



# FY2010: Regional Integrated Ocean Observing System Development

NOAA continued a merit-based funding process in 2010 to enhance regional coastal ocean observing systems (RCOOS) and achieve three long-term outcomes: establishing coordinated regional observing and data management infrastructures, developing applications and products for regional stakeholders, and crafting regional and national data management and communications protocols. In addition, regional associations received planning grant awards designed to assist them in stakeholder engagement, education and outreach, and long-range planning activities.

## SOUTHEAST ATLANTIC REGION

The Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association (SECOORA) is the regional solution to integrating coastal and ocean observing data and information in the Southeast United States. SECOORA supports the need of the southeastern United States to have real-time, or near real-time, marine information on coastal and ocean conditions that protects our people, environment and economy.

### Funding:

The fiscal year (FY) 2010 RCOOS award to SECOORA is \$1,680,000. The 2010 Regional Association (RA) Planning Grant award to this region is \$399,670.

FY 2009 - \$500,000 RCOOS (plus 3 additional implementation awards totaling \$2,444,150), \$391,991 RA

FY 2008 - \$400,000 RCOOS, \$384,535 RA

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### Regional Priorities and Objectives:

As part of a recent strategic planning process, SECOORA reviewed [stakeholder needs assessments](#) of the southeast region. Themes that regularly appear in these assessments include climate change and its impacts on habitats and sea level, marine weather and operations, and ecosystem management including fisheries and water quality. Another important expression of regional priorities is the one articulated by the newly formed [Governors' South Atlantic Alliance](#). The Alliance has identified their four initial priorities as healthy ecosystems, working waterfronts, clean coastal and ocean waters, and disaster-resilient communities. These priorities are incorporated into SECOORA's four main thematic areas:

- Marine Operations (safety, including support of Search And Rescue (SAR) operations; improving marine weather forecasting, and; offshore energy);
- Ecosystems: Living marine resources and water quality (fish and water quality, including beach advisories and harmful algae blooms);
- Coastal Hazards (inundation and rip currents), and;
- Climate Change (long-term data collection and analysis and ocean acidification).

This project originally is consolidating Coastal Ocean Observing System (COOS) assets and products in the Carolinas with those in Georgia and Florida to establish a user-driven observing system that spans the entire SECOORA footprint. The foundation of SECOORA was built initially upon six primary elements: 1) maintenance and development of existing observing assets and consolidation of existing sub-regional observing systems; 2) construction of an integrated and embedded modeling system; 3) development of ecosystem models targeted at

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predicting the characteristics of regionally important fish stocks; 4) establishment of a data management system designed to disseminate rapid, high quality products; 5) establishment of a systems engineering based structure to the observing system architecture that enables the seamless interoperability, and; 6) integration of an end-user community into the fabric of SECOORA to ensure responsiveness to regional needs. Due to funding limitations, elements 1, 4 and 6 have been the only ones implemented to date.

In FY10, SECOORA will support ongoing activities, giving priority to those that will:

- Serve important user groups identified in the SECOORA Strategic Priorities Plan;
- Provide efficiency by maintaining existing observing assets and ongoing activities;
- Serve the region as a whole, and;
- Integrate and provide access to data and related products.

In particular, SECOORA will seek to maintain and enhance the existing data management system for SECOORA and the high frequency radar systems that currently operate in the Southeast. In addition to extending these Year 1 and 2 components of the RCOOS, three other goals will be supported: (1) supporting 23 existing moored and coastal observing stations; (2) providing funding to support limited modeling and product development efforts to improve operation of a regional-scale circulation model, with a focus on supporting fisheries management needs, and; (3) increasing stakeholder education and outreach activities.

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