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## Joint Initiative Applauds the Release of the Nation's First Regional Ocean Plan

May 27, 2016 (Washington, D.C.)— The Joint Initiative applauds the release of the draft [Northeast Regional Ocean Plan](#) for public comment. The release of this draft plan signals the remarkable progress our nation has made in coordinating efforts among all sectors to protect and restore our oceans and coasts. The Joint Initiative has long advocated for collaborative regional approaches to ocean management and is pleased to recognize the release of our nation's first ever regional ocean plan for public comment.

Both the Pew Oceans Commission and the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy strongly recommended a regional approach to managing our oceans and coasts. Both Commissions believed that regional collaboration is the best approach to improving ocean governance and the management of marine resources. The approach used by the Northeast Regional Planning Body fosters extensive collaboration among federal, state, and tribal governments with the engagement of stakeholders and the public. The public comment period will provide an additional opportunity for interested parties to express their opinions and suggest improvements to the draft plan.

The regional planning process engages federal, state, and tribal entities, scientists and researchers, energy developers, fishermen, recreational users, port operators, and many more in supporting new coastal industries, maintaining traditional marine sectors, and securing the environmental health of the oceans and the communities that depend on them. As a result of this extensive collaboration, the draft Northeast Regional Ocean Plan contains a strong commitment to the principles of ecosystem-based management, science-based decision making, and adaptive management. The release of the Northeast's draft plan moves our nation one step closer to more effective management of our economic, environmental, social, and cultural resources.

The draft Northeast Regional Ocean Plan is the first of two regional ocean plans that are expected to be finalized this year. We look forward to the release of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Plan later this summer. We hope our nation continues to regard our oceans and coasts as top priorities and continues to show leadership in their protection and restoration. The Joint Initiative stands ready to continue to assist national, regional, and state leaders in enhancing effective coordination to ensure are oceans and coasts are healthy, resilient, and capable of providing the goods and services the American people need well into the future.

*The Joint Ocean Commission Initiative is a collaborative effort of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and Pew Oceans Commission. The primary goal of the Joint Initiative is to accelerate the pace of change that results in meaningful ocean policy reform.*