

GOMA Federal Working Group Call

Feb 28 2013

ACOE

Jennifer Wozencraft

USDA

Delmar Stamps

NASA

Ted Mason

Duane Armstrong

Nancy Searby

USGS

Scott Wilson

Kate Spear

Larry Handley

FWS

Patric Harper

NPS

Cherry Green

NOAA

Kristen Laursen

Becky Allee

Marian Hanisko

Ann Weaver

Chris Signiello

Julien Lartigue

Alan Lewitis

Todd Davison

EPA

Phil Bass

Jan Kurtz

John Bowie

Jerry Boos

NAVY

Camille Destafney

GOMA

Laurie Bowie

Todd Davison:

This call is an opportunity to provide input to the GOMA planning process. Phil Bass and Laura Bowie will give some background and then we will ask you a series of online questions.

Phil Bass introduced the subject:

The second action plan is in year 4 of 5 and it's time to consider how to update it. We've accomplished 90% of the actions in AP2 and those remaining actions can be carried forward into a new plan if that is the direction we decide to take.

The question posed to the group is whether to sunset AP2 and create another document – AP3, consider AP2 a living document and append it with additional actions, or create a hybrid plan that adds to AP2. The hybrid option is support by the AMT, it won't sunset nor require the five Governor's signature.

At the All-Hands meeting in June we need to charge the PITs with whatever we decide today about how to update the Action Plan. The AMT prefers the hybrid option.

There are some things that should be included in the revision(s) that are currently outside AP2:

- There may be actions within an agency that lend themselves to a GOMA goal, but is not in the Action Plan, this is great. Actions don't have to be an action of GOMA itself.
- Need some language about science-based restoration.
- Address coordination strategies with:
 - ongoing research in the region (GOMURC, GOMRI, NSF, etc.)
 - TNC, Ocean Conservancy, GoM Foundation and other NGOs.
- Develop a path forward with CMSP.

We established 6 priorities for GOMA. Unless we hear otherwise from partners, these will stay the same. Restoration and science will be big issues with RESTORE but also touch on all aspects of GOMA.

Do we feel our missions can be accomplished through GOMA, or are we participating because we care? This is an important distinction. We need to think about what we can do to better align our agency goals with GOMA priorities.

Questions/Discussion

1. About the hybrid format option, is it limited to existing actions? How can we do it w/o the Governor's signatures?
 - a. It's not limited. We should bring new things in to the plan. We can focus on areas of agreement. Governor appointees for each state can sign off on it.
2. What's the timeframe for the new plan?
 - a. We need to decide on our approach in the next few months. We will begin to pull together a draft after the All-Hands. We should plan to have a first draft by Oct/Nov.

Results from On-line questions:

Q1. What is the preferred approach for revising GOMA's strategic planning document?

O Voted for – Do Nothing

5 voted for – Add an addendum to AP2

2 voted for – Retire AP2 and develop a new AP3

12 voted for – Revised format. A more focused document that would not need the signatures of the 5 governors

Q2. The mission of GOMA is broad and diverse, but in the last two years funding has been significantly reduced for regional ocean partnerships. Do you think/how do you think GOMA

should set its priorities to focus on viable funding sources? Eg. RESTORE Act, various state and Federal RFPs with stable funding

- Focus on current RFPs and if some PITs do not get funding, we will focus on others
- No, GOMA should stay committed to its current priorities. Even if a priority lacks funding sources now, the situation may change in the future and the absence of funding doesn't make the priority any less important.
- One key is to find minimal funding to support the PIT coordinators. We need to maintain our priorities and look to accomplish actions and goals with existing efforts from all of our partners.
- Priorities are good and capture the needs of the Gulf; recommend pursuing alternative funding sources/RFPs/Foundation grants, etc.
- GOMA priorities should not change based on whether funds are available
- Does GOMA go after the funding directly or point to funding opportunities from all sources that the PITs and others might go after?
- PITs should more aggressively pursue independent funding through RFPs. Also need to document past successes made in APII and API!. Foundation funding should be more aggressively pursued.
- Keep current priorities and aggressively pursue all possible funding sources and partnerships
- Establish a process to capture work that contributes to the current priorities by each federal agency from current and new funding sources.

