



GOVERNORS' SOUTH ATLANTIC ALLIANCE

4th ANNUAL MEETING
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GUANA TOLOMATO MATANZAS NATIONAL ESTUARINE RESEARCH RESERVE

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Introduction

The 4th Annual Meeting of the Governors' South Atlantic Alliance (GSAA) was held in Ponte Vedra Beach, FL at the Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve. Approximately 80 people attended from the states of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida, as well as representatives from federal agencies, regional organizations, the academic community, non-profit organizations and industry.

The purposes of this Annual Meeting were to discuss key issues affecting the region's ocean and coasts and how these issues are being addressed in GSAA activities and formulate 2015 Work Plans to drive progress in implementing the GSAA Action Plan with a focus on advancing actions that will lead to a more resilient South Atlantic. This meeting also provided the opportunity to focus on the GSAA's engagement with industry through a forum sponsored by the World Ocean Council.

Significant discussions at the Executive Planning Team (EPT) meeting, prior to the beginning of the Annual Meeting, redirected some of the activities around Work Plan development. Issue Area Technical Teams (IATTs) were invited to discuss and submit brief "problem statements" to the EPT that identified a limited number of strategic issues that are specific, regional in nature, responsive to the "resilience" driver, and relevant to or actionable in some way by the Steering Group and/or Governors. These problem statements will be the focus of GSAA activities in 2015, and will be reviewed annually and adjusted as appropriate by the EPT.

Opening Remarks

Gil McRae, Director, FL FWC Fish and Wildlife Research Institute

Dr. McRae welcomed participants to Florida and highlighted significant regional resource management issues in the South Atlantic. The life cycle of American Eels spans the entire East Coast and out to the Sargasso Sea. Declines in eel populations have been documented as the demand for eel increases. Another significant living marine resource challenge is the migration route and habitat of the endangered North Atlantic Right Whale, whose calving grounds spans the South Atlantic coast in the fall and winter. Dr. McRae also identified opportunities for leveraging regional resource management efforts, including the incorporation of coastal habitats into Geographic Response Plans for Oil Spill Planning and expanding coastal and ocean information for the South Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative Conservation Blueprint.

Kevin Claridge, Director, FL DEP Florida Coastal Office

Mr. Claridge welcomed participants on behalf of the GSAA Steering Group and explained some of the recent changes taking place within DEP. The Florida Coastal Office is an integration of several coastal programs, including aquatic preserves, coastal zone management, coral reefs, and brings partners from National Marine Sanctuaries, offshore activities, Deep Water Horizon response, and NERRs under one umbrella.

The GSAA has made significant progress over the past year, including new communications tools, partnering with the World Ocean Council, new funding opportunities, and streamlined operations. In the future, the GSAA will focus on a more strategic approach to priorities, rather than task-oriented, in order to build on its successes. Mr. Claridge challenged participants to make at least one new contact through the course of the meeting.

Eric Strom, Director, USGS South Atlantic Water Sciences Center

Dr. Strom welcomed participants and noted the broad representation from federal agencies, which creates unique opportunities for the GSAA partnership and meeting participants. It has been a difficult time for federal budgets, but federal partners will continue to identify ways to support the GSAA partnership. The selection of resilience as a regional driver has been especially important for federal agency engagement and resonates with numerous agency priorities.

Debra Hernandez, Executive Director, Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association

Ms. Hernandez described the role of the EPT Partner Arm, which has significantly invested in the success of the GSAA. Recently, the Partner Arm hosted a discussion with the academic community about the opportunities to increase academic engagement, which resulted in recommendations to better articulate the role and value of the GSAA. The Partner Arm wants to continue to utilize the networking opportunities presented by the GSAA to enhance regional action and particularly look forward to progress on the resilience topic.

