including the agenda well in advance so that you can participate. Since again it'll be a during the day give us your suggestion and comments about how that works, the timing, the agenda, things like that so that we can make changes in the future if we have to do something to accommodate people. The schedules might not meet that during the day type of event.

One other or several other important points to make here, stakeholder advisory body of some sort has been suggested by several people. They called us and told us that they'd like to have a way to ensure that their comments get to the Regional Planning Body. They want an opportunity for direct input. They want to be able to provide ideas, advice. We agree completely.

There's a Federal Advisory Committee Act -- FACA -- that I'll mention a little more about in a couple more slide. We have some options for creating a body but it's influenced by FACA. FACA relates to public role. They're a citizen role in government actions, federal government actions that we want to make sure that we abide by the intent and proceed with establishing an advisory body or establishing anything. Just make sure that we proceed with the intent, the fact of well in mind and still fit to our primary objectives of transparency and inclusion.

So specifically about FACA there's quite a few words on this slide and I've got quite a few points that I want to convey so let me explain a little bit more about FACA. The Federal Advisory Committee Act limits what may be asked of advisory panels. Such a group will be considered as the regional planning body organizes itself and considers options for meeting your expectations as stakeholders.

FACA was enacted in 1972 to control the growth and operations of numerous committee experts and commission and similar groups that had been established to advise federal agencies. So FACA is meant to add some consistency and shape to numerous groups such as one that we might consider in the Mid-Atlantic. That can generally apply when a federal agency can be into groups that include non-federal entities which are work will to obtain consensus advice which were - that's the specific issue to consider and to inform federal agencies decision making decisions with the RPB are generally not just federal.

So those key words are real important in how FACA applies to our work. Some of them might relate directly, some of them don't relate and we've got to have a discussion about all of them added together translate into how to how does FACA apply to when proceeding with what the Regional Planning Body itself and all the other advisory committee or other bodies like what we might create.

So much of that language could apply to us including possible role and we're committed to going through the thought process of how an advisory committee of any sort -- advisory body of any sort -- might apply, might connect to our regular communication to meet your expectations of our collected need.

Just to offer in one example here of augmented transparency the Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body is engaging stakeholders through a variety of means. Now you've already heard about the website, about the email address and of course you know quite a bit about the webinar that you're participating in. These are all opportunities to gain, to maintain stakeholder input. Those are issues that are part of our collective efforts to understand the best way to

communicate with you in both directions letting you know what's going on but certainly you back to us.

So a few initial ideas on creating stakeholder idea advisory body, MARCO has been thinking about this for quite a while and now more recently the Regional Planning Body was established in April. We've been thinking about it too. MARCO identified a few options such as what's listed on the slide. All of them are what an important point must be, how the Regional Planning Body will support the effort regardless of the option or for each option that we could consider we need to give full consideration to the efforts that would be required to maintain it.

How would we maintain the communication? How would we actually make it work? In addition to the four that are listed here perhaps you've got other ideas you might like to suggest. MARCO's ideas certainly covered or spanned the range of options but there are many other sub-options that could be worth considering too.

The next slide is about identifying stakeholders. This is a very important part of our work too. It's very important that we -- just one second -- very important that we take this critical step and make sure that everyone is included in the discussions along the way.

Initial work so far has been with that stakeholder workshop that we heard about that was in April and in this webinar. So a combination of the people that we're identified for that event in April and this event has left us with a very long - very full database of about 1000 people who have expressed interest in our work. So far we've made full use of personal request from individuals and also sectors who might want to be engaged. So we've got to cut that 1000, include the combination of the two, individual and then sector.

The best way to be involved as you wish is to share your expectations. So if you didn't get an email announcing this event then you might not be in that stakeholder contact list. We want to make sure that you are so get in touch with us via the email and let us know. You might have other suggestions about --- that might meet your collective needs so speak up about that.

Our needs and actions will also have to be shaped by our work and we're developing that right now. We do not yet have a set list of priorities that we're going to address. Again we've been talking and thinking about this and listening to stakeholders for several years but the Regional Planning Body has not yet established a list.

So among the topics that you'll hear about later on today that would help define our work, shape our priorities would be the geographic scope of the Regional Planning Body which could directly relate to individuals and stakeholders who wish to engage and also to what extent they want to engage. So our decision on some issues such as good geographic scope will change as we perceive new drivers and priorities, may encourage new participants and shifting roles. So this is an ongoing effort. We'll be updating our list of stakeholders and we think we'll be doing that continually.

We hope that sectors and geographies will identify key points of contact. It's one thing to take the example that you heard about earlier in that chat question about recreational divers and divers who are using that to angle, to fish. We would like to identify and contact within a sector like that so that we do not have to constantly try to chase the email addresses of all the participants in that sector.

So maybe we could find a handful of people representing each sector, communicate with them regularly and then work with them to relay information about webinars or we can post things on our website or whatever it might be. Relay that information to members of the sectors that they work in.

So this could be a way for us to become much more efficient and effective. We don't have to constantly be keeping track of people coming and going in individuals sectors. We can contact the sector and they can help us with that secondary relay of information in their own sector. We think that that's an efficient and effective way to operate. We just need to work with the sectors to try to identify people and first of all make sure we've got those sectors and we hope that starts on this call with your questions and chat. So we look forward to your direct assistance. It'd be great to use this webinar to start not only with that sector and spokespeople but also your ideas on how to stay connected with the sectors and the spokespeople.

Suggestions are welcome right now or at any time afterwards through the website and email address. One point that the Shinnecock nation wanted me to make specifically having to do with state and federally recognized tribes, the Shinnecock nation's representing tribal interest on the regional planning body. (Roddy Smith) that can't be with us today is the tribal Co-Lead for the regional planning body with Gwynne representing the States and Mo representing the federal government.

The Shinnecock nation continues to research outreach opportunities to make sure that they're connecting. They've identified all the tribes and that we're appropriately engaging each of them. We're hopeful that this webinar will serve as a starting point for discussion generally about that topic but also

specifically about state and federally recognized tribes. We're certain to include them the way that they hope to be included in this process.

One last slide on stakeholder engagement before we move onto questions and comments, I want to thank you for participating in the webinar and for an ocean planning in the Mid-Atlantic it's a very interesting process with great promise. And I'm super excited about the opportunity to participate in this and really treasure the enthusiasm that we get from others, not just enthusiasm from --- but truly on how we proceed in energy to help us achieve our objectives. Watch our website, contact the RPB at the designated email. Talk with us individually. Come to the in-person event in September. Do whatever you can to engage because we really do need input from stakeholders to make sure that we're headed in the right direction, focus on the right issue. We'll continue to use all of our tools so once again suggest new tools that you think might work.

This is a great opportunity to engage in ocean planning so we can take control, retain control of our future. We all appreciate the effort it's taken to launch this work. It's really great having Meridian helping us and it's great what the states have undertaken and now with the Regional Planning Body with the Shinnecock and the federal agencies involved it's just been a great effort so far and now we look forward to continuous work with the stakeholders because we know that this work means an awful lot to you too. Now I'd like to turn it back to Laura.

Laura Cantral: Thank you Tom. And we're now going to open it for questions and comments on anything you want to share specifically related to what you just heard from Tom and also from Gwynne also stakeholder engagement and you underscore a couple of things just running through - a theme running through all of that is that their RPB is committed to --- to you, that it's committed to finding as

many opportunities --- platforms that are used to be engaged or the RPB to get information to you and for you to get information and ideas back to the RPB.

So whether that's the electronic mechanism, website, email, web meetings, webinars, the kinds of tools that are in place right now and that we're obviously deploying right at this moment but the RPB is also very interested in hearing about more ideas about how stakeholders can be not only engaged but also identified so that they can be engaged. All right so let's now go - I'm under the impression we don't have anyone standing by on the phone but I want to check with Frank first.

Operator: There are no questions at this time.

Laura Cantral: All right thank you. So once again we're going to go to our chat queue and we have a questions starting with Matt Gove who is asking what draft goals and milestones, etc. are created? Will there be regional in-person meetings held for the public to comment? It was mentioned that within six months a charter would be completed as well as draft goals. Is that six months from today?

Maureen Bornholdt: This is Mo. Yes that is six months from today and we'll be conducting, to the extent practical, and actively engaging the public and stakeholders to receive their input on those draft documents. Our first opportunity to do so will be in September and from September we can take our cue working with the co-champions that we have, working on our stakeholder engagement working group Tom Bigford and Sarah Cooksey to map a process so we can continue that engagement after September.

So yes we have the philosophy of engaging. We're going to do so to the extent practical that we can do because there are some challenges in trying to reach everyone in this five state geographic region but rest assured we have

coverage among the five states field to engage in that kind of outreach and receive input.

Laura Cantral: And I'd just add detail and we'll go over some additional details about the planning thus far for that meeting in September that you can mark your dates - your calendars for September 24 and 25. That's going to be the date location and other details. We'll try to share some of that with you later on this webinar but to those of you who may not be with us for the entire four hours that details to follow the 24 and 25 will be the dates.

All right let's take another question. This question is from Wilson Laney. Wilson is asking since the Mid-Atlantic extends south --- why doesn't North Carolina have representation on the Mid-Atlantic RPB?

Tom Bigford: I can take a shot at that. This is Tom Bigford, hi Wilson. We are working very closely sharing information with our friends to the north and the south with fish stocks that extend outside of our jurisdiction or shipping corridors or any other issue I think we'll be working very closely with the state for the north and the south and the industries, the researchers, anybody who can provide information to help our effort.

So we do have a distinct regional body, regional area and it does stop at the Virginia and North Carolina border but that doesn't mean that we're not going to be thinking broader or thinking in an ecosystem context. We're certainly doing that across the agencies that are on the RPB and the issues we're considering as priorities. So I think geographically that applies to north and south, not just to the shore to the shell.

Laura Cantral: All right this is Laura Cantral. We're going to go to our next question. Alison Chase who's asking if you'd please discuss the differences between the

stakeholder options mentioned. For example what's the difference between the stakeholders committee and the blue ribbon panel?

Gwynne Schultz: This is Gwynne, I can take that. As part of our deliberations we discussed the differences between them. The blue ribbon panel traditionally is where you have an individual at the table representing their interests. They're bringing in their knowledge from being a representative in that particular sector but they're really representing themselves to a large degree.

