Action Plan for Marketing the GCOOS

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Potential users

- Recreation including beach-bathers, surfers, boaters, etc.
- Recreational and commercial fishing.
- Insurance and re-insurance Industry.
- Maritime transportation.
- Disaster management (both planning and response).
- Research (including climate change).
- Search and rescue operations.
- Management of pollution sources
- Offshore energy industry including oil & gas, wind, wave, etc.
- Urban planning and development
- Educational institutions including K-12 through university
- Homeland security
- The news media (e.g., the Weather Channel).
Potential users
Identified key projects to address users needs through workshops etc.

Two major challenges remain:

- We have not determined the monetary value of the benefits that users could derive from specific GCOOS products.
- It is unclear how we can obtain resources to provide data and products. How can we get users to pay, especially for data that benefit a broad range of users?

GCOOS shares these challenges with the other RAs.
Most likely partners

- Gulf of Mexico Alliance (GOMA)
- SECOORA (Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association)
- CaRA (Caribbean Regional Association)
- NFRA (National Federation of Regional Associations for ocean observing)
- Mexico (PEMEX, state and Federal agencies eg SEMARNAT and GOOS Mexico.
- CASE JIP is a Joint Industry Project involving 20 Oil and Gas (energy) companies.
- OOC (Offshore Operators Committee) is a consortium of 130 companies involved in energy production.
- Texas Department of Insurance is a state agency whose mission is to protect insurance customers.
- United Nations Organization for Industrial Development which provides oversight to the Gulf of Mexico Large Marine Ecosystem project.
- The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council and the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission.
- Many individual private sector entities carrying out a broad range of activities.
Most likely funders that we should focus on

- NOAA, the IOOS Program and the Coastal Services Center.
- NOPP (National Oceanographic Partnership Program)
- MMS (Minerals Management Service)
- NASA fund about $5 million per year on ocean studies and solicits proposals roughly twice per year in the National Registry.
- CASE JIP
- GOMA
- Foundations especially those known for giving money to ocean research such as the Pew Charitable Trusts, the Harte Institute, or the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.
## Most likely funders characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>NOAA IOOS</th>
<th>NOAA Coastal Services</th>
<th>NOPP</th>
<th>NASA</th>
<th>CASE</th>
<th>MMS</th>
<th>GOMA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Funding limit</td>
<td>~$1000 k</td>
<td>~$500 k</td>
<td>~$500 k</td>
<td>~$500 k</td>
<td>~$200 k</td>
<td>~$500</td>
<td>~$100 k</td>
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<tr>
<td>Funding cycle</td>
<td>Yearly</td>
<td>Variable</td>
<td>Yearly</td>
<td>Twice yearly</td>
<td>Anytime</td>
<td>Yearly</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposal type</td>
<td>Solicitation based on broad topics</td>
<td>Solicited proposals (twice yearly) and unsolicited</td>
<td>Solicitation based on moderately narrow topics</td>
<td>Solicitation</td>
<td>Unsolicited but topic must hit &quot;Focus Area&quot;</td>
<td>Unsolicited</td>
<td>Unsolicited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidentiality</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>High</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lead time</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Half-year</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Weeks</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Areas</td>
<td>General ocean observations</td>
<td>Coastal ocean</td>
<td>Ocean research, sensor R&amp;D, hurricane intensity</td>
<td>Remote sensing coastal and ocean</td>
<td>Loop current and hurricane</td>
<td>Environmental, physical oceanography</td>
<td>Environmental, hypoxia, erosion, public safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustained funding</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>To be determined</td>
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</table>
Most likely funders, summary:

- Baseline funding for organizational costs and maintenance of key infrastructure (e.g., maintenance of the GCOOS data portal) is most likely to come from NOAA. Indeed no other obvious alternative is known at this time.

- Funding requires considerable lead-time at all organizations except CASE. All of the government organizations tend to fund projects on a yearly cycle, and even if one enters the cycle at the correct time, funds won't become available for many months.

- Most of the organizations will entertain unsolicited proposals though they must fall within defined topic areas. Funding decisions are usually made once a year. The breath of the defined topics can be fairly restrictive, e.g., NOPP's present emphasis on studies of hurricane intensity.