GSAA Products and Progress

Clean Coastal and Ocean Waters – Dianne Reid, NC DENR

Ms. Reid described the CCOW team's activities in 2014 in support of their goals to (1) enhance managers' abilities to effectively target prevention, enforcement, response and mitigation activities, and (2) integrate coastal and ocean observing systems in the South Atlantic. The team is pursuing graduate level interns to complete a draft catalogue of state watershed/water quality processes and improve the states' ability to transfer modeling and process development knowledge. The team is working to improve the states' ability to model loading coefficients for point and non-point sources of nitrogen in coastal ecosystems by working with USGS to utilize the SPARROW model, developing a status report related to each states' nitrogen modeling activities, and working on nitrogen criteria in each state. Implementation steps are being revised under the action to develop recommendations on processes and protocols to transfer knowledge regarding best management practices (BMPs) and encourage smart growth and green infrastructure; a BMPs compendium is being finalized for distribution. The team also led a session on development of regional monitoring groups at the National Water Quality Monitoring Council Conference in April 2014 and is currently identifying members for a South Atlantic monitoring work group from each state. Ms. Reid described how these activities support resilience, and how support for water infrastructure mapping efforts would be particularly important to advancing resilience in the region.

Disaster-Resilient Communities – Tancred Miller, NC DENR

Mr. Miller prepared a presentation on the DRC team's activities in 2014 in support of their goal to help communities understand potential risks and threats, take steps to prepare for and adapt to chronic and episodic events, and deal with effectively post-disaster response. The team is re-evaluating the implementation steps under the action to improve redevelopment considerations in state and local hazard mitigation plans and local comprehensive and growth management plans in light of FEMA's release of the National Disaster Recovery Framework. The team will host a webinar on the Framework in September with additional training events anticipated. Florida advanced the action to explore short-term economic recovery aspects of long-term redevelopment by documenting opportunities for public-private partnerships in the state, including specific examples of partnerships following the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2010. The team also hosted a webinar in August with NC Sea Grant and the SC Sea Grant Consortium on the Vulnerability, Consequences, and Adaptation Planning Scenarios (VCAPS)

tool, which helps decision-makers and residents learn about hazards associated with weather and climate variability and increase their resiliency by making better-informed decisions.

Healthy Ecosystems – Amber Whittle, FL FWC

Dr. Whittle presented the team's 2014 activities in support of the HE goal to ensure the sustainability of the diverse array of coastal and marine environments vital to the ecological and economic stability of the region. Within resources available, the HE team completed the current compilation of priority estuarine habitat, biological, and coastal use spatial data layers for the GSAA Coast and Ocean Portal. They also coordinated with TNC on their work with the South Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative to develop a spatial assessment of the South Atlantic Bight. The team is exploring monitoring catalogues and databases used in the South Atlantic to identify gaps and common monitoring, and eventually develop preferred monitoring plans by habitat. The team is also pursuing interns and funding to support a compilation of information on ecosystem valuation studies in the South Atlantic. Other activities included support for development of the EPA Wetlands program development grant proposal, compiling a list of permitted and proposed living shorelines projects in FL, and a joint meeting with CCOW to discuss areas of overlap. The HE team has initiated discussions on ecological resilience with Dr. Lance Gunderson from Emory University.

Working Waterfronts – April Turner, SC Sea Grant Consortium

Ms. Turner presented the WW team's 2014 activities in support of their goal to more effectively manage the future of our ports and other water access points by striking a balance among new development, historic uses, port expansion, and sustaining resources for the future. The team worked with the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway Association to explore costs and needs to maintain the AIWW, which led to a component of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 that requires USACE to report operation and maintenance needs to Congress. The team identified and compiled existing public access datasets, such as boat ramps and marinas, to begin the development of an integrated database of traditional working waterfronts and public access facilities. A student project was secured to advance the action to explore land-use planning and policy options to limit the loss of recreational and commercial waterfronts, which is being coordinated with the National Working Waterfronts Network. The team is exploring areas of the action plan related to economic and social resilience.

Hazard Vulnerability Assessment – Chester Jackson, Georgia Southern University

Dr. Jackson described the final products from the GSAA Hazard Vulnerability Assessment (HVA) project, including the results of the HVA tool in four pilot areas. Dr. Jackson developed the HVA tool from a foundational tool, AMBUR, designed to examine shoreline change. The HVA tool built on AMBUR by incorporating additional factors that can contribute to coastal community vulnerability, including flooding, storm surge, and social vulnerability. Significant outreach on the HVA tool has taken place throughout the region and information is available on the GSAA Coast and Ocean Portal.

