

## Panelists

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## Ocean Visions Summit Roundtable Discussion Summary

### *Breaking Down Barriers and Generating a Unified Community at the Nexus of the Ocean-Climate Crisis*

*The Center for Ocean Leadership (COL) organized a roundtable session at the Ocean Visions Summit, which was held in Atlanta, Georgia from April 4-6, 2023. The goal of this one hour session was to initiate a discussion on the critical needs and barriers that must be addressed in order to build an effective community prepared to respond to the climate crisis, and identify some high-level actions to undertake post-Summit to launch this work. Below is a brief summary of the major points made during the discussion.*

### Emphasize the importance of coalitions.

Building and maintaining coalitions that

represent a diversity of perspectives, skills, and capabilities, and connect to a broader community of scientists, community organizations, government, private sector interests, and other sectors can be truly responsive and inclusive, and can help eliminate barriers. These coalitions take effort, resources, and time, but there can't be short-cuts. As climate change impacts every aspect of human society and the planet, the opportunities to engage in responding to climate change must be available to a broad range of coalition partners.

### Democratize access to information.

In order to engage in developing

and implementing solutions, and in bringing different views, concerns, capabilities, and needs to the table, all coalition partners

## Discussion Questions

- 1) What are the structures needed to pull sectors, key interests, institutions, and communities together to agree on common goals and strategies for ocean-based climate change action?
- 2) What is the best way to incentivize different sectors, interests, institutions, and communities to work together?
- 3) How can the benefits of concerted, collaborative action directly flow to those on the frontlines of climate change impacts, particularly historically marginalized communities?
- 4) What are the resources needed to develop strong and enduring collaboration structures and where are the most promising sources for those resources?



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and the broader public need to have fair access to information. Scientific data and analyses, community knowledge and experiences, governmental information, etc. are all important in not just informing coalitions and the public, but making the most of the opportunity to craft the most robust actions to address the changing climate.

### **Inclusion must be built in from the start.**

resources, and being able to fully engage in coalition efforts. Too often the process used for information sharing, for deciding the highest priority issues to be addressed, to resource allocation, and other critical efforts is stilted, difficult to access or understand, and excludes many critical partners. Rather than sticking with existing systems that limit inclusion, coalitions to address science-based actions with respect to climate change and the oceans need to try new methods, build on experience from other settings, and explicitly work to break down barriers.

Inclusion in this context means fair opportunity to participate on an equitable basis, ensuring all voices are heard, having access to information and

### **Funding and other resources can incentivize collaboration and action, but they are often siloed and exclusive rather than inclusive.**

government and public coordination prior to required public comment periods, which would create efficiencies that would benefit all participants in the environmental review and authorization processes. These are just two examples. The Ocean Policy Committee (OPC) is a cabinet-level interagency policy committee that is charged with coordinating federal policy through national standards, but also with empowering local communities to do work at the regional level. Resources identified in the Ocean Climate Action Plan recently released by the Biden-Harris Administration present many opportunities to make a break from old patterns of exclusive allocation that leaves many scientists, organizations, and communities on the outside. While the need for ocean-based climate action is urgent, that should not mean that the opportunity to make real changes in access to resources is lost.

New resource streams, such as Justice 40 and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's (BOEM) Offshore Wind Coordination Framework, are an opportunity to break down silos if creatively implemented. Justice 40 is intended to influence all federal funding and improve access to technology and low-cost capital. BOEM leadership is looking to guide

### **Capacity building must go hand-in-hand with capacity sharing.**

ocean climate action, that means listening, particularly to the wide range of experiences and ideas from communities, cultures, scientists from varied disciplines, and many others, and then creatively experimenting with different types of actions to address the many challenges we face.

In this regard, recognize that there is great value in respecting and relying on different knowledge systems. Capacity building and sharing can take many forms. It is most successful when not imposed from the top down, but built from the bottom up. For

### **The benefits of collaborative action must positively impact marginalized communities.**

may be our greatest resource. While there are a lot of structures and resources in place, the community may not know the entry points for engagement. These entry points must be better communicated and used in order for capacity building and collaboration at a local/community level to be effective.

As noted above with regard to capacity building and capacity sharing, solutions must be co-developed and not imposed without community involvement. There is great opportunity in relying on the structures that are already in place and maximizing the capabilities of diverse groups. Diversity and creativity