The liaison committee that we are thinking about is a liaison function where they'd be making sure there's a strong connection between what they're saying and their constituents. So they're bringing in information from their constituents and their community and providing that information. So it's an extremely important function and serves as a multiplier. We reach out to the liaison. The liaison reaches out to a much larger group. That is the distinction between those two committees.

Laura Cantral: Gwynne we have another question that's an overlap that needs some additional information that you could speak to. This question is from Brent Greenfield and he's asking again to expand on the slide about how resources preclude the formation of a stakeholder advisory committee at this time and also what's the timeline of an establishment of a formal mechanism for engagement with user groups and how does the RPB plan to incorporate local officials in the process. Expand on the resources that include --- or advisory committee at this time, timelines or formal mechanism or engagement with user groups and how to incorporate local officials into the process.

Gwynne Schultz: I think I'll start out with the first one with regard to the insufficient level of resources available. When you establish a federal advisory committee there's a large level of effort that needs to go into it. You have to staff it. There's a

whole series of things that you need to do and it does cost money. It costs staff time.

It's just a very significant amount of resources to facilitate that type of federal advisory committee and at this point our federal Co-lead and federal agencies don't have the resources especially in this time of reduced budgets. With regard to the timeline. I think I want to shift it over to Tom Bigford because I know he's been co-chairing the stakeholder group.

Tom Bigford: Thanks Gwynne, a lot of good questions, questions that we've been talking about in the stakeholder group. And we don't have answers for them now but we know that it's important that we provide options and start talking about narrowing those options hopefully in association with the September in-person meeting. I'm thinking mostly about the advisory committee or whatever we want to call it, what the timeline would be for creating one and then if one was to be created how often would it meet and how, virtually or in-person.

The key part of all this is that Gwynne mentioned the internal capacity to support it. We want to make sure if we set something up that it's kind of the primary means with communicating with all of you, with stakeholders. We want to make sure that it succeeds. We certainly don't want to set something up that immediately can't be supported with --- time with prompt answers to questions that you might pose or the financial means of --- meetings in public places if we choose to do that.

So we want to give all that a lot of thought. It's going to be great to build on what MARCO already did plus any ideas that come as a result of this webinar and then I think it should be on the agenda for September so thank you for the question Brent.

Laura Cantral: Okay so I'm going to go another question from Sean Dixon. Sean is asking will there be a list of participants available to the public. And I'm interpreting here that Shawn may be referring to your contact list that you were referring to Tom. He goes on to say believes this is something raised in the April stakeholder meeting regarding the transparency issue and it's directly relevant to what Tom was referring to. In other words how do we know who's identified or not to build --- stakeholder group that covers --- if we stakeholders don't know who's already on the list.

Tom Bigford: Another good question. I believe that the first and the easiest check of whether you're on the list is for an individual to know whether they're on the list is if they received an electronic invite to this webinar. So that'll let you know if you're on the list as far as figuring out who else is on the list to make sure what sectors are presented or a geographic range or something like that.

I'm not sure exactly how public we can make the database because it might have personally identifiable information but there might be a subset of the database. Instead we can post a running list of people who have expressed interest or sectors who have expressed interest. I'm not sure about that though so that's something else to talk about in preparation for September, in preparation for the invite that would go out for the September for the meeting.

Laura Cantral: This is Laura Cantral. I'd just add if you have ideas about people including yourself that you think should be on the list it never hurts to send an email and say make sure this person's on the list or this group or whatever the contact is so a good question. We're going to take - we have for maybe a couple more before we transition.

So our next question is from Pam Lyons Gromen. How will you be responding to public comment that comes in between meetings? Will you be posting stakeholder comment letters on the website?

Maureen Bornholdt: This is Mo. We will be posting those sorts of comments that we receive in and dialogue from today in the webinar. Laura mentioned in the beginning you can go to our website at midatlanticrpb@boem.gov and take a look at not only the materials and the transcript and the video from April but as well the same materials here.

With regard to comment letters and responses that are in the public realm we can also post those as well. With regard to responding to individual questions, –that is again one of these challenges we're trying to figure out in working with Tom Bigford and Sarah Cooksey our stakeholder workgroup co-champions as well as comments to from you all. We'll figure out a good way to do that we will to the extent that we can post and use our website as one tool.

We also, I think, contacted many of you using our Constant Contact tool. Whether or not that can be used is another question. So we will post to the extent that we can using our website but if there are other means that you feel would be a good suggestion, another tool we can use to keep folk (apprised) of dialogue between sectors our responses to letters, etc. Please offer them up to us.

Tom Bigford: Just a couple words on that. I completely agree with what Mo said and just to add a little bit of ---. The stakeholder engagement workgroup is going to meet right after, - a couple days after this webinar, and prepare the Regional Planning Body to respond to questions, getting answers back out to

individuals in a timely basis and making sure that they're hearing on behalf of the regional planning body, that is our next big task.

We've been focused on preparing for the webinar but that webinar, we're going to take what we hear and charge off into the real implementation type questions that were posed here by --- so thanks for the question. It's definitely next on our agenda.

Laura Cantral: Great so we're going to keep going. Actually I may have confused matters because I got myself confused and --- we have ample time to continue with some questions and comments and we have quite a few people lined up on the chat. And I'm just going to continue to share with you what some of those questions are and as many as we can before we take a break for lunch.

So our next question is from Mary Fall Wade. The question is: Is the RPB going to have a central webpage listing some of the opportunities to engage with other stakeholders or perhaps that already exist?

Maureen Bornholdt: This is Mo. We already have a main RPB webpage and that again is midatlanticrpb@boem.gov. I think it's a great suggestion and as we become more robust in our contact database with regard to main sectors to the extent that we can show links to those sites—we can do so -again, great suggestion. Tom is on the line. He's uploading that suggestion. We could actually use that particular tool that way.

Laura Cantral: Anything else to add on that? I'm going to go to the next question from Michael Jones who's asking how will we learn what tools are being available and those being used. Is there a list available online? For example, –UC Santa Barbara developed a software program called Sea Sketch to allow an infinite

number of stakeholders to provide input. This tool is being in California for its marine protected areas, New Zealand and elsewhere.

Tom Bigford: This is Tom Bigford. I'll take a first shot of a response. I know I personally am learning everyday about different tools with engaging the public for getting the public to engage with each other, to go back and forth with ideas and maybe add a little bit of shake to a general idea or narrow it down from options into something that might be more specific to the Regional Planning Body to then discuss.

I think any of those tools, all those opportunities are I'm all ears for them. I'm not an expert in that arena so people who've seen it work elsewhere and can suggest this is the Mid-Atlantic, I think it's a great way to sort of break down those boundaries. We heard a similar type question earlier about how we're working with other RPBs. I think working with other sectors on how they've come up with tools that they've come up with I think is a very strong parallel type of opportunity that we should take full advantage of.

So I appreciate the comment both by Mary and Michael here about making good use of websites, making good use of tools, social media, anything of all we can use to get - to increase sharing information, increase the transparency in the Mid-Atlantic. I think that's just a great way for us to import lessons from elsewhere too so it feels like instantly expanding our capacity in the Mid-Atlantic.

Other people have done similar type things that work we'd love to hear. I'd actually even like to hear about other tools that have been used that maybe didn't work and why because we can still learn from that.

Laura Cantral: Great.

Laura Cantral: All right go ahead Joe.

Joe: I appreciate the comment about SeaSketch. Just as a FYI there have been discussions in the Northeast Regional Planning Body that are looking to employ SeaSketch for just that reason, expand I guess the stakeholder engagement aspect of this, still in the early stages. We're looking forward to trying it out and see how much it works but it's --- that looks very promising. And if it works in the northeast regions my suspicion is that it can easily be applied over here in the Mid-Atlantic and over in doing so.

Laura Cantral: Great thanks Joe. So another example of how the cross pollination between and among regions and regional planning bodies is important and helpful. All right the next question is from Sarah Winter Wheland who has a question and perhaps maybe a suggestion in this question. Has the Mid-Atlantic RPB considered doing a training like the one at Battelle Memorial Institute and put together for new RPB members? I attended one in May and it was fantastic. And another question, what has the Mid-Atlantic RPB defined as stakeholders?

Tom Bigford: This is Tom Bigford. As far as training goes we have had several training opportunities dangle in front of us, people who are expertise - who have expertise in dealing with individual sectors such as --- perhaps or working with the public. And again we're listening to all of those different types of training opportunities and thinking how it might help.

Again we've been focusing on the webinars. We've had not been focusing on those issues recently but we will. And the second question there, that's pretty much self-identified right now. We certainly identify sectors that we thought

should be included in our work and that's where we started developing the inside list for the stakeholder workshop in early April.

Now that list of our ideas of sectors is being populated by individuals from those sectors and from others and we're constantly comparing the two to make sure that we don't have a sector left out or that we have a sector identified that no one's participating from and in which case we want to make sure that we've got the right people or just get into that sector and make the right connection.

So it started out with a little bit of both, a little bit of our vision to make sure that we would be learning from other RPBs and including all the stakeholders they found to be important but then including anyone who should choose to participate, anyone that's self-identified as a stakeholder. Did I interrupt somebody else who wanted to speak?

Laura Cantral: Someone else wanted to chime in on that? No Tom, I think we're good. We're going to move to the next comment. Bear with us for just a moment. All right this is related to the exchange a moment ago about Sea Sketch and Joe is offering a point that you'll hear be more about the MARCO portal later this afternoon. But Joe is mentioning that the draw feature is available now to all registered users on the MARCO portal and it offers the same functionality as Sea Sketch.

It's cross forcing management approaches as --- by the RPB and MARCO then the portal can easily be customized to provide that capacity so just a data point there and again we'll be coming back to the portal this afternoon. Okay so now I'm going to a question from David White. David is asking will it be the purpose of the RPB to provide information or to act on an agenda with no independent authority, in what ways would RPB influence policy and regulatory actions.

