

WEST COAST GOVERNORS ALLIANCE on OCEAN HEALTH

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In August 2012, the West Coast Governors Alliance (WCGA) Executive Committee members held their annual meeting in Sacramento to take stock of the organization and set their course for the upcoming two years. The WCGA has had many accomplishments in 2012 supporting regional ocean priorities, including:

- Completion of a WCGA-requested study by the National Research Council to evaluate the major contributors to global sea level rise; predict the range of sea level rise for 2030, 2050, and 2100, and evaluate uncertainties. The WCGA hosted a series of workshops along the West Coast to provide this critical information to decision makers, planners, and stakeholders.
- Substantial progress toward a Regional Data Framework, including establishing a network of data managers, providers and users; assessing data needs; and developing a data registry and catalog. Work underway includes enhancing aspects of the framework by building a data viewer, developing tools to address regional issues, and providing capacity to the WCGA's RDF ACT to increase integration of state and partner data with the registry.
- Development of a West Coast marine debris database. This comprehensive database is the first of its kind in the US and will help determine baseline estimates of marine debris along the West Coast, enable disparate marine debris data to be accessed, and allow for temporal and geographical comparison of marine debris location and density.

Reflecting on these successes and acknowledging the realities of funding and capacity for the future, WCGA Executive Committee took steps to realign the WCGA's framework of Action Coordination Teams (ACT) to reflect financial and management constraints while continuing to advance key state and regional priorities.

Based on feedback from the ACTs and current ocean health priorities within the region, the Executive Committee narrowed its focus for the next two years to three priority areas; **marine debris, adaptation to climate change, and building a regional data framework**. ACTs representing these areas will remain as priority ACTs and these ACTs will receive active guidance and financial support from the WCGA. The remaining ACTs represent important regional issues and will be encouraged to continue to serve in a coordination and communication role, but will not be included in upcoming grant requests from the WCGA. Additionally, the Sustainable Coastal Communities ACT, the Sediment Management ACT and Polluted runoff ACT have reached a point of completion and will sunset.

The WCGA has also added **ocean acidification** to its priority areas because of the broad-scale impacts of ocean acidification, the particular vulnerability of the West Coast to this phenomenon, and the opportunity to advance a priority important to both state and federal partners. The WCGA will identify coordination and collaboration opportunities among its partners to further the ability of the West Coast to understand and address impacts of ocean acidification, but will not establish a separate ACT for this purpose.

Over the next two years, the WCGA seeks to:

- Continue the advancement and management of the West Coast Marine Debris Database through increased user engagement, enhancement, and the creation of a standardized West Coast data card, with an ultimate goal to serve as the central marine debris regional database.
- Increase capacity of State and WCGA partners to engage with the Regional Data Framework through support for data and metadata development, regional data integration, and data system development
- Address the information gaps in decision support systems for coastal areas affected by sea level rise hazards, and improve the predictive and analytical capability in geographic areas that are underrepresented in decision support systems.
- Develop a framework for the various entities engaged in ocean acidification to better use existing monitoring assets, identify monitoring gaps, conduct a user needs assessment, develop a research agenda, and make policy recommendations to adapt to ocean acidification.
- Advance regional and national priorities including improving the region’s ability to support and advance marine planning through improved data, data management, and data access as well as involvement of regional partners, while simultaneously addressing multiple areas of special emphasis in the Ocean Policy Task Force’s Final Recommendations.



Priority Action Teams

- Marine Debris
- Regional Data Framework
- Climate Change





Communication and Coordination Teams

- Renewable Ocean Energy
- Ocean Awareness and Literacy
- *Spartina* Eradication
- Seafloor Mapping
- Integrated Ecosystem assessment



Sunset Action Teams

- Sustainable Coastal Communities
- Sediment Management
- Polluted runoff