

**Annotated Agenda**  
*MAFAC, Key West, Florida*  
*May 24-26, 2011*

**1. Title of Discussion:** Update on NOAA Energy Activities

**2. Discussion Leader/Presenter:** Emily Lindow  
NOAA Fisheries, Senior Policy Advisor to the Assistant  
Administrator

**3. Objective/Purpose:** Ocean and coastal energy issues are closely linked to many of the priority objectives contained in the Final Recommendations of the Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force (OPTF) and adopted by Executive Order 13547, which created the National Policy for the Stewardship of the Ocean, Our Coasts, and the Great Lakes (National Ocean Policy). Although NOAA has been consistently involved in both onshore and offshore energy issues for many years, they are a number of new activities that are relevant to both the National Ocean Policy priority objectives and MAFAC. This presentation will provide a short update on these NOAA and NMFS energy activities, including the finalization of a NOAA Strategic Energy Review report, development of a NOAA Energy Plan, and areas of interagency cooperation on energy issues. Although the briefing is **informational** in nature, NMFS is **also seeking input from MAFAC** regarding development of the NMFS components of the NOAA Energy Plan.

**4. Background/Synopsis**

**Background:** Energy resources and infrastructure provide significant social, economic, and national security benefits. Growing domestic sources of renewable and clean energy can also reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help to mitigate climate change. Energy is currently at the forefront of national policy, as evidenced in President Obama's *Blueprint for a Secure Energy Future*, where he reiterated his State of the Union challenge for 80 percent of America's electricity to come from clean energy sources by 2035. There is also a strong push to expand U.S. development of traditional energy sources such as oil and gas in the Gulf of Mexico and the Arctic. NOAA has a role to play in these initiatives and other energy issues, whether through environmental consultations intended to reduce the impacts of offshore and coastal energy activities on trust resources, or by successfully bringing NOAA capacities for weather, climate, oceanographic research, observations, modeling, forecasts, and predictions to bear upon the scientific and decision-making challenges of energy development. NOAA also has an important role to play in addressing user conflicts as the siting of new ocean energy projects are considered through the National Ocean Policy's Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning (CMSP) framework.

The importance of NOAA's role in certain energy activities was recognized in both *NOAA's Next Generation Strategic Plan* (December 2010)<sup>1</sup> and the NOAA *Annual Guidance Memorandum* for implementing the Next Generation Strategic Plan (December 2010). The Annual Guidance Memorandum directs NOAA to "create a federal agency-wide plan to address identified gaps in research and observing systems and [National Weather Service] products needed to provide more accurate and reliable information for industry to use in the expansion of renewable energy capacity." Although this directive was specific to the National Weather Service, NOAA will be approaching the task for developing an energy plan much more broadly: all of the NOAA line offices are being invited to participate in the development of a plan that will include both renewable and non-renewable energy activities that

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<sup>1</sup> MAFAC received presentations on the *NOAA Next Generation Strategic Plan* at the **June** and **October 2010** meetings, and had provided significant input before it was finalized.

encompass the full spectrum of NOAA's expertise and mandates. The plan will be an internal NOAA document; part of the NOAA Strategy, Execution, and Evaluation process; and used by the NOAA line offices to prioritize energy-related activities for the next several fiscal years. It will be informed by the work of the NOAA Strategic Energy Review Team, which recently completed a review of NOAA's energy related activities, existing and potential partnerships with other federal agencies on energy issues, and associated legislative mandates. The final report of the Strategic Energy Review team is being presented to NOAA leadership for approval in mid-June 2011. It contains both high-level and more detailed recommendations that will at least partially serve as the foundations of the NOAA Energy Plan.

**Why MAFAC?** As the United States looks to improve domestic energy security, ocean and coastal areas are expected to see a significant increase in energy exploration and production. Expanded oil and gas development, offshore wind farms, and marine hydrokinetic energy arrays (using tides, currents, and waves) can all be expected in the relatively near future. This increase in ocean and coastal energy has the potential to impact traditional users of the marine environment, including commercial and recreational marine fishers. It also could harm or place additional stress on living marine resources. For these reasons, NMFS is seeking input from MAFAC that can be incorporated into the NOAA Energy Plan regarding the best ways for NOAA to balance environmental concerns, the needs of people that rely on living marine resources for their livelihood or recreational opportunity, and the desire to improve domestic energy security and expand clean energy sources in the United States.

**References:**

**White House Blueprint for a Secure Energy Future**

([http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/blueprint\\_secure\\_energy\\_future.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/blueprint_secure_energy_future.pdf))

**NOAA's Next Generation Strategic Plan**

(<http://www.ppi.noaa.gov/NGSP3/plan.html>)

**NOAA Annual Guidance Memorandum**

([http://www.ppi.noaa.gov/PPI\\_Capabilities/Documents/AGMs/FY13-17\\_AGM.pdf](http://www.ppi.noaa.gov/PPI_Capabilities/Documents/AGMs/FY13-17_AGM.pdf))

**5. Options listed from 1 to n:**

N/A

**6. Preferred Recommendation:**

N/A

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Record of Decision:

Decision, Next Step(s) and/or Action:

Assigned to:

Due Date: