

Office of Ocean Exploration and Research Strategic Plan for FY 2016-2020

OER's PURPOSE

America's future depends on understanding the ocean. We explore the ocean because its health and resilience are vital to our economy and to our lives. We depend on the ocean to regulate weather and climate; sustain a diversity of life; for maritime shipping and national defense; and for food, energy, medicine, and other essential services to humankind.

OER's MISSION

Explore the ocean for national benefit

OER's STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL 1 *Explore the ocean to make discoveries of scientific, economic, and cultural value, with priority given to the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone and Extended Continental Shelf*

Objective 1.1: Map ocean basin features of interest.

Objective 1.2: Characterize geological, physical, chemical, and biological phenomena.

Objective 1.3: Characterize ocean resources.

Objective 1.4: Discover and characterize submerged cultural resources, including shipwrecks, aircraft, and paleo-landscapes.

GOAL 2 *Promote technological innovation to advance ocean exploration*

Objective 2.1: Stimulate development of ocean exploration sensors, technology, and methods.

Objective 2.2: Coordinate development of ocean exploration technology within NOAA.

Objective 2.3: Share technological innovations with government agencies and with academia, industry, and the not-for-profit sector.

GOAL 3 *Provide public access to data and information*

Objective 3.1: Maintain information systems that provide data interoperability and access.

Objective 3.2: Distribute OER and partners' data through open portals.

Objective 3.3: Share data management techniques with partners.

Objective 3.4: Report discoveries and innovations to promote further research and applications.

Objective 3.5: Explain discoveries to the public.

GOAL 4 *Encourage the next generation of ocean explorers, scientists, and engineers*

Objective 4.1: Educate students about ocean exploration.

Objective 4.2: Increase opportunities for individuals from under-represented groups, university students, and early career professionals to participate in ocean exploration activities.

GOAL 5 *Expand the national ocean exploration program through partnerships*

Objective 5.1: Engage national stakeholders, from both private and public sectors, to set priorities for ocean exploration.

Objective 5.2: Reach out to potential international partners to encourage collaborative activities where interests converge.

Objective 5.3: Design, with stakeholders, strategic paradigms for multi-year, multi-party exploration campaigns in priority ocean basins.