

MARCO

MID-ATLANTIC REGIONAL
COUNCIL ON THE OCEAN

MARCO News, July 2020



Just 115 Miles Off the Shore of Your Beach Lies a Thriving Deep-Sea Canyon Ecosystem



MARCO and Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution partnered together to hold the webinar, "Underwater United States: Exploring life and ecosystems in the U.S. EEZ corals and canyons" to celebrate National Ocean's Month in June. The webinar, funded by the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, followed Dr. Tim Shank's exploration of lesser known underwater canyons of the Mid-Atlantic

[Read more](#)

The Underwater United States

Experience the Interactive Mid-Atlantic Ocean Forum Webinars

MARCO and the Mid-Atlantic Committee on the Ocean (MACO) thank the hundreds of stakeholders who provided input on our work and potential areas for future collaboration through a pair of virtual forums. The 2020 Mid-Atlantic Forum, held May 19, and a June 23 Supplemental Forum provided interactive opportunities for participants to engage representatives of the Mid-Atlantic states, tribes, regional and federal agencies that comprise MACO. A Summary Report and video recordings follow.

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2020 Mid Atlantic Ocean Forum

Join MARCO in the Prevent Balloon Litter Campaign

Researchers have identified balloon litter as one of the five deadliest types of debris for marine wildlife. Last May, the Virginia Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Program and its partners Clean Virginia Waterways and Eco Maniac Company launched a new website to convey the



impacts of balloon litter, and the steps everyone can take to prevent it. The mission of *PreventBalloonLitter.org* is simple. *Prevent Balloon Litter. Everywhere.*

[Read more](#)

State Ocean Acidification Action Plans

Many states in the Mid-Atlantic are taking action to better understand the potential threat of ocean acidification to economic and ecological resources. Organizations like the Mid-Atlantic Coastal Acidification Network* (MACAN) - which is co-coordinated by MARCO and MARACOOS - as well as the International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification** (OA Alliance), provide resources to state governments and researchers to better understand acidification threats and plan for its impacts.



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Alert - Look Out for Juvenile Humpback Whales Near Shore



Young humpback whales are using the Jersey Shore as their seasonal feeding ground. These small whales, between 25 and 35 feet long, can be found close to shore from April through December. They are most likely to be found from Long Beach Island to Sandy Hook with increasing likelihood moving north.

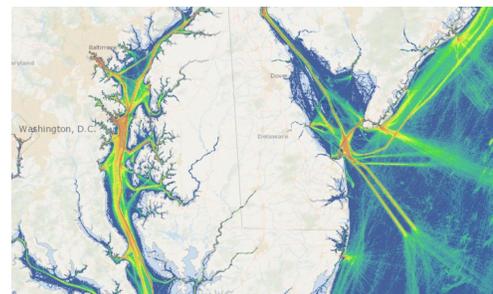
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Credit: Danielle Brown

MARCO Ocean Data Portal Has Added New Data Layers

Over 200 interactive maps depicting vessel traffic, Coast Guard study areas and regional marine sanctuaries were recently added to the Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal. Take a look at what's new below.

[2018 and 2019 AIS Vessel Data](#): Portal users can study 2018 and 2019 traffic patterns for several types of vessels with a series of new maps based on Automatic Identification System (AIS) data. With the latest additions, the Portal now houses a total of 540 AIS maps showing vessel activity for years and months dating back to 2011. The new datasets and maps were developed in collaboration with our partners from the Marine Cadastre, U.S. Coast Guard and Northeast Ocean Data Portal team.



[Read more](#)

MARCO State Spotlight: Virginia



Credit: Matt Smith

Virginia has a networked Coastal Zone Management Program which allows its small staff of six to help coordinate coastal and ocean management efforts through 12 member state agencies and 48 coastal cities and counties. Having a small staff means that a large portion of its funding from NOAA can be distributed to its member entities and partners to undertake specific grant projects. Several of these have helped MARCO with projects such as the initial development of the MARCO Ocean Data Portal, collection of whale survey data, synthesis of ocean ecological data, creation of animated maps to show shifts in the core abundance of fish species and a current grant to help develop an offshore wind-siting tool. This grant is especially important to MARCO now that two offshore wind turbines have been constructed in federal waters of the U.S. off the shore of Virginia.

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News from MARCO States:

NJ DEP's first scientific report on climate change summarizes the current state of knowledge regarding the effects of climate change on New Jersey's environment to inform state and local decision-makers as they seek to understand and respond to the impacts of climate change. This report identifies and presents the best available science and existing data regarding the current and anticipated environmental effects of climate change globally, nationally, and regionally. The report is one component of the State's comprehensive strategy to both reduce emissions of climate pollutants that fuel global warming, and proactively plan and prepare for the climate impacts that New Jersey cannot avoid.

For a copy of the Scientific Report on Climate Change, and more information on climate change and resilience, visit www.nj.gov/dep/climatechange/.

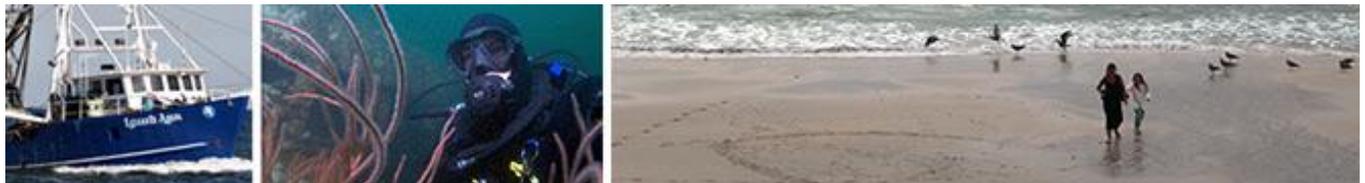


Photo Credits: Header (L-R): Coral, NOAA-OER/BOEM; Wind turbines, Ralf Hettler; Kayaks, Raul Rosa; Shipping container, Dan Barnes; Schooling fish, Jet Chen Tan; U.S. Naval ships, Gina Addison. Body. Footer (L-R) Fishing boat, William Sherman; Diver, Michael Eversmier; Beach scene, Christie Mazzeo-Pfoertner

ABOUT MARCO

Established in 2009 by the Governors of New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia, MARCO provides a forum for our coastal Mid-Atlantic states to collaborate on shared regional priorities related to marine habitats, renewable offshore energy, climate change adaptation, and ocean water quality. MARCO initiated and oversees the [Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal](#) to assist the region with ocean planning efforts. For more information about MARCO, visit our website, MidAtlanticOcean.org.

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Thank you for your continued interest in MARCO. We welcome questions and feedback you may have, including content for upcoming issues of MARCO News. To provide comments or suggestions, or to join our email distribution list, please click "Join Our Mailing List" below, or contact us at: info@midatlanticocean.org.



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