

For Immediate Release:

July 29, 2008

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Press Statement From:

The Joint Ocean Commission Initiative

Joint Ocean Commission Initiative Releases Statement on West Coast Governors' Commitment to Ocean Health

July 29, 2008 (Washington, D.C.) – In response to today's release of the final action plan to implement the priorities of the West Coast Governors' Agreement on Ocean Health, the Joint Ocean Commission Initiative congratulated the governors of California, Oregon and Washington for developing a plan that sets the stage for true stewardship of West Coast waters and the abundant resources that they provide.

"Today, the Joint Initiative commends Governor Schwarzenegger, Governor Kulongoski and Governor Gregoire for their leadership in recognizing the role that our coasts play in the economy, as well as the symbiotic relationship between our oceans and climate change.

"When executed, the governors' plan will work toward several clear and important goals that are critical in protecting the environment and the economic vitality of West Coast. Given the recent hardships faced by regional fisheries, along with growing threats from climate change and pollution, the time is now for full-throttle execution of the governors' directives. Implementation of the actions set forth in the plan must happen efficiently and quickly so that the ocean and coastal resources of the West Coast, and the communities that depend on them, can receive the attention and assistance they need before it is too late.

"The West Coast Governors' Agreement on Ocean Health is a groundbreaking collaborative agreement by three highly dedicated states that rely on oceans for much of their economic success. The next step will be to implement these important initiatives so that West Coast waters can continue to provide resources to local communities and the rest of the nation."

For more information on the Joint Ocean Commission Initiative and its work, 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 to catalyze ocean policy reform. The Joint Initiative is guided by a ten-member task force, five from each commission, and led by Admiral James D. Watkins (U.S. Navy, Ret.) and the Honorable Leon E. Panetta, chairs of the U.S. Commission and Pew Commission, respectively. The primary goal of the Joint Ocean Commission Initiative is to accelerate the pace of change that results in meaningful ocean policy reform.