State of the South Atlantic, Resilience Edition

Jeff Payne, Acting Director, NOAA Office for Coastal Management

Dr. Payne moderated the panel session and provided brief comments regarding the national focus on resilience, partially as a result of the response to Superstorm Sandy. As a nation, we are asking how we build resilient systems, not just to "bounce back" after an event, but to support the long-term effectiveness of recovery and redevelopment. Adaptation is a critical component to this type of resilience and requires that we look at metrics, how we communicate risk, and building coalitions. Policies have been developed at the national level, including the

National Preparedness Goal and the National Disaster Recovery Framework, but to be effective, these policies need local engagement and implementation. This panel was brought together to provide an overview of the key resilience issues affecting the South Atlantic's ocean and coasts and the opportunities presented by GSAA collaborations.

Please note that the perspectives expressed by invited speakers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the GSAA or its member organizations

Courtney T. Hackney, Director of Coastal Biology, University of North Florida

Dr. Hackney highlighted the challenges around ecological resilience, particularly as evidenced by the transition of coastal tidal swamps to tidal marsh across the South Atlantic. Ecological resilience is often connected the concept of a “tipping point,” after which the ecological system is no longer able to return to its previous stable state and adopts a new stable state. Several aspects of an ecological system may be related to the system's resilience, including the function or loss of individual species (such as keystone species), community function, and the whole ecosystem structure or function. Researchers explore potential hazards to ecological systems that may affect its resilience at any or all of these levels. Hazards or risks to ecological systems can include episodic forces (such as fire or hurricanes), cyclical changes (such as beach erosion-deposition cycles), or directional changes (such as sea level rise or climate change).

An example of such directional change resulted from the influence of increased depth in a South Atlantic port that led to changes in the tidal range upstream and a kind of artificial sea level rise. The complex response of the ecosystem to the increase in sea level resulted in some species being displaced or lost during the recovery of the system and conversion of bottomland hardwood to tidal swamp in higher elevations. In some parts of the system, the rate of increase in water level was within the tolerance level of the keystone species (Cypress and Gum Trees) and therefore the system was resilient and able to return to a homeostatic state. In other areas, the addition of sulfate that accompanied the increased water levels altered the competitive interactions of microbiota and ultimately tipped the system beyond its ability to recover.

Frank Knapp, President, CEO and Co-founder, SC Small Business Chamber of Commerce

Mr. Knapp described the efforts of his organization to build a grassroots effort to encourage resilience among the small business community. South Carolina's largest industry is tourism, which is largely a small business industry. The Chamber has partnered with the American Sustainable Business Council to launch SC Businesses Acting on Rising Seas (SCBARS), which educates small businesses about the potential threats of climate change and sea level rise to their businesses and communities. The first phase of the project used NOAA sea level rise maps to identify, for individual businesses, the impact of 6ft sea level rise at high tide. Businesses marked the 6ft level with blue tape, displayed informational signs, and were encouraged to write Congress to reduce carbon emissions and support renewable energy. The second phase of the project will focus on engaging local governments to plan for resiliency to sea level rise and request the development of transparent and public community task forces to address the issue. Other communities, including Boston and Hampton Roads, are now adopting this grassroots model.

James Murley, Executive Director, South Florida Regional Planning Council

Mr. Murley described some of the challenges South Florida is facing as sea level rise and climate change impact daily life on the coast, and the action community leaders have taken through the Southeast Florida Climate Change Compact to begin to address these challenges. While South Florida is now regularly seeing flooding due to high tides and erosion of coastal communities, there was a challenge in connecting environmental impacts to an economic

message. In addition, the South Florida Regional Planning Council includes constituents representing 42 different languages, making education, awareness, and resilience a challenge.