Maureen Bornholdt: Hi this is Mo. The agenda to me I interpret that as identifying goals and objectives and this is our first step we took and we're very grateful for MARCO for hosting the April workshop to kind of get our arms around the different ocean issues, particular concerns and issues, tools, opportunities and then combine the learning that we received from that particular workshop with this webinar and moving forward in September to actually help us design, I would say, a framework for dialogue with the public to better articulate what are the goals, what are the drivers in the Mid-Atlantic so we can then design a planning mechanism to arrive at regional ocean plans in the Mid-Atlantic, also being conscientious about what's going on in the north and the south because as we all know critters and activities just don't stick to a particular geopolitical line. I guess that's our agenda.

I think that we do have the full quiver of jurisdictions, responsibilities and permitting authorities; I don't feel that we're lacking there. I think that this last set of question and the last set of slides talk about stakeholder engagement. That's really what we need to augment in our quiver so we have all the elements ready to be able to work on designing what the plan is and how to develop the plan.

So I guess to me our agenda is to identify those goals and drivers working with the public and the stakeholders across these sectors, federal, state and First Nation. So I think we have those capabilities. We can as Tom mentioned learn about different tools to help us become more robust but the key thing that we need probably the most is to make sure we have a good understanding of the stakeholders, those interest and activities so we can move forward with our agenda as I outlined in a better informed manner.

Laura Cantral: All right. Now I'm going to share recommendations offered by Rick Mark. The New Jersey commercial fishing industry supports creation of a standing 'resource use' advisory panel to provide for meaningful industry participation and information exchange. We can provide the name of an industry representative to serve in this capacity if given the opportunity.

Tom Bigford: This is Tom Bigford. Thanks for the suggestion Rick. I think specific suggestions like that will give us an idea of what stakeholders might expect and that'll really inform our ability to them to think about what we might be able to support. So groups might be arranged by sector and/or geography and it sounds like that suggestion was a combination of both, something with recreational fishing that's specific for New Jersey but we might be thinking about shipping by port or by certain segments of the coastal transportation carter.

There's a lot of different ways to approach this so it'd really be good to get suggestions such as Rick's and then add that into the ideas that we've got from MARCO with their four general ideas and again give it some thought compared to our ability in the RPB and your ability as stakeholders to support this so thanks for this suggestion. I'd like to hear more about whether it's better or worse to do something on a geographic basis or a sector basis.

We are trying to communicate across sectors and including stakeholders. So there might be some benefit of doing - of meeting or having panels that are not just sector specific, maybe all sectors in a geography or the full geography with a specific just as if we're sure we've got shipping entrants for instance for the entire Mid-Atlantic so further ideas like that would be really good not just now but anytime in the future.

Laura Cantral: All right we have another question from Sean Dixon. An early slide suggested the RPB will be addressing the current permitting activity. How will the RPB be addressing or getting involved in the current ocean permitting under consideration now, for example seismic testing, offshore wind leases, deep water permit, energy right of way?

Maureen Bornholdt: I think- this is Mo - I mentioned earlier one of the really incredible exciting opportunities for the Regional Planning Body is the fact that we have a full complement of data assets, personnel resources, knowledge and experience across the First Nations, state agencies and federal agencies in the Mid-Atlantic. And I view that as the way that the Regional Planning Body can help individuals, states, First Nations in their permitting and regulatory responsibilities by augmenting what other data points, research, other activities that are ongoing on the ocean in the Mid-Atlantic so that whatever individuals, state, federal, First Nation decision making is well informed with the best and most current information possible. So that's how I look at how the RPB can help in one sense.

And the second sense is just the act of planning and creating regional ocean plans also helps inform the decision making on all those levels, federal, state and First Nation and that probably will be perhaps the most tangible product people will put their hands on. We can't discount the first point that I made because the intangible dialogue around table, across different stovepipes, even within our own federal agency the Department of the Interior.

This has helped us bridge, from the perspective of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, and create new relationships within the Department of the Interior among its sister agencies as we converse about ocean resources and ocean energy development so I think that it's twofold. One was helping us establishing a planning process and a plan and the other is the learning and the

feedback and the information exchange happening around the table as well as while we reach out to stakeholders and develop a plan.

Tom Bigford: And this is Tom Bigford if I can add on Mo. Another important point to make that - we're not talking about new licensing or new permitting, we're talking about we're improving the efficiency and effectiveness of existing authority, existing roles. And I personally know and I know a colleague here and I think a lot of people around the RPB table, we're all really excited about addressing long term regional issues that choose an opportunity as traditional, uses on end to prospective uses in the future such as wind and doing it in a better fashion and improve fashion than what we've done in the past.

I've been doing this for quite a while and I'm satisfied with the general way that we've been able to manage the Mid-Atlantic. So I'm very encouraged by new relationships and new commitments that I think will enable us to do our work in a much more efficient way without new authority. We know each other more now. We know what each other wants and we're working together in ways that we've never done before.

Laura Cantral: Okay we have another comment offered by Michael Flynn. This is related to training and the comment about Battelle CMSP training. I also attended Battelle CMSP training and it was very helpful. I worked for Stockton College Coastal Resource Center and we will be hosting an upcoming webinar regarding flood maps, but after that we might be interested in hosting an event at Stockton or in partnership with other CTP partners such as Monmouth, Stevens or Rutgers. We will try to attend the meeting in September at Monmouth and perhaps discuss possibilities then.

So get me through some moments to check to see if we have other things coming in on the chat that we need to share with you so just one moment.

David White is asking if any state port authorities are eligible for RPB membership and if so they should be asked to join. Hold on one second.

Gwynne Schultz: I believe that the port authority -- this is Gwynne Schultz -- are state employees in which case if they were designated by the governor of the state then I believe that they'd be eligible to participate. Each of the governors was asked to identify two members to serve on the regional planning body.

Laura Cantral: Jon?

Jon: Hi this is Jon Andrechik with the National Oceanic Council Office. Thanks Gwynne and Gwynne's absolutely right. So in starting this process governors were asked to identify two representatives of the state. And so governors have done that for this region. If additional state representation is required those individuals would participate via their already designated state members to the RPB.

Laura Cantral: All right thank you. Hopefully that clarifies - bear with me, I'm just looking through the chat. I think we just about come to the end of our questions and comments session. A few of you who've offered something via that's just additional contact information or echoing another comment -- and I'm not going to be sharing those but I want to make sure that we've gotten all of our substantive questions and comments so just one moment here.

All right we have entertained all of the questions and comments that have been offered via chat with none through the phone for this public comment session and so we're going now off adjourn part one of the Mid-Atlantic RPB webinar and we'll be resuming at 1:00 PM. So the webinar will go on standby until 1:00 and if you are listening via the phone - hopefully you're not because you didn't call and ask a question which is what we want you to do.

But if you are on the phone line, if you would hang up and dial back in at 1:00 pm and we will see you or hear you then for part 2 where we will discuss regional ocean planning goal, the geographic scope of the planning effort, data and operational considerations including a charter for the RPB.

So we hope you all come back. We look forward to you rejoining us at 1:00 pm. And we'll talk to you again.

Operator: Ladies and gentlemen we will now take a break until 1:00 eastern time. The web meeting will go on standby and we ask you to please disconnect your phone lines at this time.

If you wish to post a global comment during the afternoon question and answer session, please dial back into the phone, during the afternoon part 2 of this meeting.

Once again, we will now take a break until 1:00 Eastern Time thank you.

PART 2

Hello ladies and gentlemen and thank you for standing by and welcome to part 2 webinar on Mid-Atlantic regional ocean planning updates and opportunity for input.

During the presentation sessions, all participants will be in a listen only mode. There are two ways to offer comments and questions. If you would like to provide a comment or question verbally, please dial in by phone at 1800-686-2396 and press the 1 followed by the 4 on your telephone at anytime during the presentation.

You will hear a three tone prompt to acknowledge your request. At that time, your line will briefly be accessed by the conference operator to obtain identifying information.

You may also use the online chat feature located in the lower left corner of your screen to type a question or comment at any time. If at any time during the conference, you need to reach an operator, please press star 0.

As a reminder, this conference is being recorded, Thursday, August 1st 2013. I will now turn the conference back to Miss Laura Cantral with Meridian Institute. Please go ahead.

Laura Cantral: Thank you Frank and welcome back everyone. We realized that some of you maybe joining us for the first time and work with us for part 2 that took place - I mean part 1 that took place this morning. This is part 2 of the Mid-Atlantic regional planning body webinar.

For those of you who are joining for the first time and as a refresher to some of you. I want to reiterate some basic introductory points.

There are two primary objectives to this webinar. And they are to provide updates to Mid-Atlantic stakeholders about the progress and next steps for regional ocean planning.

Some of those updates were provided this morning and we're continuing with some further updates this afternoon. And the other objective is to hear input and questions from stakeholders about those initial steps and to share with you the topics that are being discussed today are most likely topics that are going to be discussed during the first in-person meeting of the RPB in September.

That meeting is planned for the 24th and 25th of September and it's going to take place at Monmouth University in New Jersey.

So let me do a very quick review of the agenda. We focused on a general introduction to the RPB, what it is, who it is in the morning and we also talked about stake holder engagement and had two question and comment sessions.

For the afternoon, we're going to first focus on regional ocean planning goals and geographic focus for ocean planning. And at around 1:35 we'll take questions and comments during the first of the two afternoon comment sessions.

At 2:00 pm we'll turn to data and information needed for planning processes and then we'll move directly at 2:15 into a description of some of the operational considerations underway by the RPB including an outline of a charter that it is working on for - to guide it to work.

At 2:30 we'll have our final question and comment session I'll summarize some key highlights themes that we've heard, outline some next steps and we will adjourn the meeting at 3:00 pm.

So I'm going to skip over the web format I think that and for those of you who are with us this morning, your familiar with the format, I've outlined the agenda. You will be hearing from some of the members of the RPB who will be presenting, talking you through the slides that you'll be seeing on your computer.

So let me just underscore a few things about the mechanics of submitting comments and questions, Frank went over this but I want to make sure everyone is clear.

You can provide your comments via phone or the web, the chat function. If you are choosing the option to join - to share your question or comment by phone- those comments will be taken in chronological order and we ask that you limit your remarks to 2 minutes to ensure that we can take as many comments and question as possible.

In the morning, we had a number of questions and comments and they were all through the chat feature which is fine and works great so we welcome either one of those. If we have those people in line on through both of those platforms, people wanting to be heard on the phone and also the chat, we'll alternate between the two and get through as many as time permits.

