

NOAA Coastal Services Center Strategic Plan 2001–2006

Introduction

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Coastal Services Center (Center) serves the nation's coastal resource managers. The Center assists this community by providing access to information, technology, and training. Partnerships between the Center and coastal management organizations give rise to over 100 projects each year. These projects produce new tools and approaches that often can be applied nationwide.

Many of the Center's activities are undertaken in collaboration with partners from the NOAA line offices—National Ocean Service (NOS), National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service (NESDIS), Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), and National Weather Service (NWS)—and other public and private coastal resource management and business development organizations. The Center includes personnel from throughout NOAA. To ensure meaningful cross-organizational planning, execution, and personnel management, the Center's annual operating plan is developed as a joint effort of the NOAA line offices. Joint planning benefits the coastal resource management community by bringing a wider range of NOAA capabilities to bear on coastal and marine issues of common interest.

This strategic plan establishes organizational directions and priorities, and ensures that the Center's efforts continue to be relevant to client needs. The plan is the result of a highly iterative process, with key objectives being to anticipate the future needs of the customer base and enhance cross-Center communication and collaboration. This plan will guide the Center's investments, annual planning, and project selection decisions over the next five years.

Vision

To be the most useful government organization to those who manage and care for our nation's coasts

Mission

To support the environmental, social, and economic well being of the coast by linking people, information, and technology

Core Values

- ***Commitment to quality*** – A commitment to high quality products and services that positively influence coastal decision making

- ***Catalyst for innovation and change*** – Being a catalyst for innovation and progressive change in the coastal management community
- ***Collaboration*** – Achieving success through internal teamwork and external partnership building
- ***Organizational assessment and reflection*** – Ensuring continuing relevance through critical evaluation and adaptive behavior
- ***Respect for all*** – Respect for employees and customers, including their views and differences

Operating Principles

- Oriented to clients
- Focused on results
- Committed to partnerships
- National in scope – local in approach

The Center’s operating principles are a guiding force in the organization. These principles articulate both a philosophy as well as a business practice.

General Customer/Partner Profile

Primary Customers

- **State and local coastal resource managers**

State and local coastal resource managers are at the forefront of the nation’s efforts to preserve coastal resources and promote responsible development. The Center helps these coastal managers gain, collectively and individually, the additional technology, data, and expertise they need to accomplish this task.

Members of the coastal management community include local and state governments, regulatory programs, protected areas, wildlife agencies, Sea Grant programs, planners, scientists, and emergency preparedness officials.

Primary Partners

- **Local, state, and federal government organizations**
- **Nonprofits**
- **Private companies**
- **Academia**

Coastal issues were not created in a vacuum, nor will they be resolved that way. It takes the talents and finances of many organizations and individuals. For each project undertaken by the Center, the organization engages a wide variety of partners to ensure that the needs of the local and state coastal resource manager are being met.

Themes

The Center's strategic efforts can be categorized into one or more of the following themes:

I. Smart Coastal Growth

Smart coastal growth maintains a balance among environmental, social, economic, and quality of life issues. To achieve this balance, a broad spectrum of considerations must be addressed, including cultural resources and the values and beliefs of the individuals in the community. Center projects in this theme area assist communities in their efforts to incorporate smart growth concepts into their planning and decision-making processes.

II. Habitat

Habitat is defined ecologically as the environment where plants, animals, and other organisms live. For the Center, coastal habitat includes the coastal wetlands and the sea bottoms and water columns of estuarine, coastal, and ocean waters in addition to uplands that affect these areas. Center projects in this theme area develop information and tools that help coastal managers integrate the physical, ecological, economic, and social components of habitat protection and management.

III. Hazards

Coastal hazards include both natural and man-made events (chronic and episodic) that threaten the health of coastal ecosystems and communities. This definition includes, but is not limited to, hurricanes, tsunamis, erosion, oil spills, harmful algal blooms, and pollution. Center projects in this theme area work to reduce the environmental, social, and economic impacts from coastal hazards by providing information and tools that facilitate increased decision-support capabilities for coastal managers.

IV. Coastal National Spatial Data Infrastructure

The National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) is a nationwide effort to improve the utilization of geospatial data within the United States. The Center fully supports this effort for the benefit of local and state coastal resource managers. Center projects in this theme area assist coastal managers in a variety of data-related tasks, including data acquisition, processing, storage, distribution, ease of use, and inclusion in the decision-making process.