The Southeast Florida Climate Change Compact was ratified by Broward, Miami-Dade, Monroe, and Palm Beach Counties in January 2010 to coordinate mitigation and adaptation activities across county lines. While there were political challenges, elected officials demonstrated leadership and provided support for the compact. Through this effort, and subsequent engagement with the National Climate Assessment and national climate policy activities, key messages are connecting the economic impact of climate change – (1) sea level rise poses threats to both the environment and economy, (2) decreased water availability (due to drought) increases competition for water and impacts the economy, (3) impacts to nationally important assets (ports, commercial fisheries) will disrupt economic activity. The revolution in communication through social media has also had an impact on the kinds of approaches that are most effective. An example from California emphasized “strategies to safeguard California” and efforts to “do better today, live better tomorrow.” Specific and local sea level rise projections in South Florida have provided a common understanding of local impacts and continued collaboration among the Counties have made outcomes more efficient.

Gavin Smith, Executive Director, University of North Carolina Center for the Study of Natural Hazards and Disasters

Dr. Smith discussed the challenges in coordinated planning for climate change adaptation, hazard mitigation, and disaster recovery, and the techniques that could be applied to improve resilience and reduce risk. Challenges to effective adaptation include hazards with differing timescales (episodic vs. slow onset), differing spatial scales (global-local), divides between researchers and practitioners, differing analytical tools, and differing funding and implementation mechanisms (natural hazards risk management vs. climate change adaptation). Scenario planning is an alternative to traditional planning frameworks and allows for planning in uncertainty by providing multiple futures based on collaboratively developed scenarios, clear monitoring and implementation strategies, and flexible strategies that are robust and have contingencies built in. Pre-event conditions such as aging communities, wealth/poverty, reactive policy frameworks and institutions, and settlement patterns and land use significantly impact outcomes and should be addressed in pre-event planning efforts. Collaborative governance can help bridge the gap between national policy and local plans and implementation, bringing to the table numerous government and non-government entities with roles in community recovery. Disasters are also “focusing events” and can be an opportunity to incorporate sustainable development principles to improve resilience and leverage land-use planning techniques to mitigate future risks. Planners are in a unique position to build coalitions to address historically poor coordination between planners and emergency managers and integrate risk reduction, sustainable development, resilience, and adaptation.

Discussion Session

During the question and answer session, the panelists and other participants made the following additional points:

- The panelists agreed that public health is an important lens with which to view resilience. Certain populations are at disproportionate risk from hazards and increasing temperatures due to climate change could result in more and broader impacts of tropical diseases. The Southeast Florida Regional Planning Council is in the process of analyzing public health impacts.
- The package of materials provided to hundreds of South Carolina businesses through the SCBARS project included economic information conveying the importance of tourism and rational explanations of climate change and sea level rise. The messaging to

business was not that the burden is on them to solve the problems, but that engaging their local communities in better planning and collaborative solutions could limit the increase in costs from inadequate planning.

- The insurance industry educating communities on why rates are increasing or will increase could also help shift industry and public opinion.
- Polling shows that less than 10% of the population is actually resistant to climate change information; national polls show concern from citizens across party lines.
- The federal role and impact should be to engage the scientific community on the topic, funding surveys, maps, and better data and information that show impact. FEMA and HUD are important additions to the national dialogue on climate adaptation strategies. A federal task force on resilience and preparedness will be releasing a report soon.
- Challenges – the annual federal appropriations process is disconnected from long-term planning needs; local plans have become a carrot for post-disaster recovery funding, but not necessarily to a high-quality standard.

Intersections in Resilience and Marine Planning

Rick DeVoe, Executive Director, SC Sea Grant Consortium

Mr. DeVoe moderated the panel session intended to explore the relationship between marine planning activities and resilience in the South Atlantic. Each panelist gave a brief introduction, followed by more extensive discussions on the topics.

Ray Toll, ODU Navy NOAA Liaison, Center for Coastal Physical Oceanography, Old Dominion University

Mr. Toll discussed the initiative being undertaken in Hampton Roads, VA to bring together federal, state, local governments, planning commissions, industry, and researchers on a two-year mitigation and adaptation pilot project. The project is taking a “whole of government” approach to addressing the climate change and sea level rise impacts the Hampton Roads region is already experiencing. Reliable data and information underpin this collaborative effort. The focus on resilience includes preserving national security interests and ensuring readiness for the strong military presence in the region.