And then also as Frank mentioned, this webinar is being recorded as part of the RPB commitment to transparency to make all of these information available everything's that's being discussed today.

So it will be recorded to slide - I mean slides will be available as will a transcript and a complete list of chat questions and comments will all be part of the record.

Also this morning, we had approximately 135 folks logged in joining us. That number is as close as we can get to an accurate number of people who are actually with us today because some folks maybe with their colleagues and haven't logged in. So it's somewhere in that neighborhood.

There have been a couple of questions that we've gotten about posting a list of participants today and I think our thinking is that, we will not be providing a list for a couple of reasons.

One when we asked you to register, we didn't ask you if it's okay for us to publish your name so we don't want to do that without permission and also as I just mentioned about, we're not sure exactly - you know we can't get a total accurate list of who had participated.

What we can do is provide in some of summary information that will be posted as part of the follow up to this webinar. We'll be able to give you a sense of the different sectors that are represented by participants today, but we won't be providing a detailed list of individuals at this time.

So that conclude all of my preliminaries and a general review and I hope that is clear and I think we will now transition to the first of the afternoon topics which is related to regional ocean planning goals and geographic focus.

And I'm going to turn to Doug Pabst who's going to speak to you about the RPBs early ideas about those things and after he concludes his remarks, we will open it up for a public comment and question session. Doug, please go ahead.

Doug Pabst: Thank you. Good afternoon everybody, hope you had a good lunch and I'll try not to put you to sleep. I'm Doug Pabst with the United States Environmental Protection Agency Region II and I'm represented and supported by my EPA colleagues along the coast and in our headquarter offices and our office of research and development.

I also would like to acknowledge Greg Capobianco from New York State DOS (Department of State) my co-lead on this particular section. We'll switch on slide 43 for those following offline.

I want to start off with that, it's important to acknowledge as you go through any process and you begin planning that you want to establish short term and long term objectives and activities that you may accomplish. So we'll start our conversation by first managing expectations, ours and yours and together recognize that we need to focus what little resources we have and probably we'll have less as time goes on, on accomplishing those things that we all figure out are most important.

Short term examples include things like developing a capacity assessment, planning activities, mapping, coordinating, identifying our geographic focus which we'll go and talk about in a little bit, and coming together on regional ocean planning goals and the work plan that will get us there. And that is a lot to talk about as a short term activity goes.

Long term will be things like implementation and achievement of those goals that we've developed along the way or getting to success which we're going to talk about in a little bit.

Slide 44, hello? We have a slide 44. There you go, thank you. Let's talk vocabulary. I think the focus of this conversation, we want to emphasize that this is an evolving process. It's going to be organic and on-going and as we had in our stake holder session, we want to allow a lot of opportunity for people to be part of this.

But we want to establish a vision, what do we want our relationship to be with the ocean as we move forward into the future? We want to develop ocean planning goals that are high level, clear but meaningful in a set of principles for achieving those goals.

Example we want to improve government coordination and efficiency and we heard a lot about that this morning. I want to improve stakeholder engagement and all of the varied interest that occupy the mid-Atlantic area and I think we had a lot of good conversation about that as well.

And then using the best data that we have is another one of the things, the goals that we have and we're going to be talking about that a little bit after this particular session.

And then after we developed goals and principles, we can start to drill down the specific objectives and activities that will result in those accomplishments. On slide 45. We want to start thinking about what's driving us, what do we need to really be doing, what are the reasons we're doing some of these besides let's just have a plan.

We want it to be meaningful and we figured the first step would be thinking about this and actually acknowledging those drivers. And what you see in front of here in the slide are things that we discussed as MARCO, which preceded the federal effort and then federal agencies started having those conversations, and the Shinnecock nation also participated and prior to the actual of standing up of the regional planning body.

And to be clear about these things, we mean by drivers. These are the key areas around which we think we can actually make progress through the social planning activity, to take into account all the activities in the interest that occur in the Mid-Atlantic region.

And a key consideration on the bottom you'll see and I think we can all agree, climate change and resilience planning are things that we need to look at as a global aspect and probably part of a lot of activities and conversations. Things

that we are dealing with the recovery from Sandy still. Sea level rise, ocean acidification and how that is affecting the different types of species that populate this area both ecologically and from a fisheries management perspective.

We have to look at the changes that are going on in the ocean and take those things into account as we make a more coordinated and look forward effort thinking of long term as we move down the road into planning and how these drivers will be factored into decisions as we move forward.

Slide 46, and before I go further, I really want to again emphasize that the regional planning body is keenly aware of the need to engage and continue to work with the stakeholders in a meaningful way as we develop our regional planning goals.

One of the things that I was sort of burnt into my brain early and it's still meaningful to me today is that the Be-in versus the Buy-In process. We want this to be something people take ownership of and feel their part not just reacting to efforts.

And so as the song goes, we've only just begun and I'll spare you my singing. What we're referring here today are just again our initial thoughts and things that we've heard as we look forward to engaging people in the coming months and particularly the September workshop.

So this is intended to be a conversation that started back in April, and again as I mentioned earlier, it really started before that but I think that was the first time that we really had the crystallization of these issues and use them as a starting point.

And we ask people to tell us, you know, what do they want to get out of this? What was the meaning of this? And the bullet you see are the themes that we heard particularly at the April workshop and again some of the conversations before that also reference some of these things.

So the desired outcomes prompt us to consider things as we move forward, the kind of questions, what do we need to do differently as federal, state, tribal, local resource managers to do this?

Specifically how can Regional Ocean planning help us get there? What is success? I think that's a key issue that you know, how you can be successful if you don't know what success is. So I think that conversation is important and we're going to have to get there.

And we don't have these answers but we definitely want to get input as we move forward and crystallize these things to be successful. And we want to develop a concise and clear set of goals in order to achieve these meaningful benefits.

We don't want this to be another plan that just gets put on the shelf. We want this to be something that is implemented and recognizing our limited resources. Slide 47 please.

So again what you'll see here again is some initial ideas. Our work group of the regional planning body decided to take some of those initial drivers that we had just discussed and we had heard at the workshop and develop an initial set of draft regional ocean planning goals for the stakeholders and the public and others to consider and this is not meant to be all inclusive, it's not meant to be limited to which is again to start the conversation.

And we want people to keep in mind criteria that we had when we did these things which are what aspects of what we heard are actually regional ocean planning goals as we defined that term in the earlier slides.

Other desired outcomes we've heard seem to rise to the level of vision, or maybe more appropriate as principles or even eventual objectives so that was one filter that we looked at as we went through the process.

We also want to identify ideas about goals that could benefit the entire region not just specific geographic areas but recognizing that some of these maybe specific - they may be specific areas that require a certain set of goals as we move forward.

And we wanted to balance from different perspectives. I think again the days of the economy and the environment being you know, not compatible are behind us and we need to move forward understanding the balance of moving forward and protecting our ecosystem self or improving it in only cases where it needs to be done.

So we also wanted to look at, well we could even do, what is possible to do? We don't want to set our goals so high that we're doomed for failure. We want to give ourselves the best chance for success. So there was a lot balancing that was done.

And I want to make sure people understand this consistent with the national ocean policy that the president put out. Again that it's important to consider oceans are held in public trust for everyone. They don't belong to anyone, particular group. They're there for all of us.

So we're eager to hear what people have to say, and the Regional Planning Body plans to have further conversations in the coming months and we want feedback both initial today, and I'm really pleased with the Q&A I've heard so far.

After today, you can send written comments, and then again at Monmouth University workshop in September which is where we're going to want to have a little more time for dialogue and things like that.

Slide 48, let's talk geography. What are we talking about when we say Mid-Atlantic? I know I also deal with climate change and it gets a little confusing sometimes that people use these terms and they not always the same areas that have hold these things.

So we want to make sure people understand what we mean by the Mid-Atlantic region. And the broad scope was defined in the National Ocean Policy framework.

And what you can see here in front of you, as we're talking about specific States of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia. Out to the edge of the exclusive economic zone, basically 200 nautical miles offshore. And then within those areas, we have the flexibility to establish different locations or specific areas that we want to focus on.

Slide 49, now we want to be practical. I think you've heard that word several times throughout the day today and that's again as we move forward and looking at areas that we may want to focus on, just to get the conversation started but by no means to be limited to or reduced to the areas that we're discussing.

You know there were a lot of existing programs, the National SQA programs for example from the EPA perspective and the other federal agencies has programs and they have the Chesapeake Bay program which again covers a lot of area.

We don't want to duplicate efforts. We want to focus on areas that we can apply resources to that need that attention that isn't being handled before. We're not going to regulate in-land activities so that's not something that we're interested in doing, but recognize that if something's happening on land that could affect the ocean and the coast, we want to provide guidance and insights into those programs such that they would understand what the impact maybe and what they may need to do differently as well.

Where we're going to get the most value? And again, well we believe the best bang for the buck will be is going to be to look at the blue ocean. And again this means the state and federal orders out to the exclusive economic zone at 200 nautical miles.

We're not going to include estuaries and base, again just to get the conversation started. But we may include long island sand and a lot of discussion around that for parity with the New England group which has Long Island sound as part of their discussion.

And then down to Virginia and North Carolina and out. We want to look at ecological integrity, different jurisdictional boundaries and we want to have something that we believe can be manageable.

But there's a lot of things that are happening in the blue ocean. I heard some of it during the Q&A on the public stakeholder engagement, renewable energy, you've got navigation, military areas, significant ecological and

migratory pathways, artificial reef locations, the canyons offshore which are a significant source of habitat and the fisheries and bird habitats and the list just goes on and on.

So I think this is going to be a big part of our conversation as we move forward and we really want to look forward having those conversations with people as we progress in the conversation. Next slide.

I think it's time for questions and I'll turn it back to Laura. If I didn't put everybody to sleep.

Laura Cantral: No, no we're all here. It's all great. Thank you, Doug. So you heard a lot of information from Doug and just to underscore a couple of points, this is the start of our conversation that the RPB is having and is very, very eager to have your input and engagement into a point probably should have reinforced at the beginning as we come back at part 2. One of the ways the RPB has been proceeding since the April workshop that many of you attended is to organize itself into working groups.

