

Virginia Sea Grant Strategic Planning

Combining the best of the past with the promise of the future

Sea Grant is a network of university-based NOAA-supported programs that facilitate research, educational, and outreach activities promoting sustainable management of marine resources. Virginia Sea Grant (VASG) is undertaking a wide-reaching, stakeholder engagement process to help us become more strategic in advancing that mission. The process began in the spring of 2008 with kick-off meetings among VASG's External Advisory Committee, VASG staff, and key partners from the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, NOAA's National Sea Grant Office, and other stakeholder groups. The outcome of those meetings is summarized here and provides a starting point for further listening sessions and discussions to be held across the Commonwealth in the coming months.

Guiding Principles for VASG

- Align closely with national Sea Grant priorities and be responsive to the Commonwealth's particular needs and opportunities.
- Sustain and build on current strengths, while exploring new directions to address emerging challenges and opportunities.
- Emphasize integration of research, outreach, and education.
- Demand demonstrable impacts that make a real difference.
- Collaborate with partners to be effective and efficient.
- Pursue regional and national approaches for issues that cross state boundaries.
- Increase collaboration with minority-serving institutions.
- Seek to increase funding availability.

Issues facing Virginia's coastal communities

- Climate change
- Coastal land-use transformation
- Changing coastal economies
- Declines in some fisheries
- Energy development
- Seafood safety concerns
- Focus on national security
- Ecosystem health threats

Areas of emphasis emerging from regional and national activities

- National Sea Grant priorities
 - ▶ Safe, sustainable seafood supply
 - ▶ Sustainable coastal community development
 - ▶ Healthy coastal ecosystems
 - ▶ Hazard resiliency in coastal communities
- Regional priorities
- Socioeconomic policy and human dimensions
- Climate change
- Hazard and community resilience

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Virginia Sea Grant
www.vims.edu/seagrants



Strategic Focus Areas: Current Strengths and Future Opportunities


Below are the strategic focus areas emerging from the spring 2008 meetings, including lists of current activities and priorities, future opportunities, and emerging issues under each focus area. This list is not prioritized; rather, at this stage, we are laying out a comprehensive picture of the needs and interests of the Commonwealth. Prioritization will be necessary and will emerge through continued public dialogue.

SAFE, SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD SUPPLY

- ▶ Sustainable supply of safe seafood.
 - Commercial and recreational fisheries and aquaculture.
 - Fisheries and protected species: habitat and behavior.
 - Gear research and bycatch reduction.
 - Aquaculture operation and impacts.
 - Socioeconomics, policy and management, and legal studies.
 - Conflict resolution and management.
- ▶ Healthy domestic seafood industry.
 - Safe production and distribution.
 - Effective marketing and economic development.
 - Emerging pathogens and environmental conditions.
 - Workforce professional development.
 - Socioeconomic and policy studies.
- ▶ Informed seafood providers and consumers (especially those currently underserved).
 - Chefs and restaurant industry.
 - Foreign workforce.
 - Low-income and subsistence fisheries.



SUSTAINABLE COASTAL DEVELOPMENT

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- ▶ Healthy, viable coastal communities and economies.
 - Commercial and recreational fishing and boating.
 - Marine transportation and trades.
 - Tourism.
 - Socioeconomic resilience and decision-making tools.
 - Port management, expansion, and development.
 - Public access and working waterfronts.
 - ▶ Sustainable use of coastal land, water, and energy resources.
 - Best management practices for water quality and waterfront development.
 - Clean marina initiatives.
 - Socioeconomic, policy and management, and legal studies.
 - Coastal land and water use, trade-offs and decision-making tools.
 - Alternative energy development, costs, benefits, and impacts.
 - Coastal brownfield redevelopment.
 - Waste disposal and blue-green infrastructure.
 - Resolution and management of user conflicts.
 - Green building and design standards and innovative planning for coastal communities.
 - ▶ Sound, science-based decision making in coastal communities.
 - Translation of science through workshops, white papers, articles, and communication products.
 - Economic impact analyses.
 - Coastal and ocean literacy among local public officials.
 - Special topic forums.
 - Socioeconomic, policy and management, legal, and other human dimensions of decision-making.