V. Organization and Culture

This theme area represents the ongoing efforts of Center employees to build an organization that serves its customers and its employees to the best extent possible. Here the focus is on the structure, function, and policies of the Center. Organizational values, practices, and beliefs are addressed in this theme area.

Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

I. SMART COASTAL GROWTH THEME

Definition

Smart coastal growth maintains a balance among environmental, social, economic, and quality of life issues. To achieve this balance, a broad spectrum of considerations must be addressed, including cultural resources and the values and beliefs of the individuals in the community. Center projects in this theme area assist communities in their efforts to incorporate smart growth concepts into their planning and decision-making processes.

GOAL 1

Coastal communities will anticipate and manage growth while balancing environmental, economic, and social considerations

Objectives

- 1.1 Increase the decision maker's understanding of impacts from land use decisions.
- 1.2 Increase understanding and utilization of existing community planning tools and techniques.
- 1.3 Increase the number of effective new tools and techniques available to community leaders for proactively managing growth.

Strategies

- Gather and disseminate the information, tools, and techniques that communities currently use to proactively manage growth.
- Promote the use of tools that help communities visualize and better understand land use decisions.
- Engage with smart growth network partners to identify the Center's niche for meeting coastal community needs in this arena.
- Demonstrate ways to incorporate into Center products data layers that describe human values and behaviors.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Center's current tools and techniques for addressing smart growth in coastal communities.
- Assess traditional cultural practices to understand alternative management techniques from historic communities and cultures.
- Identify models that other communities can learn from and highlight success stories in magazines, Web pages, workshops, or other Center products or services.
- Implement training for networked educators regarding the use of planning tools and techniques for managing changing community conditions.
- Incorporate examples of growth impacts, modeling, and case studies into Center products and services.

GOAL 2

Coastal communities will consider the decision-making process, public involvement, and human values and beliefs in managing culturally significant resources

Objectives

- 2.1 Increase capacity of regional planners to utilize and apply data and techniques to identify sensitive resources that are valued socially and culturally.
- 2.2 Increase awareness and understanding of community leaders to potential benefits of socially and culturally valued resources.
- 2.3 Increase utilization of existing resources, networks, data, tools, and education to protect and manage cultural resources.
- 2.4 Increase development and application of new tools and techniques for decision making.
- 2.5 Increase understanding and application of human values and choices by community leaders in decision making.

Strategies

- Assess gaps, strengths, and problems of current decision-making processes and practices.
- Gather, disseminate, and facilitate the transfer of information, tools, and techniques for incorporating human beliefs and values when managing sensitive areas.
- Increase the capabilities of coastal communities to find and incorporate data and information on human values and beliefs into the decision-making process.
- Encourage innovative ideas and partnerships with nongovernmental organizations and community-based associations to sustain socially and culturally valued resources.
- Use market, nonmarket, and social values of socially and culturally valued resources when managing these resources.
- Implement training for networked educators regarding protection and management of socially and culturally valued resources.
- During development of pilot projects, identify and engage potential audiences in addition to end users.
- Demonstrate the use of data layers describing human values and behaviors in Center products.
- Assess how social conditions, cultural traditions, and human values impact a community's ability to make decisions.

II. HABITAT THEME

Definition

Habitat is defined ecologically as the environment where plants, animals, and other organisms live. For the Center, coastal habitat includes the coastal wetlands and the sea bottoms and water columns of estuarine, coastal, and ocean waters in addition to uplands that affect these areas. Center projects in this theme area develop information and tools that help coastal managers integrate the physical, ecological, economic, and social components of habitat protection and management.

GOAL 1

The coastal management community has the information and tools to integrate physical, ecological, economic, and social components into habitat protection and management

Objectives

- 1.1 Increase access to data and information to support complete and accurate habitat characterizations.
- 1.2 Lead research that develops and evaluates new technologies, methodologies, and management applications for habitat characterization and restoration.
- 1.3 Promote and expand adaptive management methods including consideration and use of all relevant physical, ecological, economic, and social data sets in habitat decision making.
- 1.4 Incorporate conceptual and predictive models to improve coastal habitat management decisions.