Doug and also Greg Capobianco from New York have been co-championing, that's our term for the co-leads of this work group, and with some of the other members of the RPB have been developing the ideas that Doug just summarized for you and as you heard him say, they definitely don't have all of the answers and have - are asking a lot of important questions.

These are questions that need to be considered carefully by the full RPB and in consultation with you and other stakeholders in the region. And that is obviously one of the reasons why this will be front and center discussion along with other important topics at the September in-person meeting.

So we're going to open the question and comment session now. If you haven't already post a question or a comment and would like to do so, now would be the time to either chat us your question or comment or call that phone line that you see on the slide, and press the 1 and the 4 and be recognized for the verbal comment.

And Frank I don't think we have anyone on the phone now but can you confirm that?

Operator: There are no questions at this time.

Laura Cantral: Okay thank you. So we do have a few questions via chat. And I'm going to start with a question from Sean Dixon who is commenting that slide 45 maybe we could go back to that slide, leaves out non-renewable energy, LNG ports and dumpsites and also doesn't specify whether the federal agencies are quote driven by on-shore habitat.

Can you clarify if this means the RPB officially doesn't think it can meaningfully affect decisions being made by these sectors?

Doug Pabst: I'll take a shot at that based on the work group if that's okay with everybody. Hi Sean nice to be talking to you via webinar. Thanks for the question. It's a good question. And we try to convey a lot of information in this set of slides. So I think some of those kinds of details may have gotten lost but clearly to the extent that those activities are happening in the areas that we're working on, in that I think those things would be happening in those areas, I think they're open for RPB discussion, to the extent that decision are being made on land.

As I said, we're not going to be regulating those things or talking about those things specifically but if there's a particular land based impact that is having a significant impact on ocean resources, we certainly could inform the entities responsible for that in a meaningful way and engage them I think. So hopefully that addresses that to some degree.

Laura Cantral: Okay thanks Doug. All right we're going to go our next question which is from Sarah Winter Whelan about visioning. You talked about visioning. Does visioning helped inform all the things you're talking about goals, focus, data, operations, charter. Did or will the RPB go through a visioning process to help inform where we want the state of the Mid-Atlantic to look like into the future.

Doug Pabst: Again this is Doug; I'll start off with that. And certainly we want, yes a short answer I think is yes. And but more than just the vision, I think we really want to break it down into what is success? It sounds like it might be semantics but I think it's important to understand, we just - to say we want a healthy ocean, I think that's a good vision but we really want to break down to the specific actions and points that we need to put pressure on with our limited resources to get to that point.

So I think I'll just stay with yes, we should have a vision but we also should have some metrics that can be measurable to some degree that shows success. But it's an open question so I think if there's something we want to do as a group, we can do it.

Laura Cantral: All right so we've got another question, I think that thematically, it's related to Sarah's question about a vision and whenever having these kinds of discussions and talked about terminology and distinctions between goals and objectives and a vision and principles and everyone who's been involved in

the planning process is well-aware of how easy it is to get tangled up in that terminology.

So the question that Joan Bondareff is asking is, she says, I see objectives but what are the goals of planning effort? Do they match the National Ocean Policy goals and then another question, what has happened to offshore oil and gas development?

So there are a couple of different things in there. At least the first part though, you might want to take and clarify or underscore some of the things you said about terminology and I think that as part, I'm just going to wrap here for a minute, as part of the September meeting I think you can fully expect the RPB to be having a discussion about what do we want to see for our region and how do we proceed to articulate the goals and objectives that will get us there.

So that's just their contribution but Doug I'm going to hand it back to you.

Doug Pabst: Thanks and yes, I mean we do clearly, we're working with the trickle down from the National Ocean Policy and the National Ocean Council and all the handbooks and guidance documents produced thereof. But to the extent that this is just our initial thoughts on get the conversation started, if there's a goal here that isn't represented, we certainly want to hear from folks.

So I think these again are all conversations starters and just looking to see - have something to start talking about if you will on the conversations. We're not limited to these particular goals, but they're clearly things that we've heard before.

As far as status of the oil and gas activities, I'll defer to maybe (Mo) or someone on the BOEM folks want to handle that one.

Maureen Bornholdt: Thank you Doug this is Mo Bornholdt with BOEM, with regards to oil and gas and taking a look at some of these planning goals and drivers, again, building on what Doug said it's not the intent that you take a look at these things now, so for example with regards to conventional energy development on the ocean, it would still mean that you would have to have an nexus with protecting habitat and ecosystem functionality in planning for whether it's oil and gas or LNG, you would still want to keep in mind some of these unique planning goals associated with retaining areas of military testing, training and operation.

So again kind of going back to our phase 1 of our workshop where we talked about the premise for the Regional Planning Body, we were all individual entities where there were federal, state, tribal, we all have our responsibilities and our missions but what we're going to gain from having a Mid-Atlantic Regional Planning Body is the nexus understanding augmented discussions and dialect, augmented data access.

So if we move in any direction, whether it's LNG or other traditional energy development, like coal and gas will have benefited from that. So it's not that if you don't see it listed from here, that's something that is going to be addressed, it is addressed in a sense of trying to keep with some of these initial planning goals that as Doug mentioned we've just kind of teed up for discussion and to kind of jump start the conversation.

Laura Cantral: Okay we're going to take another question, this one is from Alie Chase. Would you please discuss your plans for conducting the regional assessment? Is that part of this workgroup? I do believe we're going to get into that later this afternoon. But maybe RPB members will want to respond to that question.

Doug Pabst: This is Doug and I think the work group that Greg and I are leading right now is a subset of the Regional Planning Body. We're not going to do the actual test assessment, I think that's a good question is to how we're actually going to get that done, and how the different members of the regional planning body going to carry the load associated with that.

So I don't know the answer to the question as to who's actually going to do it if in particular, other than to say, I think we're all going to have a part on it. But I don't envision our workgroup that Greg and I are leading right now, doing the actual class assessment.

Gwynne Schultz: And this is Gwynne Schultz from Maryland and one thing I will mention is that as part of our upcoming process and especially as we get into September, what we need to be doing is putting together a work plan which does identify what products we want to have, the activities we need to engage in, and how we're going to get this accomplished. So that definitely is one of the things on our agenda, but we haven't yet figured out how we're going to do that.

Laura Cantral: All right, I'm going to share a comment now from David White. David comment is that slide 47 on initial goals includes language, ensure sufficient access support. We request consideration for changing that to "ensure unrestricted access to ports".

So David that comments we have shared that and it will be part of a written record, thank you for comment. And now I'm going to move on to a question from Rick Marks who's asking if you can please expand on what you mean by the term 'resilience planning' as a broad goal and how will that be measured?

Doug Pabst: This is Doug; I'll jump on that one for a second. It's a great question, are resilience planning - I'm heavily involved in a lot of the EPA climate change activities and the word is used a lot but I think when you get right down to it, and ask people what they mean, it becomes a conversation.

So I think the simplistic view is to be prepared for changes or to be flexible. You can get down to sort of the specific definition of the word resilience but that's part of this process, for us to determine what we believe that word means for the Mid-Atlantic as we move forward.

So I'm glad somebody brought that up because it actually relates back to - how do you measure success. So I think that's something we just have to keep - be mindful of as we move forward.

Laura Cantral: Okay great. So I'm just reviewing the chat inventory here, give me a moment to see we've got other questions that are waiting in the queue. One moment please.

Okay so here, we have another question from Sean Dixon. Given that responsible renewable energy is the goal but LNG ports are not, how will the RPG deal with issues like the conflict between the New York State offshore wind plan and the Liberty LNG port? One issue is the target of the RPB and one issue is not.

Maureen Bornholdt: Hi this is Mo Bornholdt again, I think that we have to take a look at the slide 47 and really understand what we're embracing here and what the planning goals are. And again all this is in the context, I think that the value-added that the RPB can have and taking a look at the proposals for the LNG facility and the work that BOEM is doing with the state of New York and it's inter-governmental task force with regard to identifying a potential wind

energy area, it's the perfect place to have the Regional Planning Body come in with the host of folks that sit around the table with the stakeholders that each of the representatives have everyday dealings with to help inform that process.

I also believe that in the planning process, getting back to what Doug said about resilience in planning and change, right now I think the big change with regard to energy driver, if I maybe so egocentric, was renewable energy.

And now that we're seeing some of these other on-shore opportunities perhaps manifest themselves in you know whether it's this port for LNG, that's going to be a part of the changing environment that we're going to have to be planning for.

So even though we don't have a bullet that's specifically cover conventional energy or LNG facility, siting or even conflict resolutions, I think that it's all inherent within the planning process that we'll be embarking on, the dialogues that we'll be having around the table, the stakeholder outreach that we will be embarking upon, the tools that we'll use for the conversations and the augmented decision making.

So I think the RPB is well-situated right now to help augment decision making, information gathering associated with offshore wind energy as well as the LNG facility in New York, off New York or New Jersey.

Greg Capobianco: Yes, hi this is Greg Capobianco from New York. Could I chime in quickly?

Hello?

Laura Cantral: Yes.

Greg Capobianco: Thanks. I just want to - just a quick point and a clarification, New York State did recently just released an offshore Atlantic study. It's not a plan, it's a study and the intent of the effort was to really collect and organize and in some cases, create a data relative to users and resources that is the best available data out there and I think the value of the effort, the study that we've undertaken is to put some good information on the table for the conversations that Mo was just referring to that will be taking place over issues like the LNG and the proposed wind facility and many other things that are being proposed or getting queued up in terms of perspective ocean uses. I just want to get that out. Thanks.

Laura Cantral: Great thanks. Any other RPBs Members? All right, I'm going to move on to the next - we have another comment. This comment is from Brent Greenfield regarding slide 47 and the initial idea for a goal to - that language now states, ensure access for existing and traditional uses, recommending that that be expanded to also account for future potential uses.

So Brent thank you for your comment, duly noted. And we also have a comment, this one - this was actually related to the earlier stakeholder section. Matt Gove is offering that the Surfrider Foundation is a resource and can help provide outreach and that engagement of non-consumptive recreational users such as divers, surfers, beach goers, et cetera.

So also thank you for that comment and good resource to be aware of.

