

Research and Education Coalition for Ocean Sciences

“the ocean coalition”

Town Hall Tuesday, 16 December 2025

13:00 - 14:00

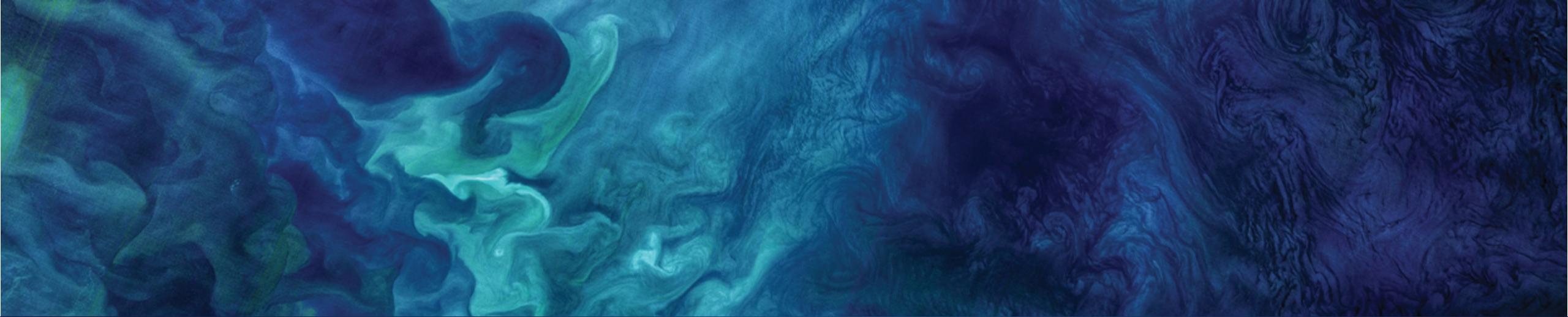
275-277 (New Orleans Convention Center)

Leila Hamdan – RECOS Secretary

(<https://theoceancalition.org>)

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How do we motivate investment as an ocean community for ocean resources?



- Question requires open dialogue with the community
- Ability to take off institutional “hats” – organize under a broader, national purpose
- Convene to identify priorities and strategy



- Formed 2024 - national priorities in ocean research, technology, infrastructure, and education for society's needs
- Academic, Research, Aquaria, Non-profits (18 members & growing)
- 501c(3) organization - focus on advocacy, not programs
- Collaborative engagement across all ocean institutions - big and small!
- Shared, nonpartisan strategy informed by federal, industry, and other partners and national needs
- Emphasis on proactive engagement vs. reacting to the times
- “If we don’t ask for what we need, who will?” - A. Doyle 2025

Where is U.S. ocean science now?

- Losing global leadership in ocean S&T
- Research fleet reduced 50% in last 50 yrs, impaired icebreakers, no US drill ship (UNOLS-FIC Town Hall Thursday @1300)
- Slowing federal investment relative to need
- Challenges to skilling professionals, student enrollment, retaining future ocean innovators and explorers
- Now is the time to act!

Are we ready for the next 50 years of ocean science?

- Unprecedented changes in ocean and Earth system
- Growing human population
- Rapidly changing geopolitical landscape
- How to build on existing federal investments and priorities (Decadal Surveys, etc.)



Work of The Ocean Coalition

- Four position papers – currently under review/refresh
 - National Security
 - Workforce and Training
 - Ocean Economy
 - Ocean Infrastructure
- Shared widely to support and unify efforts of other groups
- Used to support advocacy, public and legislative engagement

RECOOS advances recommendations by working through partners with unique ability/position to reach lawmakers where they live, in support of unified goals

National security through U.S. Leadership

Recommendation: RECOOS supports sustained basic and applied research investments in national security funding for new technologies to observe the ocean environment from seafloor to space over the next decade.



