



# Joint Ocean Commission Initiative and the U.S. Ocean Policy Report Card

Roger T. Rufe, Jr.  
Vice Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard (Ret.)  
President and CEO, The Ocean Conservancy

## Background on Joint Initiative



- Established to continue progress on implementing the complementary recommendations of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and the Pew Oceans Commission
- Guided by a ten-member Task Force, five members from each Commission
- Led by Admiral James Watkins and The Honorable Leon Panetta
- Objective of the Joint Initiative is to accelerate the pace of change that results in meaningful ocean policy reform

JOINT OCEAN COMMISSION INITIATIVE U.S. OCEAN POLICY REPORT CARD	
<b>2004</b>	
Subject	Grade
<b>Initial Response To Commission Reports</b>	<b>A-</b>
<b>2005</b>	
Subject	Grade
<b>National Ocean Governance Reform</b>	<b>D+</b>
<b>Regional and State Ocean Governance Reform</b>	<b>B-</b>
<b>International Leadership</b>	<b>F</b>
<b>Research, Science, and Education</b>	<b>D</b>
<b>Fisheries Management Reform</b>	<b>C+</b>
<b>New Funding for Ocean Policy and Programs</b>	<b>F</b>

## Joint Initiative Current Priorities



- **National ocean governance reform**
  - Institute a National Oceans Policy
  - Strengthen NOAA with an organic act
  - Improve Federal Coordination
  - Improve Regional Coordination with a national framework
- **Regional and state ocean governance reform**
  - Plans and processes grounded in local, state, and regional initiatives
- **Fisheries management reform**
  - Reauthorize and strengthen the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act

## Joint Initiative Current Priorities



- International leadership
  - Accede to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea
- Research, science, and education
  - Policy decisions based on best available understanding of the natural, social, and economic processes that affect the oceans
- New funding for ocean policy and programs
  - Increase funding for ocean and ecosystem programs in NOAA, USDA, Corps, Interior, USGS and EPA
  - Double the federal research budget over five years
  - Increase funding for education and exploration

## Joint Initiative Upcoming Report



- Ten Senators in leadership positions issued a letter to the Joint Initiative requesting a Report answering the following questions:
  - What are the Top 10 actions Congress should take to implement recommendations?
  - What are the highest priorities for funding needed to support development and implementation of policies resulting from recommendations?
  - What are the priority changes to law and the federal budgeting process to establish a better governance approach?
- Report will likely be released at the end of May

## Conclusion



Joint Initiative seeks to advance meaningful ocean policy reform based on the Commissions' recommendations

### For more information:

Joint Ocean Commission Initiative  
Laura Cantral  
Meridian Institute  
(202) 354-6444  
lcantral@merid.org

Joint Ocean Commission Initiative: [www.jointoceancommission.org](http://www.jointoceancommission.org)  
U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy: [www.oceancommission.gov](http://www.oceancommission.gov)  
Pew Oceans Commission: [www.pewoceans.org](http://www.pewoceans.org)  
U.S. Ocean Action Plan: <http://ocean.ceq.gov>