All right, at this time, we don't have anyone else in the queue for questions and comments. So I think we will at this point, transition to our next topic.

Okay so our next topic is about the importance of data for ocean planning and the presenters will be Laura McKay with the Commonwealth of Virginia. We

don't have Roddy with us here today, but between Laura and John Walters with the US Coast Guard, they will cover Roddy's points I'm sure.

So I'm first going to turn it over to John Walters, John please go ahead.

John Walters: Thank you Laura. Good afternoon. I'm John Walters and I'm with the fifth Coast Guard district in Virginia, and I've been associated with the marine transportation management, marine transportation systems in the middle of that region which is basically from Northern New Jersey to the North Carolina, South Carolina border for about the last two decades.

So we've been practicing ocean planning and in the most recent endeavors with BOEM we're getting even more involved with planning.

So one of the biggest things that we have learned is the need for good data and this is a wonderful introduction or slide right into a segue into this presentation.

The foundation for ocean planning process is having access to the best science data and information for decision making. The National Ocean Policy framework call for the streamline access to science data tools and information necessary for informed and comprehensive ocean planning.

This includes the national regional state and local efforts. The ocean planning process consists of a series of steps that may eventually lead to development of our comprehensive, multi-sector and multi-objective regional ocean plan.

Within this process, there is a critical need for science data and information. And how we're going to use that? We're going to use that to conduct the

assessments of ecosystem functions, to identify society's goals for specific areas that's developed and described in the regional objectives.

To evaluate alternate ocean use scenarios. To factor in the effects of environmental change when projecting future conditions and to monitor and evaluate affecting this of implemented regional ocean plans. We go to the next slide please.

Oceandata.gov is the federal effort to make data and information accessible and discoverable. It is the national information management system and portal established by the national ocean council to support reasonable planning efforts.

The website is a community on data.gov and includes not only data but tools, technical information and links to the different regional efforts. As part of the ocean.data.gov effort, a marine planning portal network was established, that brings together the reasonable portal developers to share what they have learned about building and maintaining regional portals.

The MARCO portal will be described shortly by Laura McKay. If we go to the next slide please. At the foundation of ocean.data.gov or the federal agencies that are the sources of much of the basic data for marine planning. Each agency makes their data available through the web, is responsible for the quality of the data provided and ensures that the most recent version is available.

Ocean.data.gov is a place for the agencies to register the data, to make access and discovery easier for the marine planner including each of the reasonable portals.

At the core of this framework is the ability to trace data back to a source or originating agency and to ensure that the user is accessing the most recent version. In addition to federal data, ocean.data.gov can also make non-federal source of data accessible and discoverable.

When does science data and information come into play? And the conduct for reasonable assessments of ecosystem functions, identifying those regional objectives and setting society's goals for specific areas to evaluate implications of alternate ocean use scenarios and projecting future conditions and using adapted management to monitor and evaluate affecting this coastal marine plans.

As you can see the inputs are at the bottom of the screen, from the various federal agencies feeding into the ocean.data.gov and the outcomes are the MARCO portal which again Laura will cover shortly. And NROC (Northeast Regional Ocean Council) portal. There was a question earlier about does the Mid-Atlantic RPB coordinate with the RPBs to the north and to the south of us.

This is one example of where that coordination or integration of effort results in a better product where ocean.data.gov can feed both in NROC products as well as MARCO products.

And to further describe the MARCO portal, I'd like to introduce Mrs. Laura McKay who is director of the Virginia coastal zone management program.

Laura McKay: Thank you John. This is Laura and just by way of telling you a little bit about my background, I serve on MARCO's management board and MARCO has several action teams, one of which is an ocean planning action team, so I've

been serving as the leader for that team and also serving as a proxy for Rick Weeks my boss here at the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality.

Rick is one of Virginia's two state RPB reps. So I just want to tell you something about the MARCO portal. I hope a lot of you have already gone out and taken a look at it.

MARCO began to work on this back in the fall of 2009 and then we launched our ocean data portal in December 2010 and as I mentioned we have a whole team of people working on this and they include state and federal agency staff as well as people from academia. This morning, I think we had a comment come in from MARACOOS, that's the Mid-Atlantic Regional Association for Coastal and Ocean Observing Systems and we work with them as well.

And we also work what we call the "Monmouth Team" and they're a group that is headed up by Monmouth University and the Monmouth team also includes folks from Rutgers, University of Delaware, Ecotrust, and the Nature Conservancy. There is a subset of that team that is just now being established called the data review team and that's going to be very critical to working on developing data standards and quality assurance, QA/ QC kinds of issues.

Their first meeting will be August 20th. So we're looking forward to that. Funding has come from NOAA- they are the source of our funds. I Initially we started with Virginia CZM funds to get the first version of the portal out and then NOAA was able to fund the Monmouth team subsequently and currently to keep us going. So I thank NOAA for that.

MARCO has solicited input and comments from a lot of our ocean stakeholders. The portal, when you get into it, has all kinds of feedback

buttons and I encourage you to use those so that the Monmouth team can see all of your ideas and comments.

But we are - as was mentioned this morning, already engaging in some meetings with some sectors, we've talked a little bit with the fishing sector, the shipping sectors and NGOs and most recently, we've been working with recreational stakeholders and actively engaging them in what we call participatory GIS workshops. Those are meetings where you get recreational users to come in and we can project maps and allow them to draw shapes on top of the map to say what areas are important to them.

And we've mapped 22 different uses. New York had already done some work and Virginia did our workshop a year ago. Maryland and Delaware have done their workshop and New Jersey's will be coming up I believe in November.

This is what you see when you first go to the portal and the web address is right there, so again I encourage you to take a good look at it if you haven't already.

What we did for this portal when we were developing it, was to look for a data that would be relevant to regional ocean planning in the Mid-Atlantic. So we looked for those data layers that were regional in extent. And of course looked for the highest quality data or at least the best available data.

And the portal uses some state of the art visualization. You can go on here and register to establish an account and when you do that, you get access to some wonderful features and tools that are similar to SeaSketch as was mentioned this morning, and some tools that allow you to draw shapes on top of the map layers and then you can save and share those that you create and you can query for results and share those with others as well.

So the portal has these three main sections of learn, explore and visualize. The learn button gives you background information and context for each of again what MARCO established as seven data themes and I'll get to those in a minute.

If you go to the explore button, that's where you can actually download data from the catalog and use the metadata and also it's where we have a section that lists our data needs and priorities and I'll talk more about that in a minute.

And then that last button on the right is "visualize." If you click on that, that's what gets you into actually seeing the all of the Map data.

If you look at the top of the screen, there's a button for the news and a link back to the MARCO website and very soon the portal will also have a new feature, which will be a button on that main page that will link you to a training video. So that will give you a little help in learning how to navigate and use the portal.

Let's go to the next slide. So here we've hit that visualize button and we have launched - we're launching the map now and so up there on the right, you'll see under learn, those seven themes that we've divided the data into. So they're just alphabetically called, administrative-- that's where you have your jurisdictional boundaries and whatnot; fishing data; marine life— which is where we have most of the biological information; maritime - it has shipping and industry information; recreation- and that again we need to do a lot more to populate that but we have a lot of work underway to do so; renewable energy; and security which is all the military information that we can put up.

So next slide, was going to be, Roddy's but couldn't be here today. The Shinnecocks are very anxious to include tribal data that will help in the ocean planning process and we are going to be working with them and again make this participatory mapping technique might be a way to try to collect some of that data so we will look forward to finding out what we can so that we ensure we're watching out for those resources in areas that are important to our first nation people.

The next couple of slides just show you some of the comments that came up at our April stakeholders workshop about data and those fall into three basic categories and my thanks to Marty Rosen, my colleague in New Jersey who put these slides together for us.

Basically the three types of comments we received revolved around coordination and sharing of data, data quality and then how we apply the data and the tools. So next slide.

So talking about coordination and sharing. A lot of stakeholders mentioned how important it is that we coordinate specific data collection efforts so that we may increase interaction across and amongst government agencies and interest groups and I'm thrilled to say that I have already seen that happen and it's been terrific.

I've been meeting all kinds of new people in the different federal agencies and I think that's already a bit of a success that we can point to from the ocean planning efforts.

So where we can get together to pool our resources to facilitate filling the data gaps will be really important and helpful.

Another kind of comment that came up was about considering all of the useful data types, and again stakeholder engagement can facilitate that and we need to mine a lot of information out of people's heads- industry associations, traditional knowledge, and of course cultural information and all important.

So data gaps and quality and this is a really, really important area. What are the remaining important data gaps, there are plenty. And data do exist sometimes, but we just haven't identified them and they just haven't been brought into the process. So we need to look at that.

And then how will data quality be addressed? What will be the roles of peer review and data vetting, how will we standardize data and how are we putting out the metadata and how do we deal with uncertainty and whether there's a need for centralized filtering and management of that data.

So those were all things that our stakeholders were concerned about.

This is the last grouping of comments revolve around application and tools and these are topics we're addressing now as a result of that workshop.

How will we use the data in decision making, issues of conflicting data sets, rating the data, integrating different scales and the role of traditional knowledge and resources, cumulative impacts, that sort of thing?

So quickly in response to that, I think it's going to be really important that all of our stakeholders remember that data are just data. They are not policy. They are not decisions and this mapping portal is just one tool in a decision making process and we hope it can be used to help inform decisions but the portal itself doesn't make a decision.

So what's critical is that we get the best possible data in the portal and that it be a trusted resource. So work has begun to address these issues and MARCO has set up this data review team to develop clear and transparent data standards that we will want the RPB to take a look at. And those will eventually be posted on the MARCO portal. And a user-agreement will be established as well so that people going into the portal understand these concepts very clearly.

Getting back to how we can collect more data, again, mapping workshops have been really a great way to get us started on gathering more data. And the picture at the top there is just indicative of something that happened recently where MARCO staff helped the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council at a workshop in Baltimore, where they were trying to identify areas where coral exists that should be protected from certain fishing gear type.

They brought scientists and fishermen together for one of the first times ever to really share and try to integrate their data. So again another little success in integrating data and using and getting that traditional knowledge from the fishermen.

