



Workshop Announcement

Ecosystem Research and Coastal Management Making the Connection at the Regional Scale

May 18-19, NOAA Science Center, Silver Spring, MD

What is the Issue?

Regional-scale ecosystem research has gained acceptance in recent years as a critical need to address complex regional and national issues affecting the management and health of ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes ecosystems. The division of ecosystem components among different agencies, scientific disciplines, and political boundaries, as well as the complexities of conducting large-scale research make effective ecosystem management at the regional scale very challenging.

For over a decade, NOAA and other agencies have conducted a number of regional-scale ecosystem research efforts in support of mission requirements. This workshop will provide a venue for the scientific and coastal management community to critically examine these efforts and identify the most promising approaches which lead to results with direct management relevance and impact.



Regional ecosystem research has led to a better understanding of the nutrient management implications for over 40% of the continental US to mitigate the annual hypoxic zone in the Gulf of Mexico. Source: USGS.

Key Properties of Mission-Oriented Regional Ecosystem Research

- *Issues span large geographic areas and encompass physical, chemical, biological, and human interactions*
- *Projects link large-scale changes in ocean circulation, climate, and land-use practices to regional changes in coastal marine ecosystems and quantify linkages among ecosystem components*
- *Projects integrate multi-disciplinary research, monitoring, and modeling/forecasting approaches*
- *Scientists and managers collaborate to identify the issue, key variables of management interest, synthesize findings, and transition results to applications which support management decisions*

Workshop Format

The workshop will feature:

- Plenary presentations from leading practitioners in ecosystem research, management, and policy.
- In-depth discussion of case-studies to examine “what worked” and “what didn’t work” from past and ongoing regional ecosystem research linked to management.
- Break-out sessions and open discussion to develop best-practices for maximizing the effectiveness of regional ecosystem research.



Challenges of Regional Ecosystem Scale Research in Support of Coastal Management

- *Managing across traditional boundaries to address the regional scale nature of many coastal impacts*
- *Long-term commitment of resources and project teams*
- *Articulation of scientific understanding and uncertainty*
- *Distillation of complex interactions into actionable information*

Participants

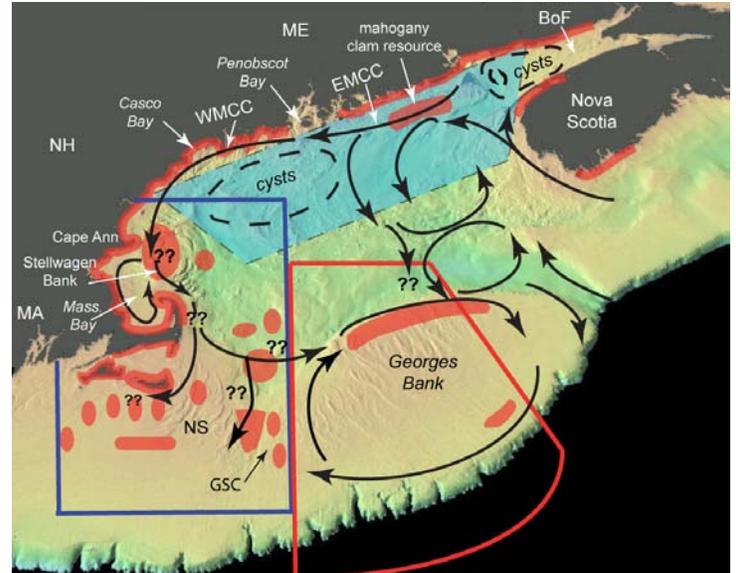
Participants will include the nation’s leading scientists, managers, agency, and policy representatives who have experience in funding, managing, conducting, or utilizing regional-scale ecosystem research to facilitate regional-scale management decisions. We hope to provide a venue for these communities to exchange ideas and best practices on each of these phases. Future efforts to deploy regional ecosystem research for management purposes will greatly benefit from the collective experiences of these participants.

Attendance at the workshop is limited to 50-75 invited participants.

<http://www.cop.noaa.gov/>

Outcomes

- Evaluation of the impact and value that regional ecosystem research focused on predictive outcomes has had in regard to on-the-ground management.
- Identification of best practices by practitioners of ecosystem science, management, and policy.
- Development of workshop report and synthesis paper to guide the planning, conducting, and application of future regional ecosystem research efforts to maximum effect.



Regional ecosystem research has established a comprehensive understanding of *Alexandrium fundyense* dynamics in the Gulf of Maine. This information and relevant technologies are assisting managers, regulators, and industry to fully exploit nearshore and offshore shellfish resources threatened by paralytic shellfish poisoning. Source: NOAA/ECOHAB-GOMTOX Project - Don Anderson/WHOI

For More Information Contact

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