

## September 2008

### In the Headlines

**Admiral Watkins Meets with McCain Senior Staff.** Joint Ocean Commission Initiative Co-Chair Admiral James D. Watkins (U.S. Navy, Ret.) met with representatives of Senator John McCain's presidential campaign staff. Admiral Watkins discussed the need for the incoming Administration and Congress to catalyze meaningful ocean policy reform and address ocean issues related to climate change. During the meeting McCain's staff received a paper prepared by the Joint Initiative that outlines three central ocean policy priorities: (1) establish a coherent national ocean policy and improve federal coordination of ocean resource management and science (2) invest in ocean science especially in relation to climate change, and (3) accede to the Law of the Sea Convention. Moreover, the paper emphasizes the connections between climate and ocean both as driver and victim of climate change. The complexity of marine ecosystems and their adaptive qualities necessitate further funding and investigation of ocean science to identify how best to incorporate ocean issues into climate policy. The Joint Initiative has also scheduled a meeting with Senator Barack Obama's senior campaign staff. Through these meetings the Joint Initiative aims to call attention to the goals of the ocean community and lay a foundation for a targeted strategy for passing long-awaited, necessary legislative and executive branch action and increasing the funding for ocean programs and policies. To read the Joint Initiative's ocean policy priorities document, follow the [link](#).

### Joint Initiative Activities

**President Bush Praises Parravano's Commitment to the Oceans.** On September 26, President Bush addressed the ocean community to mark the grand opening of the Sant Ocean Hall at the Smithsonian Museum of Natural History. In addition to congratulating the Smithsonian Institution and NOAA on innovative ocean exhibits designed to educate the public on ocean science and the need for conservation, the President chronicled the advancements in ocean policy during his two terms in office and focused on the progress of the U.S. Ocean Action Plan. Highlighting the importance of stewardship among citizens and marine resource user groups, the President personally recognized Joint Initiative Commissioner Pietro Parravano. The President spoke highly of Mr. Parravano's consensus-building work with port operators and fishermen in Half Moon Bay, California and his engagement at the local, state, national, and international levels of marine stewardship. The Joint Initiative applauds the efforts of Pietro Parravano and is pleased to see his work so highly recognized.

**Watkins and Panetta Voice Their Appreciation for Retiring Members of House Oceans Caucus.** Four members of the U.S. House of Representatives Oceans Caucus will not return for the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress. Representatives Thomas Allen (D-ME), Wayne Gilchrest (R-MD), Jim Saxton (R-NJ), and the late Thomas Lantos (D-CA) were honored at a reception on September 17. In recognition of their commitment to the oceans and the coastal communities they served, Joint Initiative Co-Chairs Admiral James D. Watkins (U.S. Navy, Ret.) and the Honorable Leon E. Panetta sent a letter of appreciation to Representatives Allen, Gilchrest, and Saxton.

**Rosenberg Interviewed on NPR on New Fisheries Management Research.** On September 18 National Public Radio's *All Things Considered* interviewed Joint Initiative Commissioner Dr. Andrew Rosenberg with regard to new research released on the ecological effectiveness of fishing quotas. In line with previous research on the fishing quotas the researchers from the University of California Santa Barbara found that quotas not only had a positive economic effect, but the management tactic also correlated with sustainable fish stocks and other ecological benefits. Dr. Rosenberg commented that the findings of the

research published in *Science* were indeed compelling. However, he cautioned that implementing the fishing quota system can be challenging and the particular ecological, economic, and social characteristics of the specific fishery should be considered.

## **Items of Note**

**Sant Ocean Hall Opens at Smithsonian Museum of Natural History.** The Sant Ocean Hall at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History opened to the public on September 27. The Hall is a collaborative effort between the Smithsonian Institution and a number of leading marine science organizations, including NOAA. Through interactive exhibits on ocean science and cultural links to the sea, the Sant Ocean Hall aims to heighten visitors' interest in ocean health as well as understanding of its connection with climate and weather systems. In addition to the standing exhibits, there is also a calendar of ocean events featuring lectures, exhibit interpretation by scientists, and arts events.