RWSC

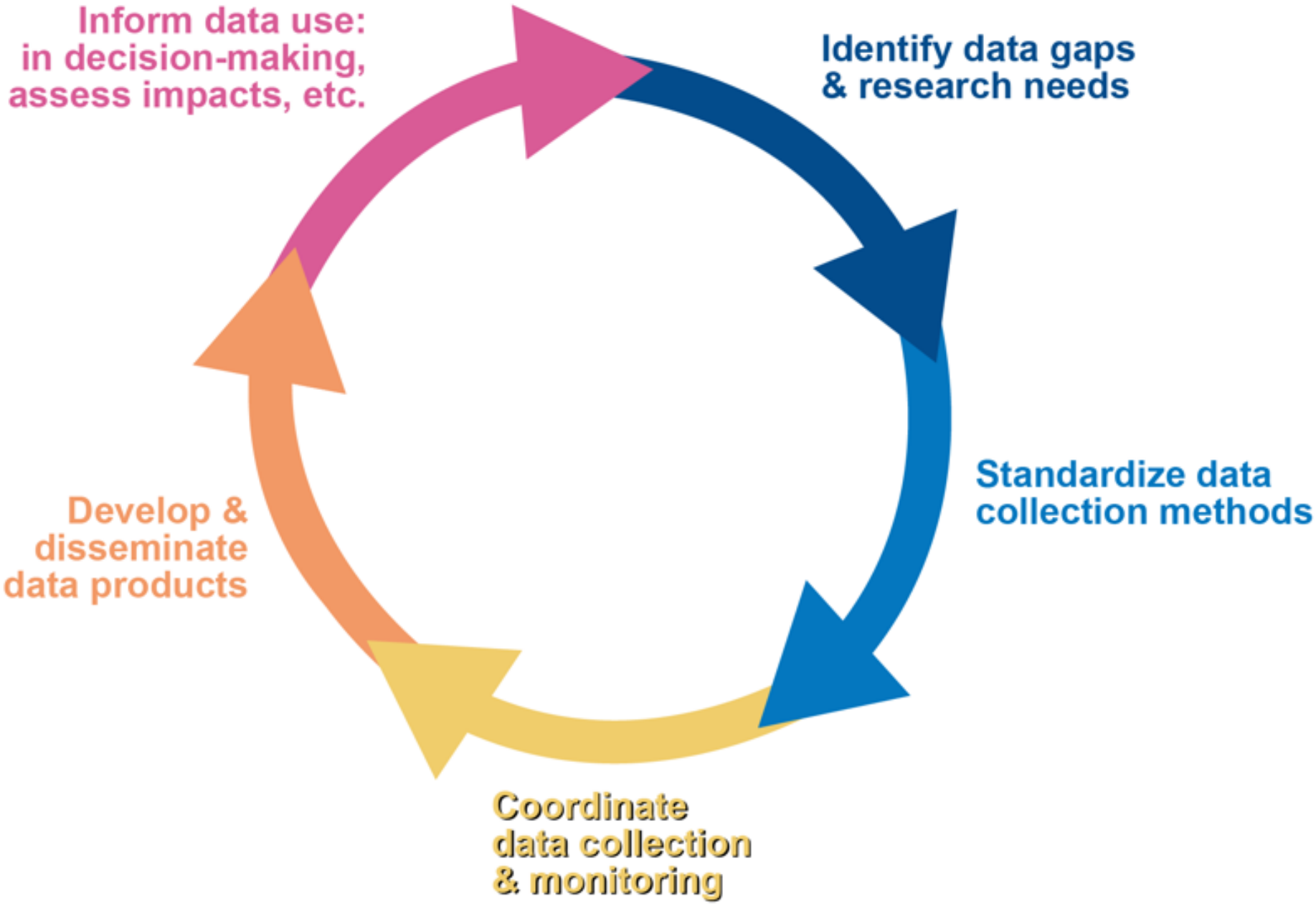
Regional Wildlife Science Collaborative for Offshore Wind

