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PRESS STATEMENT FROM: The Joint Ocean Commission Initiative

HISTORIC PICK FOR NOAA ADMINISTRATOR BRIDGES GAP BETWEEN SCIENCE AND POLICY

December 18, 2008 (Washington, D.C.) – The Joint Ocean Commission Initiative strongly supports and commends President-elect Obama’s selection of Dr. Jane Lubchenco as head of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Dr. Lubchenco has served as a prominent commissioner for the Joint Initiative since its formation in 2005. The decision not only marks an historic moment for NOAA but also demonstrates that the new administration values science as a key driver of national policy.

“Dr. Lubchenco comes into this role from a critical intersection of policy and science,” said Leon E. Panetta, former White House chief-of-staff and co-chair of the Joint Initiative. “NOAA’s increasing focus on climate change research, as well as its power to influence and implement national ocean policy, demands a leader of Jane’s capabilities. You will not find anyone more respected in her ability to bridge these two worlds seamlessly than Jane.”

Dr. Lubchenco is one of the nation’s leading marine biologists and has garnered many appointments and awards for her accomplishments. In addition to serving as a commissioner for the Joint Initiative, Dr. Lubchenco works as a Wayne and Gladys Valley Professor of Marine Biology and Distinguished Professor of Zoology at Oregon State University. She also leads the Partnership for Interdisciplinary Studies of Coastal Oceans, a team of scientists who study the coasts of Washington, Oregon and California, and is a managing principal of the Communication Partnership for Science in the Sea. In addition, she was a presidential appointee for two terms on the National Science Board, which advises the President and Congress and oversees the National Science Foundation. Dr. Lubchenco recently testified before the U.S. House of Representatives Select Committee on Energy Dependence and Global Warming, and has been instrumental in the coordination of the West Coast Governors Agreement on Ocean Health. She is also an elected member to numerous scientific bodies including the National Academy of Sciences, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the Royal Society of London.

“Selecting Jane sends a clear signal that this administration plans to base its policy on science, while also recognizing ocean issues as a key factor in the strategy to address climate change.” said Admiral James D. Watkins (U.S. Navy, Ret.), co-chair of the Joint Initiative. “We are confident that Jane’s talent and knowledge as a world-class marine scientist will greatly advance our efforts to pursue an aggressive ocean policy.”

For more information on the Joint Ocean Commission Initiative, its work and Dr. Lubchenco's role as a Joint Initiative commissioner, 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.