Strategies

- Identify, gather, develop, and provide simplified access to relevant coastal data.
- Develop standard protocols for data collection and data management that transfer lessons learned and provide a means to leverage these efforts.
- Promote creation and management of metadata to facilitate data exchange.
- Build tools that integrate disparate data sets.
- Support innovative research and technologies that apply to habitat management by providing insight into management needs, establishing partnerships, and providing resources.
- Demonstrate new technologies and research for habitat applications.
- Develop decision-support tools that include physical, ecological, economic, and social data sets to provide managers with scenarios, options, and potential outcomes.
- Foster predictive capability by supporting targeted modeling efforts.
- Promote use of models to expand management capabilities.
- Evaluate the efficacy of management practices and provide feedback to the management community.
- Select and develop projects based on habitat issue rather than on technology, geography, or program area.
- Create guidance for the process of developing high-risk projects.
- Apply cross-Center program resources to a project through enhanced communication, project planning, and Center management support.

GOAL 2

The coastal management community has the training, networks, and partnerships that facilitate informed decisions about habitats

Objectives

- 2.1 Increase the coastal management community's understanding of spatial technologies and their applications to habitat management.
- 2.2 Promote adoption of protocols and standards that facilitate sharing of information and tools.
- 2.3 Develop and encourage interdisciplinary approaches and applications to solve problems.
- 2.4 Generate public support for habitat management and regulations.
- 2.5 Increase the capacity of the management community to effectively determine their needs and evaluate end products and activities.
- 2.6 Increase the capacity of the management community to understand the complexity of habitat management and to evaluate the results of management options.
- 2.7 Enhance informal communication within the coastal management community.

Strategies

- Increase efforts in training and education with existing networks of educators and trainers (e.g., Sea Grant extension, National Estuarine Research Reserve educators, National Marine Sanctuary educators, and National Estuary Program communication and education specialists).
- Conduct or coordinate the following types of training: technology (e.g., geographic information systems, remote sensing techniques and technologies, relational database management systems); content (e.g., characterizations, application of remote sensing to coastal management); and process (e.g., facilitation, needs assessments, evaluation, and public involvement processes).
- Develop informal communication networks by supporting discussion groups, regional meetings, issue-based workshops, bulletin boards, and Web sites.
- Provide easily accessible guidance on the process for partnering and proposing projects with the Center.
- Set an example for maintaining innovative approaches through processes such as supporting on-site collaborators (e.g., fellows and personnel serving through intergovernmental personnel agreements), and continuing professional education and development of Center staff.

III. HAZARDS THEME

Definition

Coastal hazards include both natural and man-made events (chronic and episodic) that threaten the health of coastal ecosystems and communities. This definition includes, but is not limited to, hurricanes, tsunamis, erosion, oil spills, harmful algal blooms, and pollution. Center projects in this theme area work to reduce the environmental, social, and economic impacts from coastal hazards by providing information and tools that facilitate increased decision-support capabilities for coastal managers.

GOAL 1

Coastal communities have a significant reduction in loss of human, environmental, and economic impacts from both man-made and natural hazards

Objectives

- 1.1 Reduce impacts from coastal hazards by developing effective hazard mitigation strategies based on the systematic evaluation of risks and vulnerabilities of Center clients and their communities.
- 1.2 Increase the development of techniques that more comprehensively calculate the impacts and costs of coastal hazard events and the economic benefits of hazard mitigation activities.
- 1.3 Increase the awareness of the hazard mitigation benefits of natural systems to promote informed and comprehensive decision making.
- 1.4 Broaden the focus of hazard mitigation to include social consequences such as behaviors, beliefs, and values by incorporating these considerations into Center tools and products to fully address the issue of human health and safety.

Strategies

- Work with clients and partners to increase the use of the risk and vulnerability assessment methodology developed at the Center by creating focused training, encouraging local implementation, and improving the integration of economic, environmental, and social science principles.
- Contribute to existing research (i.e., through grants, partnership projects, studies, workshops, etc.) on assessing the economic and social benefits and cost savings derived from hazard mitigation strategies and efforts.
- Enhance the capability to use geographic information systems, remote sensing, and spatial data for hazards planning and assessment through active partnerships with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), and the coastal management community.
- Develop targeted outreach materials for improving hazards awareness and enhancing hazard mitigation planning (i.e., technical briefs, conference presentations, Internet sites, press releases, articles, publications, refrigerator magnets, etc.).

