

Ocean-Based Climate Solutions

Facts & Recommendations



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U.S. Ocean Climate Goals

President Biden's early executive action signaled strong commitment to addressing the climate crisis, advancing environmental justice, and ensuring that the ocean is leveraged as a source of climate solutions. These actions set ambitious ocean climate goals, including:

- Reducing U.S. emissions by 50% by 2030
- Deploying 30 gigawatts of offshore wind by 2030
- Conserving 30% of our ocean by 2030
- Achieving zero emissions from international shipping by 2050

Ocean Conservancy Priorities

Enhance Coastal Resilience and Restoration

Coastal resilience and restoration help protect against some of the most devastating climate impacts, including storms and sea level rise. Investing in restoration and resilience projects is a productive, cost-effective way to help coastal communities survive in the face of the most severe impacts of climate change.

Resilience

- Maximize impact of the \$2.6 billion in coastal resilience funding in the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)

Restoration

- Restore coastlines using living shorelines and green infrastructure
- Identify impediments to restoration and set targets for completion of projects

Protect Blue Carbon

Blue carbon ecosystems, such as mangroves, sea grasses, and tidal marshes, improve resilience of ecosystems and nearby communities, sequester carbon, and can help fight the climate crisis. Once these ecosystems are degraded or destroyed, they lose their ability to function as carbon sinks. To protect these critical ecosystems, we need to:

- Designate important blue carbon areas as significant and establish protections for them
- Prevent degradation of these ecosystems
- Increase research and mapping of blue carbon ecosystems and increase data collection to understand the sequestration potential of blue carbon ecosystems

Advocate for Ocean-Based Climate Research

Ocean Carbon Dioxide Removal (OCDR) Research

OCDR is a collection of techniques that leverage the ocean's biological, physical, and geochemical processes to take up extra atmospheric CO₂. These techniques are so new that their different consequences are not yet well known. To support science-based decision making we need to:

- Advance multidisciplinary research about OCDR techniques and their impacts
- Ensure OCDR research adheres to a code of conduct that promotes equitable distribution of benefits and risks

Address the Plastics Climate Crisis

Made from and powered by fossil fuels, plastics generate 3-4% of global greenhouse gas emissions and are the fastest growing source of demand for oil. Each year ~11 million metric tons of plastics enter the ocean, polluting our ecosystems and communities. To end plastic pollution and accelerate the clean energy transition, we need to:

- End fossil fuel subsidies
- Include plastic production reduction in climate commitments
- Reduce pollution and emissions from plastic production
- Invest in the circular economy to achieve low-cost emissions reductions
- Require transparency and accountability from industry across the plastics lifecycle
- Support a just clean energy transition
- Work toward a legally binding global instrument to end plastic pollution

Transition to Clean Ocean Energy

We need to transition to a 100% Clean Energy Ocean future. To protect the ocean and our communities, we must transform the fossil fuel-based energy regime along our ocean and coasts by accelerating the transition to clean energy. To achieve this vision, we need to:

- Phase out dirty and dangerous ocean and coastal fossil fuel and petrochemical development and infrastructure
- Promote investment in and support of frontline communities that have been adversely affected by fossil fuel and petrochemical industries
- Transition funding and incentives away from fossil fuels and petrochemicals and catalyze new financing to support a clean renewable energy future
- Responsibly deploy marine renewables, like offshore wind
- Leverage tax incentives and transmission investment in the IRA
- Advance and leverage U.S. policy mechanisms to advance clean energy responsibly
- Support interagency engagement and White House leadership to advance ocean co-use

Decarbonize the Shipping Industry

We believe that with the solutions and momentum currently available, the U.S. can up the ambition to reach zero-carbon shipping globally by 2040. We can reach these goals by:

- Leveraging funding from the IJA and IRA
- Advancing zero-emissions shipping and ports
- Promoting green shipping corridors
- Strengthening infrastructure investment and market development
- Maintaining U.S. leadership in international decarbonization
- Utilizing zero-emission fuels produced with renewable energy