Q3. Do you feel your agency goals are in alignment with existing GOMA priorities?

- My office goals align well with HCRT and EIA
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes, EPA does, but we need to make sure that those are maintained with smaller budgets.
- Yes
- Yes – EPA's goals align well with GOMA priorities
- YES
- Yes. In particular the NOAA Regional Team Construct matches ideally with GOMA.
- Absolutely, NASA applied science goals and interests strong align with GOMA priorities
- YES
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes, NOAA goals align fairly well with GOMA priorities.

Q4. How can GOMA help you accomplish your goals?

- GOMA brings so many of the key players together. When used properly it can be a mechanism for multiple partners to contribute to a common goal.
- Partnerships to leverage connections between common goals at the Federal/State/Regional level – make 1 and 1 equal 3
- By linking their priorities with EPA Goals and Objectives (roadmap of sorts)
- RESTORE Act implementation. Both the Science and Council activities. GOMA can help Feds by bringing a regional/Gulf framework to RESTORE so that it's not 5 separate and unconnected efforts.
- Facilitate connections to state agencies that can benefit from the R&D we conduct.
- By facilitating partnerships not only within state but across state lines
- I benefit from the partnership aspect – forming them, disseminating info to them, and coordination planning and implementation with them
- GOMA needs to be fully supportive of all federal agencies missions equally

- Assist in bringing together research and other initiatives which focus on similar activities in the Gulf.
- Serve as a link to state management needs.

Q5. Would your agency allow you to spend a nominal amount of time (perhaps 1-2 days a month) to assist with development of APIII?

- Likely
- Yes
- Yes
- Probably, as long as I can get my own work done.
- Likely, yes
- Yes – I think EPA would
- Yes
- Yes, NOAA would but it's important to align NOAA priorities with GOMA priorities – so having NOAA staff assist with drafting would help mesh the priorities.
- Probably
- Yes
- Yes
- Not relevant for me; coordination with partners is part of my offices members' job description
- YES
- Yes
- Yes

Q6. Which Priority Issue Team do you work most closely with?

- 4 answered Environmental Education
- 3 answered Coastal Community Resilience
- 8 answered Habitat Conservation and Restoration
- 7 answered Ecosystem Integration and Assessment
- 4 answered Nutrient and Nutrient Impacts
- 4 answered Water Quality

(There is no Q7)

Q8. Do you have any other items we should consider?

- Possibility of Inter-Agency Grants between Federal agencies jointly supporting GOMA priorities
- Include successes from API and APII within APIII.

More Questions from Participants

1. When we built AP2, it was to be a living document that expands with time. We developed in our PITs a number of actions that are "everlasting." In the call for AP3, what's changed?
 - a. Nothing has changed. We just need to articulate to the team what we will do, as well as the expected achievable actions for the next few years. We need to build on the living document by showing our successes, noting what still needs to be done, and a few other specific actions. It's a document for decision-makers and appropriators. There are a few documents underway to document successes. Perhaps we could blend the documents to chart the future and look back at our accomplishments.
2. How do we start the document development process?
 - a. It begins with the AMT giving the PITs clear guidance at the conclusion of the All Hands Meeting. The PITs will pull together the 1st draft and pass it to the writing team. The final will be delivered to the AMT.
3. Are there any discussions about aligning RESTORE activities at a state level within GOMA so that states are consistent?

- a. Monthly AMT and ACT calls are discussing gulf wide monitoring, and each state representative is submitting the idea to the RESTORE council. If each PIT writes to the restore council and the council get proposals from all states makes it easier for them to see the unity.

Other Announcements:

- Brent Ache with NOAA Special Projects Office has been detailed to the Department of Commerce to help develop the Council's Comprehensive Plan.
- The All Hands Meeting is scheduled for June 25-27 in Tampa.
 - Please submit your registration as soon as you can.
 - NOAA will lead an engagement session for RESTORE science activities in conjunction on that Monday from 4-6 p.m.
 - The Meeting still needs sponsors.
 - Given the agency budget situations, it's time to start thinking about whether or not we need to transition to bi-annual All-Hands meetings.