



Ocean Exploration
and Research

National Forum on Ocean Exploration

Ocean Exploration Advisory Board Meeting

March 31, 2015 – La Jolla, California

PL 111-11

Section 12002 Authorizes the NOAA Administrator to

“establish a coordinated national ocean exploration program within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration that promotes collaboration with other Federal ocean and undersea research and exploration programs.”

In carrying out this mandate the law also authorizes the NOAA Administrator to

“establish an ocean exploration forum to encourage partnerships and promote communication among experts and other stakeholders in order to enhance the scientific and technical expertise and relevance of the national program.”

Forum - Defined

Forum – The term forum is defined as a place, meeting, or medium where ideas and views on a particular issue can be exchanged.

The function of a forum is to discuss topics and ideas of great social significance, and to provide a setting for diverse activities, including political discussions and debates, rendezvous, and meetings.

The 1st National Forum - 2013

The first National Forum focused on discussing a framework for an integrated National Ocean Exploration Program in the year 2020, focusing on:

- Identifying priorities and drivers
- The value of and need for a network of public and private partners
- The need for technologically advanced platforms and tools
- The increasing role of citizen scientists to augment and make new observations
- The need for streamlined data management and dissemination
- The value of a shared communications strategy

The 1st National Forum – 2013

Recommendations

- Focus exploration efforts on specific areas, features, and phenomena
- Form a functional federal coordinating core group to plan, execute, and evaluate exploration activities among federal and non-federal partners, including industry
- Develop new adaptable vessels, undersea vehicles, and networked observing stations to provide for exploration at multiple spatial and temporal scales
- Proactively pursue private sector partnerships to accelerate the pace of designing, developing, and deploying advanced undersea technologies
- Develop a framework for incorporating citizen science and crowd sourcing
- Build on current efforts to standardize and disseminate data and to develop products to stimulate further exploration, research, marine resource management, and engagement

The 2nd National Forum - 2014

The 2nd National Forum focused on discussing the role of NOAA and OER as an environmental intelligence agency with regard to a national ocean exploration program. This forum focused on:

- Discussing discoveries made by scientists supported by OER in:
 - The western Pacific
 - The western Atlantic
 - The Arctic
- A discussion of NOAA missions that benefit from ocean exploration
- A discussion of new emerging requirements for NOAA programs
- Developing advice for the OEAB and 2015 National Forum planners

The 2nd National Forum – 2014

Recommendations

The 2nd National Forum built on the outcomes of the first forum, providing advice to the OEAB and meeting planners for the 2015 National Forum:

- Build the “value proposition” for a National Program
- Focus on and prioritize targets for exploration
- Execute with attention to visibility and engagement
- Exploit existing partnerships and programs to build a National Program
- Use the 2015 National Forum as a lens to focus on ocean exploration



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Questions?

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