HEALTHY COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS

- ▶ Sound scientific data to inform management decisions.
 - Fish and oyster disease.
 - Algal blooms and their impacts on health of people, wildlife, fisheries, and aquaculture.
 - Habitat and ecosystem health.
 - Fish behavior.
 - Invasive species.
 - Chesapeake Bay and ocean observing systems.
 - Threats to coastal fisheries and environments.
 - Land-watershed-estuarine-marine interactions.
 - Socioeconomic, policy and management, and legal issues.
 - Interdisciplinary and collaborative research.
- ▶ Responsible, effective ecosystem management.
 - Integrated management.
 - Institutional frameworks, area management, living shorelines, and ocean zoning.
 - Fisheries management.
 - Coastal resources management.
 - Energy infrastructure and management.
 - Ecosystem stewardship.
 - Socioeconomic, policy and management, and legal studies of ecosystem-based management strategies and tools.
- ▶ Restoration of ecosystem function and productivity.
 - Bay and tributary habitat restoration
 - Restoration of habitat for sturgeon and other fish, for protected species, and for blue crab and other species.
 - Oyster restoration and water quality (e.g., ongoing work with oyster gardeners).



HAZARD AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE IN COASTAL COMMUNITIES



- ▶ Expansion of public understanding of climate change.
- ▶ Tidal, wave, and sea level rise implications.
- ▶ Coastal socioeconomic impact analysis.
- ▶ Marina hazard assessment, planning, and mitigation practices.
- ▶ Shoreline stabilization.
- ▶ Coastal and port hazard risks, vulnerabilities, management, and mitigation.
- ▶ Coastal community risks, vulnerabilities, resilience, and change management.

COASTAL AND OCEAN LITERACY

- ▶ National leadership in innovative, science-based marine education.
 - Online resources (i.e. Bridge, www.marine-ed.org/bridge)
 - Use of scientific data in science curricula, including ocean observing data.
- ▶ Scientists' communication to non-scientists.
- ▶ Reaching varied audiences including educators, students, industry, scientists, and public officials.
- ▶ Effective use of communication technology and strategies.

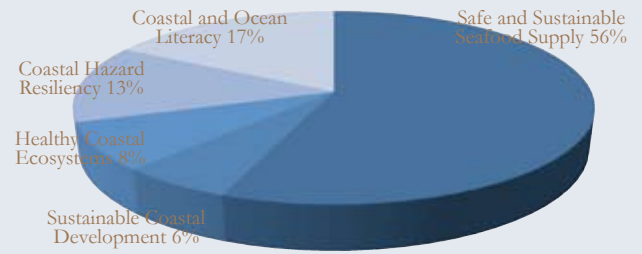


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Moving forward with your help

VASG funds research, designs and administers extension programming, develops and conducts educational activities, and produces communication materials. Current VASG activities are distributed between the four national focus areas and one national cross-cutting theme, coastal and ocean literacy, as shown in the chart to the right.



To ensure that VASG maximizes its impact and is prepared to help Virginia address future challenges, we need to hear from you. We will be holding listening sessions and inviting input over the next six months through many means, including this and other documents, our website, email, and online surveys. Please help us ensure that VASG is meeting your needs by giving us your feedback.

Tell us what you think

Please consider the following questions about the future of Virginia Sea Grant. You can submit your feedback on this sheet, via email to VASGinput@vims.edu, or on the web at vasgstratplan.wordpress.com. Thanks!

Which of the following categories best describes the role in which you interact with VASG?

Industry Government Academia NGO Other _____

The lists on the previous two pages reflect current strengths of VASG as well as coastal and marine interests and needs in the Commonwealth. What additional pressing or emerging needs currently exist? For each additional issue or need, please identify any organization currently working on that topic.

What research is most pressingly needed to help solve coastal and marine resource problems in the Commonwealth?

What outreach, education, or extension activities or services could make a difference in addressing the critical issues you identified above?

Beyond funding, what are the challenges that must be overcome to address these emerging issues and needs?

What kinds of information should Sea Grant communications products provide (updates on our work, decision-making support for management, technical information, educational materials etc.)?

If you are willing to be contacted with follow-up questions, please provide your name and email address below.

Name: _____ Email: _____

Comments? Contact Us:

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