GOAL 2

The hazard-risk and vulnerability data, information, and application needs of Center clients are met

Objectives

- 2.1 Develop relevant hazards data, value-added services, and applications in a useful form in order to promote better decision making.
- 2.2 Identify and provide critical hazards data and information (physical, social, economic, and environmental) through targeted and improved delivery mechanisms in order to promote better decision making.
- 2.3 Identify and adhere to industry and client group standards and protocols when developing data and applications to ensure that Center products are usable by clients.

Strategies

- Stay current with technology changes and assess clients' needs and capabilities to ensure all Center hazards products are appropriate and useful to the client community.
- Continue efforts to develop relevant hazards data, value-added services, and applications for risk and vulnerability assessment, including Light Detection and Ranging, new data development techniques and protocols, data conversion, data integration, methodology development, modeling, and applied research.
- Contribute to existing research (i.e., through grants, partnership projects, studies, workshops, etc.) that assesses the economic benefits and cost savings derived from hazard mitigation strategies and efforts.
- Develop targeted outreach materials for improving hazards awareness and enhancing hazard mitigation planning.

GOAL 3

Awareness and coordination among client groups is achieved, eliminating redundancy or gaps in hazards-related activities

Objectives

- 3.1 Promote awareness and sharing of vulnerability assessment methods.
- 3.2 Increase visibility of the Center's hazards theme activities by elevating outreach efforts in order to ensure effective communication, enhance the prioritization of hazards planning, and reduce redundant efforts.
- 3.3 Facilitate partnership building and awareness of all client groups to clarify roles, responsibilities, expertise, and expectations to more effectively reduce coastal hazards impacts.

Strategies

- Create outreach plan development team to identify target audience and partners, inventory existing resources and needs, and determine necessary materials and products.
- Convene and facilitate meetings of client groups to improve use, eliminate redundancy, and identify gaps in hazard efforts.

- Develop targeted outreach materials for improving hazards awareness and enhancing hazard mitigation planning.
- Target key Center partners to continue efforts to develop and host content-based workshops and symposia on hazards issues.
- Continuously evaluate Center hazards projects, products, and processes for relevance and effectiveness in meeting the needs of the clients.
- Facilitate meetings and workshops on coastal hazards issues to establish communication between state and federal agencies and organizations; encourage coordination in comprehensive planning activities among these agencies and organizations; and identify sources of funding that would enable these communities to dedicate resources to hazards planning and policy decisions.

GOAL 4

Coastal managers have the knowledge and skills to develop and implement hazard mitigation policies and practices

Objectives

- 4.1 Increase knowledge of hazard mitigation by working to inform and train current and future coastal managers.
- 4.2 Create training and methodologies for effective use of Center-developed data and applications in order to maximize clients' skills and abilities to use products.
- 4.3 Partner with clients to develop information, techniques, and processes to advance their policy and management options for reducing coastal hazard impacts.
- 4.4 Coordinate the flow of information and resources regarding training, data, and technical tools available through other sources.

Strategies

- Gather internal and external input on existing hazards curriculum, determine needs within client community, develop or adapt curriculum for coastal resource managers, and identify appropriate delivery mechanisms.
- Work with clients and partners to increase the use of the risk and vulnerability assessment methodology developed at the Center by creating focused training, encouraging local implementation, and improving the integration of economic, environmental, and social science information.
- Work with existing networks of training professionals to provide access and delivery of information, tools, and training to the coastal management community.

IV. COASTAL NATIONAL SPATIAL DATA INFRASTRUCTURE THEME

Definition

The National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) is a nationwide effort to improve the utilization of geospatial data within the United States. The Center fully supports this effort for the benefit of local and state coastal resource managers. Center projects in this theme area assist coastal managers in a variety of data-related tasks, including data acquisition, processing, storage, distribution, ease of use, and inclusion in the decision-making process.

GOAL 1

The coastal management community understands and embraces the vision, concepts, and benefits of the NSDI

Objectives

- 1.1 Engage coastal and marine customers and encourage participation in NSDI activities.
- 1.2 Demonstrate the benefits of participation in the NSDI to existing and prospective coastal and marine management practitioners.
- 1.3 Promote the principles and practices of the NSDI to the coastal and marine community through formal and informal education, training, and marketing.