2023 Mid-Atlantic Ocean Forum
Mid-Atlantic Ocean Wildlife: Charting a Course for Biodiversity Conservation

Available ocean data and needs

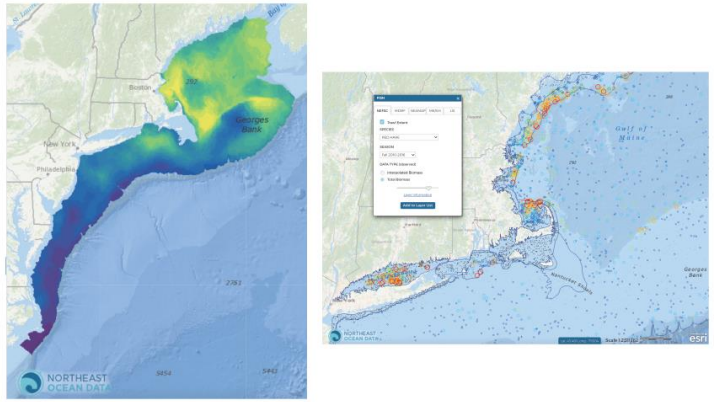
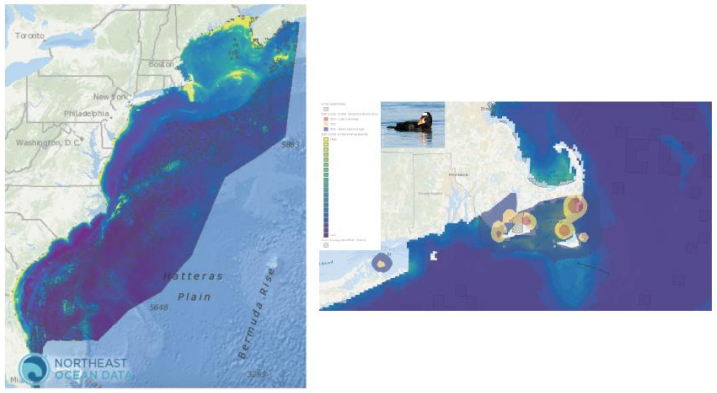
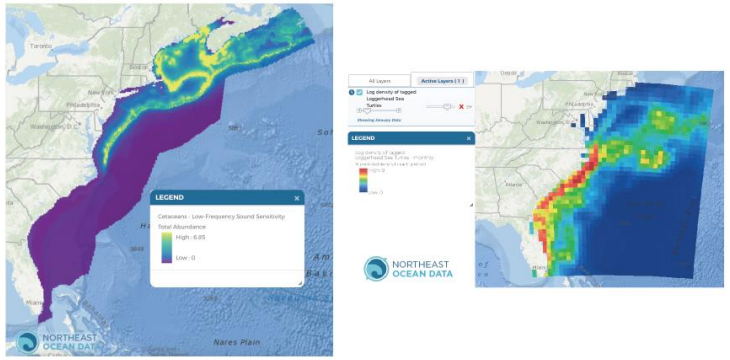
EMILY SHUMCHENIA, PH.D., DIRECTOR

MAY 18, 2023


Identify data gaps
& research needs
Standardize data
collection methods
Coordinate
data collection
& monitoring
Develop &
disseminate
data products
Inform data use:
in decision-making,
assess impacts, etc.

