

**Post-certification of PacIOOS
Draft Letter to NOAA Administrator
Copies to IOOC, PacIOOS, key Congressional Offices, VADM Brown, Dr. Bamford, Dr.
Callendar**

Dr. Kathryn Sullivan
Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere
NOAA Administrator

Dear Dr. Sullivan,

As the Chairman of the U.S. IOOS Federal Advisory Committee, and on behalf of my fellow committee members, it is my pleasure to extend to you warm congratulations on the recent certification of the Pacific Islands Ocean Observing System (PacIOOS) as the first regional information coordinating entity within the IOOS System. This is a momentous step forward in the growth, development, and maturity of IOOS and a testament to the vision, leadership, and investment of NOAA in the development of IOOS as a truly national, integrated, indispensable service for public good. **Certification is a ringing stamp-of-approval from the Administration that the ocean, Great Lakes, and coastal data collected, managed, and distributed by IOOS regional partners meets the highest standards of quality, reliability, and accuracy.**

IOOS is designed around the successful establishment of partnerships between the Federal Government and non-federal regional organizations. With contributions from both federal and non-federal organizations, the regional partners of IOOS work to promote the quick and organized collection and distribution of ocean, coastal, and Great Lakes data and data products to meet critical needs of our society.

Certification of regional IOOS extramural partners, as called for in the Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observation System Act of 2009 (ICOOS Act), is a rigorous review and assessment process. Unlike any extramural review process across the whole of the Federal Government, IOOS certification was designed by partners across NOAA line offices to evaluate the governance, management, data quality, system security, public engagement, and financial controls employed by the IOOS regional partners. Certification provides NOAA and the interagency partners a means to verify extramural partner maturity, excellence, and efficiency and formalizes the complete integration of that partner into the U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing system.

We congratulate you and your Administration on this first step forward on the formal integration of regional partners into IOOS, and look forward to successful certification of the ten remaining IOOS regional partners. The eventual completion of the IOOS certification process presents unique opportunities for NOAA and IOOS to improve interagency engagement with regional partners, communities, and individual members of the public. We stand ready to work with you, your administration, members of the interagency IOOS community, and the certified regional IOOS partners to advance efficient and effective data services, valuable and lasting public engagement, and operational excellence for the nation's Integrated Ocean Observing System.

Conrad Lautenbacher