Supporting U.S. Ocean Workforce

Recommendation:

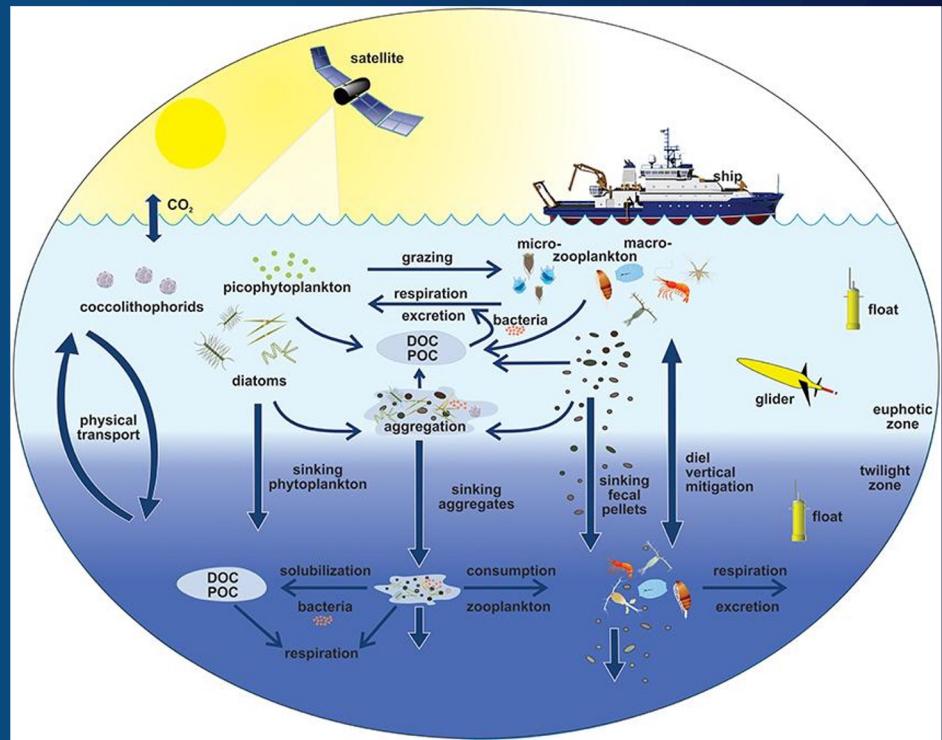
RECOS supports the continuation of robust funding in Blue Economy workforce training programs with the Department of Commerce, including programs through NOAA and the Economic Development Administration.



Resilient U.S. Ocean Economy

Recommendation:

U.S. investment in science and technology is essential in preparing the nation for current and emerging opportunities. We recommend the highest possible funding levels for basic and applied research programs, including research instrumentation and future academic research fleet recapitalization.



Ocean Infrastructure for U.S. Leadership

Recommendation:

RECOS supports the building of two icebreakers, four global class ocean research vessels, sustained investments in new technologies to observe the ocean at cellular to global scales, and strategic research investments from seafloor to space over the next decade.



Ocean Coalition work to date:

- First in-person annual meeting
- Reaching out to new members
- Four Position papers (e.g. Oceans in the Biden-Harris Plan)
- Coordinated over 70 Congressional briefings
- Supported expert testimony before the House Subcommittee on the Environment
- Aided dissemination of science reports
- Organized town halls: Coastal Protection and Restoration
- Monthly member meetings
- TOR adopted, Officers elected
- Membership Annual Meeting
- Coordination with COL, OMB, OSTP
- Listening sessions for policy development
- Industry Engagement
- Support OMB/OSTP FY priorities memo
- We want to hear from you! We invite members!



members
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ographic distribution
ta (House Science

J 2025; OSM26; UNOLS
gathering
Op-eds

Executive Council:

- Paula Bontempi, Chair (University of Rhode Island – Graduate School of Oceanography)
- Debbie Bronk, Treasurer (Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences)
- Leila Hamdan, Secretary (University of Southern Mississippi)
- Rick Murray, Vice Chair (WHOI, ret.)
- Tuba Ozkan-Haller, Member Organizational Representative (Oregon State University)

Questions?
Join Us

<https://theoceancalition.org>

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