George Sedberry, Science Coordinator, NOAA National Marine Sanctuaries

Dr. Sedberry discussed the role National Marine Sanctuaries have in helping to maintain the ecological resilience of important ocean ecosystems, such as the Florida barrier reef, which also protects the resilience of adjacent coastal communities. The Florida Keys Sanctuary uses spatial planning and zoning tools to help maintain the ecological resilience of the Sanctuary, but also to identify areas of compatible use, which is part of the Sanctuary mandate.

Jayantha Obeysekera, Chief Modeler, Hydrologic & Environmental Systems Modeling, South Florida Water Management District

Dr. Obeysekera discussed the water resources infrastructure at risk in South Florida and the increasing impacts from flooding and sea level rise. Projections of sea level rise for South Florida are in the range of 1-4 feet by 2100 and significant storm water management infrastructure for the region is located in at risk areas. Potential impacts on water management in the region include flood protection (flooding, storm surge, hurricanes, and coastal structures), drinking water supply (saltwater intrusion, freshwater wells), and the natural environment (Southern Everglades, coastal wetlands).

Jamie Monty, Manager, Coral Reef Conservation Program, FL Department of Environmental Protection

The Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative (SEFCRI) launched a community planning process for the 100 miles of coral reef tract north of the Florida Keys that lacked a coordinated management plan. Information on the reef tract has been collected over the past 10 years, and in 2013 they initiated, Our Florida Reefs, community working groups that review and provide input on uses and management recommendations for offshore reefs. Working groups include local reef users, scientists, representatives from NGOs, and local, state, and federal agencies. In partnership with TNC, SEFCRI is also using the information collected to explore the resilience of the reef ecosystems and human impacts.

Stephanie Bailenson, Senior Policy Advisor for Oceans and Coasts, The Nature Conservancy

TNC has been working on coastal resilience issues for over 10 years with a focus on taking care of the needs of local communities, now and into the future. Effective planning for resilience doesn't happen by accident and TNC helps communities around the country coordinate, set mutual goals, and come up with plans that will persist. The basis for sound planning is good data, which supports the context of decisions at the local level.

Discussion Session

During the question and answer session, the panelists and other participants made the following additional points:

Q: What is resilience?

- Some panelists prefer the National Academies of Sciences definition for resilience, which they describe as the ability to prepare for, plan for, recover from, and adapt to hazards on an ecological, cultural, and economic basis.
- Resilience was also highlighted as being intergovernmental and including sustainable use.

Q: How do you engage people in planning?

- The public is involved in every step of the planning process for sanctuaries and fishery management plans, including the sanctuary designations.
- TNC engages communities across the country, and with federal agencies and numerous other partners.
- The Hampton Roads project is bringing 18 federal agencies into a local planning process and connecting science, through the Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS), with decision makers.
- The Southeast Florida Compact includes extensive outreach efforts, which on the topic of sea level rise has become easier because communities are already seeing the impacts.
- FL DEP has an extensive community planning process, including projects, outreach, and education plans that also link the health of environmental resources to human health.

Q: What are the dimensions of planning?

- A number of different levels of government; typical processes can take 5-10 years, but SEFCRI has focused on a geographically defined area to enable more immediate plans.
- Integrating across space, including a unified sea level rise projection. The timescale depends on the planning horizon – what are you planning for? Water projects are typically on a 50-year horizon.

- The Hampton Roads project is a pilot strategic planning process so that we can focus on how to fund implementation. The Department of Defense will be able to identify requirements to make their coastlines more resilient and influence federal budgeting.
- Communities start at different places and developing planning process responsive to the needs of the communities. Oregon's territorial sea plan was a short-term process; Massachusetts had a narrower focus initially which is now being revisited; New England's marine planning process is more comprehensive of the competing landscape in the marine environment.
- Because of the zoning process with specific use areas for Sanctuaries, the public is engaged to support continued access, but other federal agencies are also engaged.

Q: Where does your information come from?

- From partner organizations with the resources to provide the maps and tools needed, such as NOAA and IOOS.
- TNC does some of its own research, such as ecoregional assessments, but also rely on partners. Data portals are an important resource for access to information.
- Data are accessed wherever available – NOAA and state data, national projections, but there are still significant gaps. We need to find ways to get data needed for better resilience planning for the coast of the future.
- Data are collected when funding is available, and at times by stakeholders themselves, but organizing data through portals have helped mobilize planning efforts.