Strategies

- Develop targeted educational programs and materials for coastal and marine community user groups.
- Continually evaluate and improve our geographic information system, remote sensing, and metadata training, and look to exploit on-line educational opportunities.
- Develop, build, and showcase products and case studies that exemplify the benefits and principles of the NSDI.
- Use Coastal GeoTools as a forum for coastal and marine NSDI activities by establishing an agenda that promotes the NSDI goals and encourages participation.
- Sustain student internship and fellowship programs to increase knowledge of the NSDI in the coastal management community.
- Require adherence to NSDI standards within all Center contracts and grants that involve the collection, processing, or distribution of spatial data.

GOAL 2

Geospatial coastal and marine framework data are readily available for use by the coastal management community

Objectives

- 2.1 Define the major framework data sets required for use by the coastal and marine community.
- 2.2 Establish Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) standards for coastal and marine framework data sets.

- 2.3 Develop and publish protocols for capture and publication of important marine and coastal data and applications.
- 2.4 Facilitate funding mechanisms for the development, acquisition, rescue, and distribution of coastal and marine framework data sets.

Strategies

- Continue to survey coastal communities to determine framework data needs and establish priorities for the acquisition and dissemination of these data sets.
- Work with coastal states and related professional organizations to build framework data by identifying, gaining access to, and integrating existing data sets.
- Enhance Center and state agency relationships with private sector data providers.
- Engage the FGDC and other standards groups in researching, evaluating, implementing, and publishing protocol standards to broaden access to data sets.
- Establish financial support for framework data activities by identifying funding opportunities primarily through the federal government budget planning process and partnerships with key stakeholders.

GOAL 3

Innovative practices and technologies that facilitate the discovery, collection, description, access, and preservation of geospatial data are widely available to the coastal zone management community

Objectives

- 3.1 Continue to develop a seamless national coastal and marine geospatial data clearinghouse.
- 3.2 Support the evolution of common means, such as FGDC-compliant metadata or standards, to describe and exchange coastal and marine geospatial data sets.
- 3.3 Develop, implement, and support architectures and technologies that enable interoperability and seamless data integration.
- 3.4 Offer metadata training to the Center's coastal customers.
- 3.5 Ensure preservation and usefulness of data for future generations.

Strategies

- Work with data gathering and sharing organizations to find and develop data that support coastal resource managers and their staff.
- Engage the NOS spatial data synergy team in developing internal organizational strategies to overcome data integration and compatibility issues.

GOAL 4

Foster, develop, and implement geospatial data applications in response to the needs of the coastal and marine communities

Objectives

- 4.1 Identify existing applications that are capable of supporting coastal resource management efforts to balance the needs of the community with effective coastal stewardship.
- 4.2 Foster, develop, and implement tools that allow for the easy exchange of applications, information, and results.
- 4.3 Develop coastal best practice documents for the use of coastal geospatial data sets and applications.
- 4.4 Develop applications for coastal habitat, hazards, and communities in partnership with state and local partners.

Strategies

- Provide technical educational and training opportunities targeted at the use of geospatial data, tools, and analysis methodologies to address coastal management issues.
- Serve as a focal point for the coastal management community in the collection and sharing of ideas, methods, and needs for geospatial tools and products.
- Consistently seek customer feedback on Center products and services and integrate the feedback into products.
- Place staff on temporary reassignment within the coastal management community workforce to facilitate a greater understanding of the Center's customers and to increase the Center's ability to create innovative solutions for their issues.
- Encourage applied research and creativity by Center staff for the development of applications and products that are directly applicable to Center customers.

V. ORGANIZATION AND CULTURE THEME

Definition

This theme area represents the ongoing efforts of Center employees to build an organization that serves its customers and its employees to the best extent possible. Here the focus is on the structure, function, and policies of the Center. Organizational values, practices, and beliefs are addressed in this theme area.

GOAL 1

Center employees are responsive to customer needs and dedicated to the improvement of coastal resource management nationwide

Objectives

- 1.1 Quickly adapt to changing needs and priorities.
- 1.2 Increase the utility of planning and evaluation.
- 1.3 Improve the quality of employee interactions with customers.

