



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS STATEMENT FROM: The Joint Ocean Commission Initiative

JOCI Commends Swift Action by Obama Administration to Craft First National Ocean Policy

June 13, 2009 (Washington, D.C.)—The Joint Ocean Commission Initiative strongly supports President Barack Obama’s Presidential Memorandum laying out a timeline and structure for the development of a national ocean policy. Such a policy will have significant implications for the country’s ability to successfully manage the immense natural and economic resources provided by our oceans, coasts and Great Lakes.

Better coordination among the federal agencies with jurisdiction over our oceans was a primary recommendation of both the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and the Pew Oceans Commission more than five years ago. The increasingly urgent need for a national ocean policy and necessary coordination to effectively implement such policy was reemphasized by environmental, ocean and industry leaders in a report issued by the Joint Initiative earlier this year: *Changing Oceans, Changing World: Ocean Priorities for the New Administration and Congress*.

Coastal and ocean resources contribute nearly \$138 billion dollars to the nation’s economy each year and are under deep threat from climate change, overfishing and pollution. The ability of the federal government to effectively manage these vital resources has been hindered by fragmentation of oversight among 20 federal agencies.

The Joint Initiative applauds President Obama for setting an aggressive timeline of 90 days for an interagency task force to provide recommendations on the content and coordinated implementation of a national ocean policy and a timeline of 180 days to develop a framework for coastal and marine spatial planning.

The President's additional proclamation designating June National Oceans Month brings valuable national attention to the role oceans play in the lives of all Americans for recreation, economic stability, and national security.

For a full list of the specific recommendations included in the Joint Initiative's "*Changing Oceans, Changing World: Ocean Priorities for the Administration and Congress*," please visit www.jointoceancommission.org.

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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.