Q: How do we link/pull together the people at the table to coordinate planning?

- Start by taking time to sit down together, but you need support from leadership to work across jurisdictions.
- Agree on a common set of planning assumptions and methodologies.
- IOOS Regional Associations are important integrating organizations. And look for opportunities that galvanize the effort. The White House sent a National Security Council staffer to make the announcement on the HUD competition for communities who recently experienced hazards - Norfolk was selected by the Rockefeller Foundation as a "resilient city."
- Articulate the interests and value the process will bring to partners, and engage them in a new line of thinking with their goals in mind. Then its power in numbers – stakeholders and political.
- Often those at the table don't speak the same language, so it can be hard to understand each other. IOOS Regional Associations have helped improve the dialogue, but need more communication, even when in the same room.

Q: What is your number one challenge?

- Its easy to say funding and lack of data, but it's the truth.
- We've done a lot of mapping, but we really need more, especially offshore. There are several ongoing efforts, but need to coordinate better. Unfortunately, existing software is less accurate offshore. There may be opportunities to tap more into military resources.
- Fear of the unknown – asking people to change their way of thinking and act on it. Its important that we can show the connections and that decisions are not in a vacuum – we've moved well beyond planning issues on land, zoning is expected. Good spatial information helps – when you overlap maps and make it real to people where they live.
- Resilience – moving techniques from research to operations. Planning – our constitution. If the federal government is going to participate in planning at a local level,

our efforts may experience resistance. We need to think about how to bring in the whole community.

- Lack of acceptance of future unknowns; lack of decision strategy for decision-makers.
- Groundswell of stakeholder support – while we're engaging local communities, its still a small percentage of the community that provides input and influences political decision makers.

Q: How do you deal with objectors?

- Having a neutral facilitator (such as a university) that provides community forums. Also, identify the potential for attractive business opportunities.
- In South Florida, we already see existing impacts, so planning is focused on variety of scenarios that are triggered by watching the data trends.

Q: How can you reach all communities?

- Based on funding, you try to reach a variety of audiences with a limited budget. If they don't come to your meetings, go to theirs.

Q: Climate change is just one of many problems natural resource managers deal with; how do you balance the effort of time to address the many complex challenges?

- Climate change may be a different dimension of current problems; you can't treat it as a set of separate, distinct issues. Bottom line is its still more, but the more we can capture impacts now the more we'll be able to make the case for resources in the future.

Q: How do you see FEMA's role?

- FEMA's National Preparedness Goal parallels the National Academies of Sciences definition of resilience, which we're starting to see filter into FEMA guidance and documents. They are starting to look at changing conditions and factor them into state hazard mitigation plans.

Q: If you had one recommendation to give the GSAA, what would it be?

- Use whatever resources and influence you have to focus on offshore habitat mapping using a cross-agency approach and resources.
- Do not try to be all things to all people – be clear about your focus and how to articulate it.
- Support federal and non-federal data integration.
- Look at the organization's constituency and see where gaps are to build support and get the funding to move forward.

GSAA-World Ocean Council Industry Forum on Marine Planning

Leslie-Ann McGee, Programs Director, World Ocean Council

Ms. McGee welcomed the participants to the Industry Forum and participants introduced themselves around the room. Ms. McGee introduced the group to the WOC and the WOC/GSAA project including stakeholder mapping, sharing of information, and investigating the creation of a South Atlantic Ocean Business Network.

Bruce Cwalina, Executive Director, Navy Region Southeast

Mr. Cwalina discussed the status of the Regional Planning Body for the region. State points of contact have been named but that group has not met yet. While no decision has been made as

to state participation, the federal agencies will move forward with the RBP as called for under the National Ocean Policy. The Navy will serve as the federal lead in the region.

Kevin Claridge, Director, Florida Coastal Office

Mr. Claridge provided brief remarks about the GSAA and its approach as the South Atlantic regional ocean partnership and existing marine planning activities. Ms. McGee directed the participants to the GSAA website which includes an [overview presentation on the GSAA](#).

