Private Sector Concerns

Kenneth J. Schaudt, CCM

schaudt.us

Houston, Texas

Workshop to Explore Private Sector Interests and Roles in the U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System; Focus on the Southeastern U.S. and Gulf of Mexico
Marathon Oil Co., Houston, TX, 2-4 March 2004
OPTIONS FOR GOVERNING REGIONAL OCEAN OBSERVING SYSTEMS

... In theory, an observing system could be owned and operated as a for-profit venture.

However, the basic data acquisition, data management, and data analysis components of an observing system are unlikely to be profitable activities or attract the necessary private investment or sales to be self-supporting.
OPTIONS FOR GOVERNING REGIONAL OCEAN OBSERVING SYSTEMS

This is because the data and information produced by an observing system are in the nature of “public goods.”

Many private companies will use the data to produce and sell value-added products and will provide observing systems with needed services, but the observing systems themselves will be, probably of necessity, not-for-profit.

(http://www.ocean.us/documents/docs/RA-overnance-Options-ER.doc)
Meet User Needs with One Voice…?

• Mariners – safety, rescue
• Shipping – safety & efficiency
• Mammals – endangered species assessment
• Aquaculture – site selection & water quality
• Lobster fishing – recruitment prediction
• Petroleum Industry – spill response
• Shellfishing – spat collection, site selection
• Military – national security, operations test bed
• Coastal Management – eutrophication
• Commercial & Sport Fishing – stock assessments
• Research – long-term observations, infrastructure
A Chasm Has Developed

- Competition
- Commercial / non-commercial
- Value Added Role
- Access to data
- Innovation
COMMERCIAL/NON-COMMERCIAL

NWS states that NWS will not compete with the private sector although it will distribute products where directed by law or when services are not available from the private sector.

COMMERCIAL/NON-COMMERCIAL

IOOS states that data and information produced at public expense will be fully and openly shared at no more than the cost of dissemination. It does not distinguish between commercial and non-commercial information/products.

IOOS contributors are responsible for full open and timely sharing and exchange of GOOS-relevant data and products for non-commercial activities. GOMOOS markets to the end user filling a role traditionally reserved for the private sector.

Non-commercial information/products.
COMPETITION

Should taxpayer dollars be used to crowd out the private sector...the source of tax revenue in the first place?
Value Added Role

.... are unlikely to be profitable activities or attract the necessary private investment or sales to be self-supporting.
Value Added Role
VALUE ADDED ROLE

• Led deployment of operational global wave models.

• Runs operational regional current models

• Markets Gulf of Mexico Eddy forecast models

• Even onshore, AWS runs 5000+ US weather stations.
DATA DISTRIBUTION

New marine information for multiple users

The ocean influences everyone – just think of El Nino. Yet, unlike the routine monitoring of weather patterns in the atmosphere, there has been relatively little routine observing of ocean waters – including the Gulf of Maine – until now.

GoMOOS is a national pilot program designed to bring hourly oceanographic data from the Gulf of Maine to all those who need it, including: Commercial Mariners making everyday decisions that impact their safety and livelihood.

http://www.gomoos.org/aboutgomoos/
DATA DISTRIBUTION

Coastal Resource Managers seeking to maintain economically and environmentally vital resources. Scientists trying to understand complex ecosystems and predict climate change. Educators conveying the complexity and urgency of ocean science. Search and Rescue Teams trying to find and save lives. Emergency Response Teams mitigating damage from environmental disasters. Public Health Officials concerned about outbreaks of harmful algal blooms (such as red tide). All these users can benefit from the up-to-date information GoMOOS provides.

http://www.gomoos.org/aboutgomoos/
DATA DISTRIBUTION

85% of the forecasts reaching public are generated by the private sector.

The private sector, The Weather Channel, Weather Data, WSI, DTN, Oceanweather, Oceanroutes and others, have pioneered the scientific/artistic presentation of weather information. Copying this “Look and Feel” involves intellectual property rights in some instances and, unfair competition issues in others.

Private sector companies, such as WeatherScan and WSI, pioneered the first weather databases in the late 1970s enabling users to instantly access the information they needed.
WKY TV - first ever tornado warning broadcast - 1950.

Alden Electronics - remote weather radar data.

Kavouras – remote color radar and electronic displays.

WSI - first composite displays of forecast satellite and composite radar imagery.
SYNOPTIC NETWORK

Real-time Observations
- In Situ Measurements
  - Far Horizon Drifter (FHD)
  - Offshore rig and ship obs
  - Shipboard surveys
  - Pilot visual observations
  - NOAA and NOPP buoys
- Remote Sensing
  - GOES SST composites
  - CoastWatch AVHRR SST
  - Satellite altimetry
  - Ocean color
  - Custom enhancements

Models
- Dynamical
  - Navy NLOM and CU/CASE POM
- Parametric
  - Forecast Model
- Statistical
  - Eddy Watch

Operational Data and Model Analysis
Synthesis and Reporting

Reports and Forecasts
- Charts & Narratives
  - Web-Site
  - Email
  - Fax
  - Hard Copy
  - Phone

schaudt.us
consulting oceanographer
PATH FORWARDS

INCLUDE IN THE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

• Existing providers
• The CWSA
• NOIA