Strategies

- Decrease obstacles by continuously reviewing and improving policies and procedures.
- Keep staff current regarding political, legal, policy, and personnel changes.
- Maintain an appropriate balance of federal and nonfederal employees to ensure flexibility in response to customer needs.
- Invest in the information collection needed to assess customer needs.
- Make a needs assessment determination a standard part of project design and planning.
- Create different levels of product and service evaluations to determine if customer needs are being met.
- Develop performance measures to gauge effectiveness.
- Make evaluation and survey results available Center-wide and within NOAA as appropriate.
- Create an active internal seminar series inviting coastal resource managers to express their views, needs, and experiences.
- Initiate methods for staff to spend time working with state or local coastal resource management programs.
- Utilize the fellowship program to learn more about customers.
- Clarify project selection, service request, and partnering criteria.
- Ensure that Center partners and staff agree to project outcomes and commitments on the front end.
- Bring all appropriate players together at the initial planning stage, both internal and external.

GOAL 2

The Center has a highly skilled, efficient, and effective workforce

Objectives

- 2.1 Increase the positive impacts of diversity within the workforce.
- 2.2 Give staff the tools they need to do their jobs.
- 2.3 Offer employees training opportunities to improve their expertise and job performance.

Strategies

- Promote a diversity of staff in the design and execution of projects.
- Formalize an organizational assessment process whereby the Center continuously looks toward the future regarding workforce issues and needs.
- Ensure that Center policies support employee recruitment and development to provide for a balanced workforce.
- Encourage participation in conferences and workshops.
- Encourage the use of individual career development plans.
- Ensure that staff keep current regarding leading edge technology and trends through expert seminars, training, and continuing education.

- Share skills and knowledge across programs to meet project requirements, and cross-train in job-related areas where appropriate.
- Continuously share and reinforce the Center's vision throughout the ranks.
- Create a local staff exchange program.
- Continue to support and encourage publishing opportunities for staff.

GOAL 3

The Center has an innovative and challenging work environment that fosters mutual respect, teamwork, and positive energy

Objectives

- 3.1 Increase communication at all levels.
- 3.2 Respect employee abilities.
- 3.3 Empower all employees to be innovative and able to effect change.

Strategies

- Showcase successes and failures.
- Encourage enhancement of communication skills.
- Focus on keeping communication appropriate to the target audience.
- Encourage leadership opportunities at all levels and reward leadership successes.
- Encourage an environment where authority and trust is shown as jobs are delegated.
- Create skill guides for different programs and share skill sets by contributing to efforts outside normal program areas.
- Encourage creation of self-directed work teams.
- Encourage an open door policy for both staff and management.
- Strive to balance production work with opportunities to be innovative.
- Develop an incentive structure that encourages employees to develop innovative ways to meet Center goals.
- Identify areas prime for innovation and focus sufficient resources in these areas.
- Provide opportunities for interested staff to participate in Center planning and project selection.

GOAL 4

The Center supports positive policies regarding quality of life issues important to employee morale

Objectives

- 4.1 Implement methods to increase productivity and decrease burnout.
- 4.2 Integrate buildings and off-site personnel.

Strategies

- Encourage wellness seminars including stress management.
- Support organizational skill training in areas such as time and meeting management.
- Make better use of special incentives, including cash and time-off awards.

- Develop an employee's training curriculum that provides for both mandatory requirements and discretionary options.
- Implement a process to evaluate positive and negative impacts of Center life.
- Cross-train where appropriate.
- Seek to balance the use of all buildings for meetings and events.
- Empower employees to initiate and coordinate special events and observances.
- Encourage broad employee understanding of Center operations.
- Ensure good communications among all buildings and off-site personnel.
- Encourage full representation at all-hands meetings.
- Incorporate people from various departments in projects.
- Strive to ensure consistency in the treatment, support, and expectations of all staff.

Implementing the Strategic Plan

Center staff participated widely in the creation of this strategic plan. The results will guide the Center's efforts over the next five years as the organization strives to serve the coastal resource managers of the nation and provide a stimulating workplace for employees.

Theme areas in the strategic plan were created using information provided by the coastal management community. Many months of careful consideration helped Center staff develop the goals, objectives, and strategies that address the challenges found in each of these themes. The Center and the nation's coastal resource managers will benefit from this blueprint for the future, as this document will be an integral part of the Center's day-by-day operations and the annual-planning and project-selection processes. Progress made toward meeting the goals of the strategic plan will be reviewed annually, and adjustments made as necessary. The continuing input and level of satisfaction of the coastal resource management community will help guide this process.