Arctic

NOAA'S ARCTIC ACTION PLAN

SUPPORTING THE NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR THE ARCTIC REGION

The Arctic is changing – and those changes will affect us all, no matter which country we live in or region of the world we inhabit.

NOAA has many diverse and robust programs currently underway in the Arctic, ranging from biological, physical, and chemical research to weather and climate services to nautical charting, spill response, fisheries management, and marine mammal protection.

These programs help to implement NOAA's vision of an Arctic where decisions and actions related to conservation, management, and use are based on sound science and support healthy, productive, and resilient communities and ecosystems.

NOAA's unique capabilities and expertise enable it to provide critically important support to the Nation as it seeks a future where the global implications of Arctic change are better understood, predicted, and managed.

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
NOAA
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

NOAA's Arctic Action Plan was released in April 2014

The plan is available online at: http://www.arctic.noaa.gov/NOAAarcticactionplan2014.pdf

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is actively engaged in the Arctic, providing science, service, and stewardship to this rapidly changing region, its inhabitants, and the Nation. Through its broad range of activities, NOAA is well prepared to make significant contributions, to the extent possible within existing resources, to all three lines of effort in the recently released U.S. National Strategy for the Arctic Region (May 2013) and its subsequent Implementation Plan (January 2014). As described in its 2011 Arctic Vision and Strategy, NOAA has six strategic goals in the Arctic, each of which directly supports the National Strategy.

National Strategy for the Arctic Region — lines of effort —	NOAA's Arctic Vision and Strategy — strategic goals —
• Advance U.S. security interests	• Forecast sea ice
	• Improve weather and water forecasts and warnings
• Pursue responsible Arctic region stewardship	• Strengthen foundational science to understand and detect Arctic climate and ecosystem changes
	• Improve stewardship and management of ocean and coastal resources in the Arctic
	• Advance resilient and healthy Arctic communities and economies
• Strengthen international cooperation	• Enhance international and national partnerships

Advancing U.S. security interests in the Arctic requires improved maritime domain awareness, for which NOAA's weather and sea ice forecasts are critically important. NOAA's sea ice research strengthens forecasts of both ice and weather conditions as well as building a better understanding of the direct links between sea ice and climate. As a result of this research, the complicated linkages among melting sea ice, changing climate, and weather patterns in the Arctic and around the globe are becoming more apparent and allow better planning to cope with Arctic change.

NOAA plays a key role in **pursuing responsible Arctic region stewardship**. Foundational science enables better understanding of Arctic ecosystems, the atmosphere, climate, and their dynamic interconnections. NOAA's fisheries research and management programs are likewise vital, particularly for the economically important U.S. Bering Sea fisheries. Research and stewardship of marine ecosystems and protected species like marine mammals promote sustainable use, conservation, and protection from potential impacts of offshore development, increased shipping, and environmental degradation. NOAA provides important services to coastal communities by improving safe Arctic maritime access with mapping and charting as well as increasing preparedness and communities' resilience to intensifying weather. NOAA is also an important partner in hazard response and mitigation (e.g., providing scientific support to the U.S. Coast Guard after oil spills). Research relevant to oil spills, sea ice, and marine ecosystems will help to prepare for and to protect against potential environmental disasters in the Arctic.

All of NOAA's Arctic activities are united in one aspect: leveraging national and international partnerships and collaborating to support common Arctic goals. NOAA **strengthens international cooperation** through the Arctic Council, joint research opportunities, and provision of services. NOAA also has many successful Arctic national partnerships, within and outside the Federal Government. Existing partnerships will be strengthened and new ones developed in the coming years as NOAA continues its work to address the Nation's challenges in the Arctic.