And then the picture at the bottom is an example of what I mentioned before, the recreational use participatory GIS workshop where you have that group process and it's interesting how people will correct each other in a group and you can get a really pretty reliable set of maps about the different recreational uses.

And again each of the States was looking at 22 different uses and you can see Virginia's map, they're out there right now on our portal, Coastal GEMS (Geospatial and Educational Mapping System) but we are waiting to stitch

together all of the States' maps into one layer that will go into the MARCO portal so you can see the whole region.

Getting back to the data gaps... When you go to the portal, again go to that explore button and then on the lower right, you can get to that button that says explore data priorities. And again I want to emphasize that the data priorities that you'll find in there relate back to MARCO's original four goals from our governor's agreement which revolved around promoting offshore renewable energy, protecting habitat, adapting to climate change and protecting ocean water quality.

So when you open that button, we have 17 data needs listed and characterized and for each data need, you'll see the potential source of the data that might be in the works. The status of it, whether it's under development or not, who to contact and then maybe additional notes on that, the expected date when we might be able to upload it to the portal and any notes on that.

So I encourage you again to go and look in there and hit that feedback button if there are some data layers that you're aware of that you would like to be considered to be added to the portal.

The other thing I'll mention really quickly is that we are thinking about creating a research theme on the portal that could go along with these other seven map themes, to show where various types of data collection are underway or are planned, not so much underway, the data priorities takes care of that.

This could be really labor intensive though to keep up with that because it's a fast changing world. Just something we're considering. So next slide please.

So just summing up here, the RPB is going to need relevant and credible trusted data and maps to undertake this regional ocean planning process. We think a lot of great work has been done, we think the MARCO portal will be a useful tool for the RPB. We think it's a really strong running start and we'd like it to be a primary tool for the RPB.

But as already came up, other goals that we may not have been thinking of, will need to be resolved, and that may lead to the need for more types of data that are important to our stakeholder and those data will have to be identified, vetted and ultimately posted on the portal, assuming they are relevant to our stakeholders' interests.

And we also again want to hear from you about what other functions or features you'd like the portal to have. And so we look forward to hearing all your thoughts on that, and I'll turn it back to Laura Cantral now.

Laura Cantral: Thank you Laura McKay. So we're going to ask for you to hold on to your questions related to data and information, if you want to go ahead and get in the chat queue, you're welcome to do that. But we're not going to open it up for session right now; instead we're going to roll right into our next topic which is related to operational and administrative considerations including the outline of RPB thinking on charter development.

And for that information, I'm going to turn it over to Joe Atangan with the Joint Chief of Staff who will offer remarks about that topic. Joe go ahead.

Joe Atangan: Good afternoon everybody. My name is Joe Atangan I'm with the United States Navy and represent the Joint Chief of Staff on the RPB. I want to recognize upfront that we are addressing a number of operational

administrative details but for the purpose of today, we're going to be limiting our discussion to the development of RPB charter.

I want to recognize the efforts of Gwynne Schultz who's my partner in crime in this whole effort. And Darlene Finch as well, Susan Holmes in the NOAA team and Sal Ruggiero for their contributions to date. Next slide please.

Our vision for the development of the charter is to deliver documents that clearly articulates the RPBs mission, its scope, identify the memberships and its commitments and provides some maximum flexibility for the conduct of RPB. Next slide please.

The charter is going to be divided in these main sections which we're going to cover individually in the subsequent slides. Next slide please. The overarching mission of the RPB can be succinctly summed up as to conduct. marine planning.

This section will address why the RPB is coming together in a statement of common purpose. The RPBs geographical focus as mentioned in the previous presentation will be identified via separate document. This session will also identify - will also define marine planning and stipulate the specific goal and objective will be defined by the RPB itself, with inputs from the stakeholders.

We'll briefly mention some examples of the deliverables but most of it will be identified more specifically by the RPB and subsequent work plans. These work plans will all be separate documents.

Next slide please. In the section marked membership and commitment, this session will identify the federal agencies, states and tribes who will make up this RPB.

Included in this session, we'll provide for ex-official membership participation for neighboring states and tribes. This we hope will address one of the earlier questions regarding the participation of North Carolina in this effort.

It will describe the members' commitments as described in the executive order. This includes an agreement to participate in the marine planning process. Agreement that the commitments that will be made are not enforceable and do not create legal obligations; and also an agreement to implementation of the marine special planning framework.

To facilitate and guide the RPBs efforts, the RPB will be led through an executive secretariat that consists of a triumvirate of federal state and tribal co-leads. Included in the executive secretariat is the sports staff required to execute various secretariat functions.

The specific length of times will be established by the RPB membership. One of the recommendations for this is to make it two years to coincide with the MARCO leadership times.

The general description of the roles and responsibilities will also be included in this session. An important piece is the issue of resources. As stipulated in the executive order and the final recommendation, the responsibility for providing basic resources, falls on the federal colleague.

Next slide please. As mentioned earlier in the webinar, it's important to emphasize that the RPB is not a regulatory body. It has no independence and equal authority.

Our intent for marine planning is to guide agency decision making and for those agencies to adhere to the plan to the extent possible within the existing authority.

We will ensure that this will be made clear in the charter next slide please.

In the session of procedural elements, we specify and identify three main areas. That's the conduct of business, the decision making process, and also dispute resolution.

Under the conduct of business section, it addresses the calling of meetings, setting of agendas and identification issues that are for consideration.

In decision making, we anticipate that this will be done via consensus but allow board members to voice and document their dissent.

For dispute resolutions, if members are unable to detect sense, this provision will provide a mechanism for elevating the disputes up to the national ocean council level.

Detailed procedures and processes for each element will be addressed in a separate document or in an appendix to this charter. This charter will take effect on the date of the last approving signature.

Our goal is as mentioned earlier, is to accomplish all of these within the next six months. We want the charter where a change in membership does not require execution or a rewrite of a new charter.

New members who joined their regional planning body after their execution to this charter will be asked to sign on to the charter. A non-federal member may

withdraw from this charter by providing written notice to the RPB colleagues, withdraw from this charter by federal member requires notice to the federal Co-lead in a subsequent concurrence by the National Ocean Council.

Members may modify this charter by developing and agreeing to a written amendment. I want to - this list quickly goes over some of the additional documents that we anticipate will be developed to guide the RPBs efforts.

Specifically two appendices will provide specifics on the conduct of RPB business, decision making and dispute resolution. Also the section in appendix 1 should the guidelines where identifying and identifying ex-officio members as well as clearly outlining the RPB relationships to mark with MARCO.

Additional products listed in this slide will aid and guide the RPBs marine planning efforts. This includes the geographical focus, regional goals and objectives, work plans and timelines, regional assessment, a capacity assessment and an implementation plan.

We have a tremendous amount of work today in all of - in delivering all of these products. We're very interested in getting your input over the next few weeks regarding the proposed outlined based on the inputs that we've received from the stakeholders and the RPB; we will be putting together a draft charter which we hope will be available for discussions during the next RPB meeting later in September.

Now I'll turn it back to Laura for some Q&A.

Laura Cantral: Thank you Joe. Okay so this is Laura Cantral and now we're going to open it up for comments and questions, questions on data and the charter are particularly encouraged but you can also - you are welcome to offer any other

final comments or questions. Please note that this will be our final comment and question session before we adjourn.

And remember that you have two options for offering your comments or question and at that time, let me ask Frank the operator if we have any caller waiting with a comment or a question on the phone line.

Operator: There is no question on the phone line at this time.

Laura Cantral: Okay thank you. I think we have a couple of comments or questions registered right now through the chat. So let's turn to those and the first one is a comment that Salvatore Ruggiero is asking that we make on behalf of Roddy as you have - our tribal co-lead is not with us today and would like to underscore one of the points that Laura McKay shared on behalf of Shinnecock nation.

The Shinnecock believes that inclusion of tribal data will allow for streamlined, efficient and effective method of marine planning while eliminating and preventing conflicting issues amongst stakeholders.

So as you also heard Laura say that this is something that the RPB and the folks who are working the data needs and the portal are considering how to accomplish.

And we also have a question from Gwen Lockhart. The question is: How will MARCO regulate the public use of the data provided by the NGO? Will data providers be able to limit data accessibility to the public?

Laura McKay: This is Laura McKay, I'll try to answer that. That's an interesting one. I'm curious what kind of data you'd be talking about but basically the MARCO

portal is being built as a public resource that everyone can look at. There is often sensitivity to for instance the location of endangered species although many of those in the water are moving around but there may be corals that are endangered and so forth that you wouldn't want to pinpoint their accuracy.

There may be ways of buffering the information so that you could generally put something out but again I think that will be a good question that we can add to the list of questions for the data review team to consider.

Laura Cantral: Great okay. Now we have a question about the RPB, the proposed charter, Jim McElfish is asking: What is the relationship of the proposed RPB charter to the MARCO agreement?

Joe Atangan: I'm sorry Laura, could you repeat the question please.

Laura Cantral: Yes, it's the question is, what is the relationship between the charter the RPB charter and the MARCO agreement? And Gwynne it's looks like Gwynne has been chiming on this one.

Gwynne Schultz: Yes, one of the things that we are working on is to clarify for ourselves as well as the public the relationship between the two entities and not necessarily the relationships but what are the things that we can all bring to the table to advance ocean planning.

So we'll have a document that kind of explains the relationship, some of the things that both of our organizations want to work on together and where we see that there's efficiencies. But I don't think there's any kind of legal connection between those documents.

It's just a statement of intent that we want to coordinate together on these kinds of issues. I will say that there are some members of the MARCO Management Board who are also representatives on the Regional Planning Body so those folks would be party to both the MARCO process as well as the regional planning body.

Laura Cantral: Okay next question is from Brent Greenfield: Will the draft charter addressed local governments' participation on the RPB and have any initial decisions been made as to local government participation on the RPB?

Joe Atangan: The short answer is yes. How we're going to address that, we're certainly looking for inputs with regard to how best to tackle that. I know that's an issue that has been I guess somewhat tackled by the Northeast region already and we look forward to hearing how they're tackling it in that region and hope to learn from their lessons.

The concern with local government is to, how do you find - how do you narrow down to the form where you have local participation to represent the local issues but have a small enough and manageable group that the RPB can work with.

So there's a balancing act that has to be maintained there and we need to figure that out, how to incorporate that within the charter.