NORTHEAST OCEAN DATA MARCO Mid-Atlantic Ocean Data Portal

PARTNER ROLES

	DATA ACCESS & EXPERT REVIEW	DATA MODELING & MAPPING	DATABASE & CURATION	DATA COLLECTION
FISH		MDAT NMFS NEFSC The Nature Conservancy funded by: NROC Northeast Regional Ocean Council MARCO Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean	VIMS William & Mary Virginia Institute of Marine Science NMFS NEFSC NE States	NMFS NEFSC NEAMAP State Trawl Data
SEABIRDS		MDAT NCCOS Loyola University Maryland · bri · Duke MGEL funded by: BOEM Bureau of Ocean Energy Management · NROC Northeast Regional Ocean Council MARCO Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean	BOEM Bureau of Ocean Energy Management USGS science for a changing world	BOEM Bureau of Ocean Energy Management AMAPPS NMFS NEFSC & SEFSC
CETACEANS & SEA TURTLES		MDAT Duke MGEL · NMFS NEFSC funded by: NASA · NROC Northeast Regional Ocean Council · MARCO Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean	BOEM Bureau of Ocean Energy Management	BOEM Bureau of Ocean Energy Management AMAPPS NMFS NEFSC & SEFSC New England Aquarium · Virginia Aquarium · Clearwater Marine Aquarium UNCW University of North Carolina Wilmington · The Wildlife Trusts · HDR

RWSC

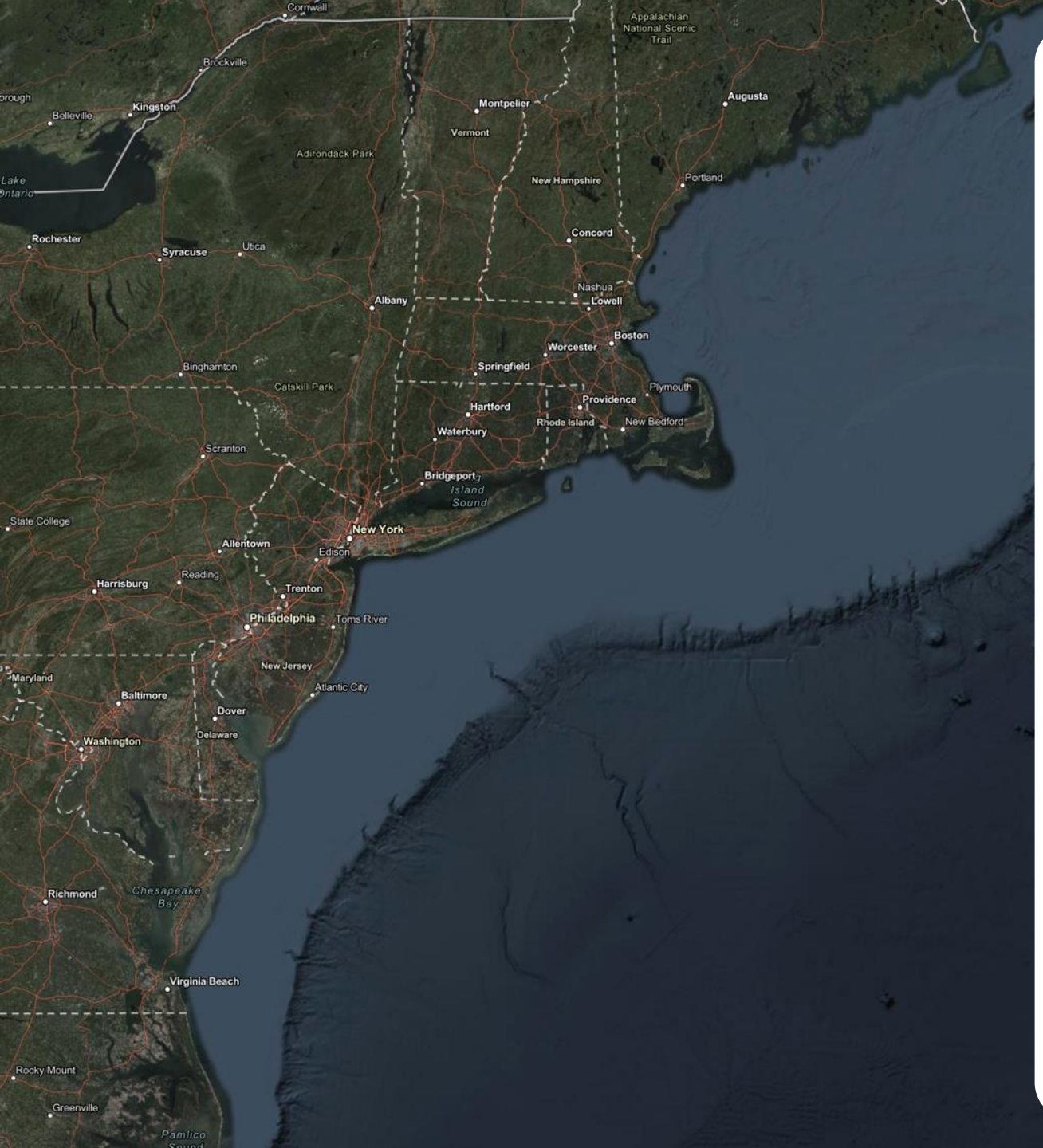
Regional Wildlife Science Collaborative for Offshore Wind

