

Presentation Notes from Kaitlin Giglio
Ocean Acidification Task Force Public Meeting
December 17, 2021

We are currently on version 9 of the OATF report.

The report is organized into 5 pillars that each contain a set of recommendations. Overall, the recommendations within this report focus on counteracting coastal ocean acidification, which is driven by local factors that are relatively manageable within New York State borders, namely local discharges of acidic waters and excessive nutrient discharges. The task force strongly recommends that NYS also participate in the broad global and national goals of reducing factors contributing to global carbon emissions and ocean acidification. New York State clearly contributes to global carbon emissions and, it is already acting aggressively to address them, evidenced by its establishment of The Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act. The efforts in this report are centered on identifying mitigation measures suitable to New York, the region and, where appropriate, to specific water bodies. The task force aims to reduce the impact of ocean acidification on our coastal waters and resources.

The pillars of this report work together to form a cohesive and comprehensive response to ocean acidification. They are: Mitigate, Educate, Investigate, Engage, and Legislate.

The Mitigation pillar recommends measures to mitigate the extent, magnitude, and impact of ocean acidification. The recommendations generally fall into three categories, where ocean acidification is mitigated via reduction of point sources of eutrophic or acidic waters, introduction of materials to buffer acidified waters or alterations to the local ecosystem, such as restoring shellfish or cultivating seaweed to reduce acidification. These recommendations are categorized as substantiated or conceptual based on prior studies or pilot programs that have been conducted previously.

The educate pillar includes recommendations for promoting public awareness regarding the general concept of ocean acidification as well as its impacts and potential opportunities for mitigation. Here the Task Force recommends increasing public awareness via formal education at the elementary, undergraduate, and graduate level, as well as educating the wider public through marketing and communications campaigns on radio, TV, and online.

The investigate pillar includes suggestions for

- removing or neutralizing low pH sources,
- ameliorating sources of nutrients or carbon dioxide, which are causing coastal acidification ,
- considering ecological use, recycling, or storage of nitrogen and carbon, and
- focusing on monitoring efforts throughout NYS waters

Monitoring aragonite saturation for New York's various marine water bodies is the important end point for setting environmental standards. Aragonite saturation which is found by concurrently monitoring $p\text{CO}_2$ and pH for the various monitoring programs operating in the New York Marine and Coastal District. The recommendations within this pillar are prioritized as high,

medium, or low priority. The task force felt that even those recommendations that have been labelled as low priority were worthy of investigation and should be included in the report.

The engage pillar includes recommendations for engaging business and industry to collaboratively address the issue of ocean acidification, encouraging businesses to adopt best management practices for mitigation and developing new strategies for Ocean acidification reduction or mitigation. These suggestions include requiring new development to be carbon neutral and working with industries to foster carbon sequestration or reduce carbon emissions.

The final pillar looks to develop a legislative and regulatory action plan for addressing ocean acidification. The suggestions here aim to provide legislative support for actions related to ocean acidification mitigation. They include recommendations to participate in larger, regional, national, or global ocean acidification efforts as well as looking inward to review NYS legislation to include consideration of ocean acidification and coordinate ongoing efforts within the state. The task force recommends the creation of an Ocean Acidification advisory committee out of the governor's office to help implement the ocean acidification plan.

In addition to the recommendations already contained within the report, the task force will be considering including a recommendation for the establishment of marine protected areas to address ocean acidification in our local waterbodies.