Laura Cantral: Okay, we're going to take another question that is so related to the comment you're answer Joe is not specifically with regard to the charter and how the charter is going to provide for local government participation but it is relevant.

Jennifer Felt is asking about how the RPB plans to engage and coordinate with local government. Okay Gwynne is going to take that.

Gwynne Schultz: Well one thing to say is that I think it's one of the items that the ad hoc stakeholder work group is looking at is how to engage, not just special interest groups but the public and stakeholders and the scientific community as well as local governments.

So I think we need to come up with an identified mechanism to ensure all of that engagement. I know the states are really interested in engaging with local governments to ensure that their interest are brought to the table.

So a lot of the state agencies already have relationships with local governments and we see that as an opportunity and we're willing to reach out and help make those connections.

Laura Cantral: Thank you. All right, a request from Sean Dixon for a clarification about discussing the charter at the September meeting and his question is: if the charter will be available for comment "at the September meeting" does that mean that it will be open up the full of the meeting for comments or that stakeholders will see a draft at the September meeting for the first time and can only comment there at the meeting?

Joe Atangan: Well September meeting is fast approaching. Our goal is to have a draft available for comment. My sense will be that will be the coming out for the initial draft.

Just please keep in mind that you know, our goal for this thing is, over the next six months, my sense is that will be the initial coming out for the public to discuss it, that we post - and then the mechanics of it, is that it will likely be

posted for a period of time for public comment and then we'll proceed from there.

Laura Cantral: All right. So thank you Joe. So we have two more questions that have been post through the chat, and so if there are any other questions or comments on your mind, now would be the time to let us know.

Joan Bondareff is asking Laura McKay a question. Do you know what the data gaps are and how are you trying to fill them and can there be a system for using leases and permits to acquire private sector data?

Laura McKay: For the first part of the question, do we know what the data gaps are? Again we do have those 17 data gaps listed on the MARCO portal relevant to the four MARCO priorities. But in terms of identifying additional data gap for the RPBs purposes, that remains to be done and they should flow from what the RPB decides the regional goals will be.

So there may well be some more gaps to be identified. Can you repeat the 2nd question Laura?

Laura Cantral: Yes, the second question is can there be a system for using leases and permits to acquire a private sector data?

Laura McKay: I'm going to ask Mo to be thinking about this too, but I believe in many cases, some data that are generated maybe proprietary in which case, I assume we could not, but maybe we can and maybe there's some possibility.

Mo would you like to add to that?

Maureen Bornholdt: Sure Laura thank you. This is Mo Bornholdt. To the extent that BOEM uses the information associated with the wind leases or other permits to make decisions, those source of data and information may come in the public realm and so that we would make available.

The other thing we have available to us, is we have an environmental studies program as well as actually in Virginia I know Laura is familiar with this, we have a cooperating agreement with Virginia to collect some geologic and geophysical data off of the Virginia wind energy area that also will be made available to the public and made available to MARCO for its portal.

So to the extent that the information is public and not proprietary, it is in the public realm and should be used.

Laura Cantral: Okay, Bruce Tackett is asking a question. The RPB represents federal, state, and tribal representatives, will the RPB meet the federal standards under the information quality act, OMB pure review guidelines et cetera and how will this be put into practice in the procedures?

Laura McKay: Can you repeat the name of this --- again?

Laura Cantral: Was that John were you willing to answer go ahead.

John: No I think it was Joe getting ready to answer and the answer is we don't know yet and we're certainly welcome that input since I am certainly not familiar with those standards that we're mentioned before.

It appears that other RPB members are not as well. At this point of the charter development, we certainly welcome inputs such as that so that we can be - so that they can be factored into certainly not just for the charter development but

with the development of all the other products and guidelines that we'll have to produce to guide the RPBs efforts.

Laura McKay: Just to clarify Laura, were they asking about federal data standards?

John: My sense was there were - I mean when we're talking about peer review it was - some of the documents, some of the work products maybe, some of the reports that might be produced by the RPB and it's a various work groups that are going to be established.

Maureen Bornholdt: This is Mo, I believe the point is that, I know we'll require when we gather data that drive policy decisions that we make, if we're going to use that data for that purpose those studies or investigations are subject to a peer review requirement.

So if the question is aimed at a particular agency, yes of course we would adhere to OMB directives. When it comes to the regional planning bodies, since we're not making policy decisions per se, I do not believe that, that would apply.

But as Joe mentioned, what we should do is take a look and make sure that everything is copasetic but again the RPB is not making policy decisions so I don't believe it will apply.

Laura Cantral: All right thank you. And I'm just checking to see if we have any other questions or comments? And hearing none, I think we are probably ready to move on to summarizing some key themes from this session, thanks to all of you who have joined us for the entirety or for a portion.

I'm just going to summarize some key points and then offer some next steps. And I'm sure this will sound completely redundant because I know you've all been listening carefully and no one has been multi-tasking at all during this webinar but indulge me.

In terms of - I'm not summarizing points that were made by the RPB members today because you've been listening to them and you've got the slides and what I instead would like to do is just make some general summary comments about the kinds of input that we heard today.

In general, you asked questions about how the RPB will influence policy and regulatory actions and how we'll be involved with permitting. And you heard RPB members explain that enhanced coordination and data sharing of the RPB is intended to lead to better and more efficient decisions within the existing authorities of the RPB member state, agencies, and tribes and Mo was just making that point in the context of an answer to a question just a moment ago.

You emphasized the importance of coordination with RPBs in neighboring regions, the Mid-Atlantic RPB agrees with you and is looking for ways to do that and is in fact doing that and will continue to.

In addition to neighboring regions other entities manage resources that cross the boundaries of the Mid-Atlantic region.

With regard to stakeholder engagement, you emphasize the importance of engaging the full range of interests and made specific mention of a few including recreational fishing, sport divers, commercial shipping and local government.

We heard questions about how the RPB will define stakeholders and in response the RPB offered that it takes a broad view that includes all interest meaning self-selected interests in the use and conservation of our oceans.

We heard you express interest in mechanisms for engaging stakeholders, particularly continuing to explore the different options for advisory bodies and structures that may be established.

And thank you for highlighting the need to capture a diverse range of interests in a large region, and we all know this needs to be done in the context of constrained resources.

This will require creativity by the RPB, which has shared its clear commitment to meaningful engagement. And it will also require the meaningful engagement by all of you.

You ask several questions about exactly how the RPB will transparently share stakeholder input it has received. And the RPB has explained that it will post comments received, post summaries, transcripts, recordings as appropriate for different kinds of meeting.

The RPB will also maintain a central webpage that it has established for sharing just kind of information. We heard several offers of assistance and recommendations about tools including MARCOOS, SeaSketch, Surfrider Foundation, Stockton College and other universities and marine labs in the region.

And we've also gotten some - a number of specific suggestions about individuals who should be considered for a stakeholder advisory body and other ways to be engaged.

So moving on just a few highlights that we heard with regard to the setting of regional ocean planning goals and geographic focus. You posed questions about what was and was not reflected on the slides today. Noting traditional energy development in other words, oil and gas, dumpsites, some questions about what the RPB has in mind with regard to climate change and resilience planning and enhancing resiliency of the marine environment.

Also recreational uses and several specific language changes were suggested and as I said at that time duly noted. Specific examples of current or potential conflicts between ocean activities were offered and it was noted that these are the kinds of situations that could benefit from better informed and coordinated decision making by federal agencies, states and tribes that are part of the RPB, in other words, this is a big part of the raison d'etre RPB.

Recommendations were offered about the goal setting process including that the RPB should consider undergoing a visioning process. Clarity on what is meant by goals, objectives, metrics, et cetera will be important.

And there was also a question about the timing of a regional assessment. Regarding data and information, we had some good questions about data privacy, proprietary and sensitive data, data gaps and data quality standards and you've heard John and Laura speak to the importance of those issues and the need to figure those things out and hopefully with your help.

Regarding the charter, there was a couple of questions about the charter including clarifying the relationship between the RPB charter the MARCO agreement.

The RPB plans to clarify how each entity will contribute to ocean planning and not just MARCO. There was a question about the timing and the mechanics of the public input for the development of the charter and I think you heard Joe answered to that. We are working on it and September is quickly approaching which is indeed the case.

So to me that feels like a good segue to the next step. Speaking of September, please save the date for an in-person public meeting on September 24th and 25th at Monmouth University in New Jersey.

You'll be hearing more details as they emerge including how we're going to handle the charter discussion and many others in coming days. The RPB will post the recording we said this a few times but as a reminder, this webinar is being recorded and the recording along with the transcript, the slides and the chat comments will be posted on the RPB website.

The RPB will use the input that it had received today, to continue refining its ideas in preparation for that September meeting including posting all the materials online in advance as much as humanly possible.

Members of the public are invited to provide additional input to the RPB at the email address. That email is, midatlanticrpb@boem.gov. reminder please sign up for RBP updates, use that email address to send us a note and let us know that you would like to sign up and you will also - you are invited to provide public comment at the September meeting will be providing ample opportunities for your input at the public meeting much like we've done on this webinar today.

And we look forward to seeing you all there.

So at this point, I think I'd like to offer to co-lead Gwynne Schultz, Mo Bornholdt to take the opportunity to make any closing remarks and we'll wrap this up.

Gwynne Schultz: Yes this is Gwynne Schultz and as the state co-lead and on behalf of the Mid-Atlantic States, I want to thank you for participating today. We look forward to working with you and really do encourage you to reach out to all of the member's. Thank you.

Maureen Bornholdt:: And this is Mo Bornholdt and on behalf of the federal family in the Mid-Atlantic, I want to echo Gwynne's appreciation for everyone participating today and I think this is at the core of having a successful regional planning body is having webinars like this and having such great interaction with you all who have participated with us this morning and this afternoon. Thank you so much.

Laura Cantral: And this is Laura Cantral, I would just say that one more time, thanks to all of you who joined us today, this is a great adventure for everyone in the region and please is involved and please stays in touch and stay tuned. But for now, this webinar is adjourned. Thank you.

Operator: Ladies and gentlemen, that does conclude the webinar for today. We thank you for your participation and ask that you please disconnect your lines. Have a great day everyone.

END