

## Recent MARCO Accomplishments

Formed in 2009 by the Governors of New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia, the Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean (MARCO) remains focused on collaborating with state and federal agencies, key partners, and stakeholder groups to address shared regional priorities. Recent accomplishments include:

### **The Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal: An online spatial mapping tool and data library**

MARCO publically released its Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal in December 2010. This innovative online tool centralizes the region's spatial data, making a diverse range of environmental, socioeconomic, infrastructure and jurisdictional information readily accessible to decision-makers, resource managers, stakeholders, and the public. Users can now view, download, and organize available data. The MARCO Data Portal Team has identified data priorities for the tool, and will work with partners to address gaps and develop new information and data. <http://portal.midatlanticocean.org>

### **Working with Mid-Atlantic stakeholders to gather ocean recreational use data**

In collaboration with the NOAA Coastal Services Center and the MARCO Data Portal Team, MARCO states hosted a series of participatory Geographic Information System (pGIS) workshops to learn about, characterize, and map various recreational ocean uses. Information shared by fishermen, kayakers, boaters, environmental groups, and interested members of the public will be translated into new recreational use data layers and made available on the MARCO Data Portal later this year.

### **Preparing for Climate Change Adaptation in the Mid-Atlantic**

In December 2012, MARCO convened local, state, and federal agency partners and Mid-Atlantic non-governmental and academic experts to develop recommendations for addressing climate change adaptation at the regional level. A summary, including next steps, is available on the MARCO website.

### **Developing a Coordinated Response to Reducing Marine Debris**

As a potential pilot project for a larger MARCO regional effort, Virginia convened a Marine Debris Summit in February 2013. Industry, non-governmental organizations, academia, and government agencies offered ideas to better coordinate campaigns to prevent, monitor, and clean up marine debris. A "Virginia Marine Debris Management Plan" is in development with the support of federal partners.

## Looking Ahead

MARCO will continue to promote collaboration, and pursue our shared regional priorities:

- Stakeholders shared their regional ocean planning ideas and priorities at the Mid-Atlantic Regional Ocean Planning Workshop in April 2013. Following the workshop, stakeholder input will inform MARCO activities, and a summary will be available on the MARCO website.
- Together with the Environmental Law Institute, MARCO will produce "A Guide to State Management of Offshore Wind Energy in the Mid-Atlantic Region" to support the sustainable development of regional offshore wind energy. The report is scheduled for release in April 2013.
- MARCO will continue working with state and federal agency partners, as well as others, to address data gaps, and identify and characterize the region's important marine habitats.
- MARCO and its partners will continue gathering information on recreational boaters, and coastal and ocean recreational users to address data gaps. Once collected, the information will be available on the Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal as new recreational data layers.
- MARCO will help provide a voice for the region in ocean planning efforts underway in the Mid-Atlantic.

For additional information, visit [www.midatlanticocean.org](http://www.midatlanticocean.org) or contact us at [info@midatlanticocean.org](mailto:info@midatlanticocean.org).