Brent Greenfield, Executive Director, National Ocean Policy Coalition

Mr. Greenfield introduced the National Ocean Policy Coalition and shares its perspective on Regional Planning. The NOPC was formed in 2010 to give voice to industry interests in development of the policy. It has 40 official members in a number of sectors. He reviewed the Coalition's concerns that the National Ocean Policy efforts will lead to new regulations. Mr. Greenfield explained that, under the Policy, marine plans must be certified by the National Ocean Council and that this raises the concern that regional and state visions may not align with national goals. He highlighted that marine plans in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic are scheduled to be completed by January 2017 and noted concern that regions don't have control over deadlines and decisions on the stakeholder engagement processes. Mr. Greenfield concluded by urging that states and existing regional ocean partnerships are best suited for priorities and solutions at the regional level.

Scott Skinner, Manager of Environmental Compliance, Jacksonville Port Authority

Mr. Skinner offered background on the Jacksonville Port Authority and the role ports have in marine planning at the local and regional levels. He emphasized current port projects and the federal and state regulations for activities like salt marsh restoration, retaining walls, harbor deepening, dredging, and rebuilding terminal berths. Mr. Skinner reported on their many partners including federal, state, regional, NGOs, and the private sector. In Florida, there is an effort to eliminate redundant regulations. Given the inability for one port to handle all of the projected future cargo, Mr. Skinner noted that ports are working together on siting and environmental issues.

Roundtable Discussion: Engaging Business & Industry

Kristen Fletcher (Project Consultant, WOC) and Ms. McGee facilitated a group discussion focused on:

- * What are the existing mechanisms for collaboration for the Alliance and Ocean Business?
 - * What are the benefits and hurdles to engaging with the Alliance?
 - * How might those hurdles be addressed?
 - * What role can industries play with the Alliance or marine planning?

The following key themes and points emerged from the discussion.

- **Current Mechanisms for Industry Involvement** in the GSAA include the technical teams and the partner arm which is open to business but currently does not have private sector membership. Brad Pickel of the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway Association noted that the Association has benefited from participation on the Working Waterfronts technical team. The team has identified areas for navigation maintenance and made recommendations to the GSAA to support necessary legislative updates.
- The possible **creation of a Business Advisory Group** was discussed. The Gulf of Mexico Alliance formed a Business Advisory Council to enable industry participation at a higher level on Alliance issues. Mark Fernandez of HMS Ferries noted that such a group could be useful for businesses that have a lean staff to allow them to be involved. In the Gulf Council, representatives recognize their responsibility to filter the information to the rest of the sector, which may not have time for active participation.

- The **timing of industry involvement** may be a quandary: in developing a plan, it is important to the region that industry weigh in on its development (i.e, what questions merit a plan?); however, does the GSAA need a plan to get the industry involved?
- In engaging industry, **communicating the plan and goal is essential**. One consideration for the GSAA is whether and/or how its priority areas resonate with industry. If the focus is on a “clearer playing field” such as streamlining permits (especially in inter-jurisdictional situations), businesses are more likely to see the value in participation. Even dissimilar industries may have common regulatory challenges they’re dealing with, but the most important thing is to communicate the plan/goal. In addition, it is important to communicate why a business should engage at a regional scale (as it is likely already involved at the local/state/national scales).
- **Industry Associations can play a key role** in presenting industry priorities to the GSAA, especially during its initial planning stages. This enables businesses to stay informed about GSAA activities even though they may not be able to be involved in the early stages. Industry Associations could enable industry engagement throughout the process.
- There are still **questions related to the Regional Planning Bodies**. One perspective is that the RPB can give states more influence on federal actions outside of territorial waters. The RPB can assist in the identification of gaps in data and the bridging of them. The RPB can also expose the impact of regulations on industry uses through its process. A countering perspective is that combining the efforts of so many federal (and potentially state) agencies, it is difficult to believe that new regulations will not emerge from the process.

Next Steps & Closing Remarks

Ms. Fletcher noted the following next steps. The GSAA will be working its way through the specific questions and problems that need to be addressed at a regional scale. State representatives will meet soon (likely this fall) to discuss the possible establishment of an RPB. In addition, WOC will continue to develop its South Atlantic Industry Database and consider options for the South Atlantic Industry Forum 3.

