



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
The Under Secretary of Commerce
for Oceans and Atmosphere
Washington, D.C. 20230

September 7, 2010

Dear Participant:

On behalf of the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)—a major partner in this First World Seabird Conference—it is my pleasure to welcome you here. I commend you for coming together to focus attention on the world's seabirds—an integral component of ocean ecosystems.

This past July, President Barack Obama announced a new “National Policy for the Stewardship of Our Oceans, Coasts and Great Lakes” (see www.whitehouse.gov/oceans and www.cmstp.noaa.gov). A recent *Science* magazine article provides more details on how this forward-thinking policy incorporates ecosystem approaches, and links science and management (*Science* 328: 1485–1486, 18 June 2010). The policy sets the United States on a clear path for the sustainable use of our oceans and coasts. At the heart of this new national policy are three words:

Healthy oceans matter.

Specifically, the President's new policy identifies five areas of special emphasis: climate change and ocean acidification; regional ecosystems; management of water quality on land; changing conditions in the Arctic; and observation, mapping, and infrastructure. The policy also outlines how the U.S. Government will operate differently to improve ocean stewardship and connect with all stakeholders. This includes adopting an ecosystem-based approach to management, increasing our knowledge to improve decision-making, and enhancing coordination.

Seabirds are an integral component of our ocean ecosystems that integrate physical and biological processes across geopolitical boundaries. I wish you the very best in the coming week as you meet with participants from around the world to address important topics pertaining to our World's oceans.

Sincerely,

Jane Lubchenco, Ph.D.
Under Secretary of Commerce
for Oceans and Atmosphere

Join me on Facebook: www.facebook.com/noaa.lubchenco