- It will be difficult to get funding for projects greater than roughly $500 to $1,000k from any single organization.
Primary Funding Strategy

- Develop specific project proposals targeted at one or more of the funding organizations.
- Develop and maintain a prioritized suite of observing system activities for the production and delivery of data and products.
- Use the GCOOS list serve and web site to solicit Letters of Intent (LoI) to carry out high priority activities.
- In April of each year the Board will set up a small working group assigned to consider and identify potential funders.
- Approach the funders with a portfolio of accepted Letters of Intent.
Marketing - looking at the longer term

Marketing plan will be four-tiered:

- An economic benefit analysis
- An “awareness campaign" to spread the word about GCOOS to the general public and collective user community
- A targeted outreach aimed at specific user groups deemed to be most likely to partner or fund the effort
- A legislative strategy.
Economic benefit analysis

A study titled “Estimating the economic benefits of regional ocean observing systems” was undertaken by H. L. Kite-Powell et al in 2005.

Since this report was published a number of factors have occurred that influence the current value of benefits, these include:

- Inflationary increases
- Varied economic growth in the different sectors (at the time of publishing oil prices were less that $50 a barrel).
- Meteorological and oceanographic events have occurred that require an alternative assessment to determine the true benefit.
- The GCOOS-RA has obtained considerable additional information regarding the needs for information of various stakeholder sectors

A revised study would:

- Allow more accurate assessment of the return on investment to be made, thereby reinforcing the value of proposals from an economic perspective
- Allow areas where project could have value to be identified and prioritized.
- Ensure that efforts are not directed in to areas when the economic benefit is small

The GCOOS-RA Board will approach this study by first developing a short list of sectors that would likely receive the greatest benefits for enhanced information from GCOOS. Then, potential funding sources will be approached to determine their interest in supporting this analysis. If favorable interest is shown, we will work with the potential funder to develop a proposal of mutual satisfaction.
Awareness campaign

This effort will disseminate general information about GCOOS with the objectives of establishing a basic knowledge and awareness of GCOOS among the general public, promoting the intrinsic value of improved coastal observation and monitoring capabilities at regional, national and global levels, building a grass roots base of support for future legislative initiatives, and recruiting new GCOOS users and members.

Though there are a multitude of possibilities, the best bets are:

- Maintaining an up-to-date and informative GCOOS website,
- Attending key conferences and workshops including presentations by GCOOS Board and committee members,
- Maintaining an e-mail list of interested parties, stakeholders, and potential users, and
- Maintaining active subcommittees and councils with broad representation from potential users, funders, and partners.
- The exhibits at the five Coastal America Learning Centers will be a major awareness opportunity for GCOOS and IOOS in general-hundreds of thousands of people will be reached.

- Over the past five years GCOOS has pursued all of the above with the exception of a quarterly newsletter.
Targeted Outreach

Targeted marketing and promotion of GCOOS will involve custom-designed, narrowly-focused outreach initiatives directed at specific primary user groups. Efforts will include:

- Assigning a GCOOS liaison to regularly attend meetings of GOMA, SECOORA, and NFRA;
- Maintaining strong representation by the Energy companies on the GCOOS Board and committees;
- Preparing proposals and submitting to potential funders; and
- Holding periodic workshops with specific user segments (e.g., energy industry, fisheries organizations, etc).

To date, GCOOS has pursued all these forms of outreach. One obvious effort that could be improved is in submitting unsolicited proposals to funders other than NOAA IOOS.
Legislative strategy

- A legislative program should be prepared which advocates for federal legislation to authorize and appropriate the IOOS programs, including GCOOS. Clearly this a role the NFRA should lead but GCOOS will support it through various means.

- Where appropriate, the legislative initiatives should also be directed to the states to ensure programmatic consistency and function across the Gulf ecosystem. Coordination of the program should involve principally the GCOOS Board of Directors and other key committee members.

- Targeted and strategic communications should be established with federal legislative stakeholder groups which should include those listed earlier.
Scenario 1

Lack of Federal funding

IOOS/RAs

Ocean Observations
Scenario 2

Lot of Federal funding

IOOS/RAs

Ocean Observations