Launching the GSAA’s EPA Grant Projects

Kristine Cherry, Coordinator, Governors’ South Atlantic Alliance

Ms. Cherry reviewed the proposed projects developed by the GSAA for submission to the EPA Region 4 Wetlands Program Development Grant Program. No confirmation of funding has been received, but the GSAA is confident that it will receive some funding in FY2015 appropriations through this grant program. Three project components are included in the proposal: (1) establishing a Regional Monitoring Workgroup focused on coastal wetlands monitoring efforts, (2) outreach and training on Best Management Practices for water quality, and (3) building a strategy for a regional approach to living shorelines. Core GSAA partners are engaged in all three project components, and critical new partners will be brought in if funding is awarded. A fourth project, sponsored by the USGS to evaluate regional nutrient models, will proceed regardless of EPA funding. The overarching goal of all these projects is to improve water quality and coastal resilience in the South Atlantic region.

Cheryl Mannel, Northeast Florida Aquatic Preserves Restoration Coordinator, GTM NERR

Ms. Mannel reviewed the work prepared by staff at the GTM NERR to assess the scope of literature related to living shorelines in the South Atlantic region. The purpose of the project was to create a document that serves as a reference for individuals seeking a comprehensive bank of research pertaining to living shorelines. The team created several categories of information:

physical effects, biological effects, shoreline protection methods, planning, design, and monitoring, social science, and resources. They will finalize the report with summary trends within each category, identification of data gaps, and next steps.

2015 Planning – Issue Area Technical Team (IATT) Meetings and Closing Reports

Clean Coastal and Ocean Waters – Dianne Reid, NC DENR

Ms. Reid reported on the activities the CCOW team has discussed for 2015, including finalizing the BMP Compendium and making it accessible via the GSAA website, coordinating across the states on nutrient criteria, and implementing the EPA Wetlands Grant. To be successful in moving forward, the team needs clarification from the EPT of what is expected of them in 2015, continued support from the states in participating in the GSAA, and support for attending GSAA events. The CCOW team recommended two problem statements to elevate to the Steering Group, the first related to the threat of increased nutrients, bacteria, and sediment from nonpoint sources and storm/flooding events, and the second issue focused on EPA's resistance to the use of alternatives to numeric nutrient criteria. The 2015 CCOW Team Lead will be Gary Raulerson from Florida, who will begin his tenure in January 2015.

Disaster-Resilient Communities – Tancred Miller, NC DENR

Mr. Miller reported that in 2015, the DRC team plans to focus on pilot implementation of the National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF) across the region, working with FEMA and the World Ocean Council to support economic resilience. The team recommended a related problem statement that focuses on better planning for preparation and recovery of businesses in the region through the NDRF. The requirements for success include buy-in from GSAA leadership, including the Governors and access to federal resources to support NDRF implementation. The 2015 DRC Team Lead will be Daniel Fitz-Patrick from Florida.

Healthy Ecosystems – Amber Whittle, FL FWC

Dr. Whittle reported on actions the HE team is planning to undertake in 2015, including identification of regional research needs, pursue a grant for a multi-state oyster resilience study, and engage in implementation of the EPA Wetlands grant, particularly related to living shorelines and wetland monitoring. They recommended the GSAA elevate the topic of instream flow policy, management, and data to better incorporate downstream effects due to the numerous negative environmental consequences on the coast, such as fish die-offs, water quality impacts, sedimentation and alteration of stream flow. In order to be successful in 2015, the team suggested funding opportunities for research needs and the development of a Data Team for the GSAA responsible for maintenance, enhancement, and identifying funding opportunities for the Data Portal. The 2015 HE Team Lead is Pat Geer from Georgia.

Working Waterfronts – April Turner, SC Sea Grant Consortium

Ms. Turner reported on the proposed 2015 actions for the WW team, including identification of the economic impact of the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway, sediment management uses, completion of a working waterfront community resources catalog, and expanding the clean and resilient marina initiative. The WW team recommended a problem statement around protecting the viability of ongoing waterfront cultural traditions, commerce, and adequate access in coastal states. Bob Swett from Florida will be the 2015 WW Team Lead.