Cooperatively established (July 2021), led, and funded

by federal agencies, states, offshore wind companies, eNGOs

BOEM, NOAA, DOE, USFWS, EPA, Marine Mammal Commission; Atlantic coast states from ME to SC; Atlantic coast offshore wind lease holders and developers; 12 eNGOs (national and local)

Mission: To collaboratively and effectively conduct and coordinate relevant, credible, and efficient regional monitoring and research of wildlife and marine ecosystems that supports the advancement of environmentally responsible and cost-efficient offshore wind power development activities in U.S. Atlantic waters



NROC Northeast Regional Ocean Council

MARCO MID-ATLANTIC REGIONAL COUNCIL ON THE OCEAN

Formed by the governors of New England and Mid-Atlantic states, respectively

The Regional Ocean Partnerships in the RWSC geographic area of focus

Major functions together and separately:

- Coordinating
- Convening and engaging
- Identifying regional priorities and data gaps
- Fundraising
- Managing initiatives, projects, and contracts
- Facilitating data and information exchange

NORTHEAST OCEAN DATA
www.NortheastOceanData.org

MARCO MID-ATLANTIC OCEAN DATA PORTAL

NERACOOS NORTHEASTERN REGIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COASTAL OCEAN OBSERVING SYSTEMS

MARACOOS Ocean Information for a Changing World

2022 & 2023 RWSC Steering Committee

Federal agencies
- NOAA
- BOEM
- USFWS

States
- Maryland
- New York
- Massachusetts

Offshore wind companies
- Ørsted
- Equinor
- Atlantic Shores Offshore Wind

eNGOs
- The Nature Conservancy
- Natural Resources Defense Council
- National Audubon Society

RWSC
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RWSC Roles – Science Plan & Research Support

Integrated Science Plan for Wildlife, Habitat, and Offshore Wind Energy in the U.S. Atlantic

- Development of Science Plan is focus of 2022-2023 Annual Work Plans
- Supported by annual contributions and in-kind support from more than 20 entities across sectors

Aligning funds to select and manage research projects

- Building capacity in 2023 and planning to continue growth
- Funds from offshore wind developers, states, federal agencies, others

RWSC Science Plan

Integrated Science Plan for Wildlife, Habitat, and Offshore Wind Energy in the U.S. Atlantic

- Build on existing research priorities
- Understand ongoing and pending data collection and active research
- Identify data gaps and needs
- Standardize new data collection, facilitate data sharing, enhance data management
- Align funding

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www.rwsc.org

RWSC Science Plan

Subcommittees

- Participation from science experts and all offshore wind developers w/ Atlantic interests – **same individuals who are collecting the data, developing the models, and providing input to Portal data products over the last decade**
- Materials and meetings are public: forums for information sharing and coordination – data collection & research – https://database.rwsc.org
- Expert review of study design, data analysis methods, etc.

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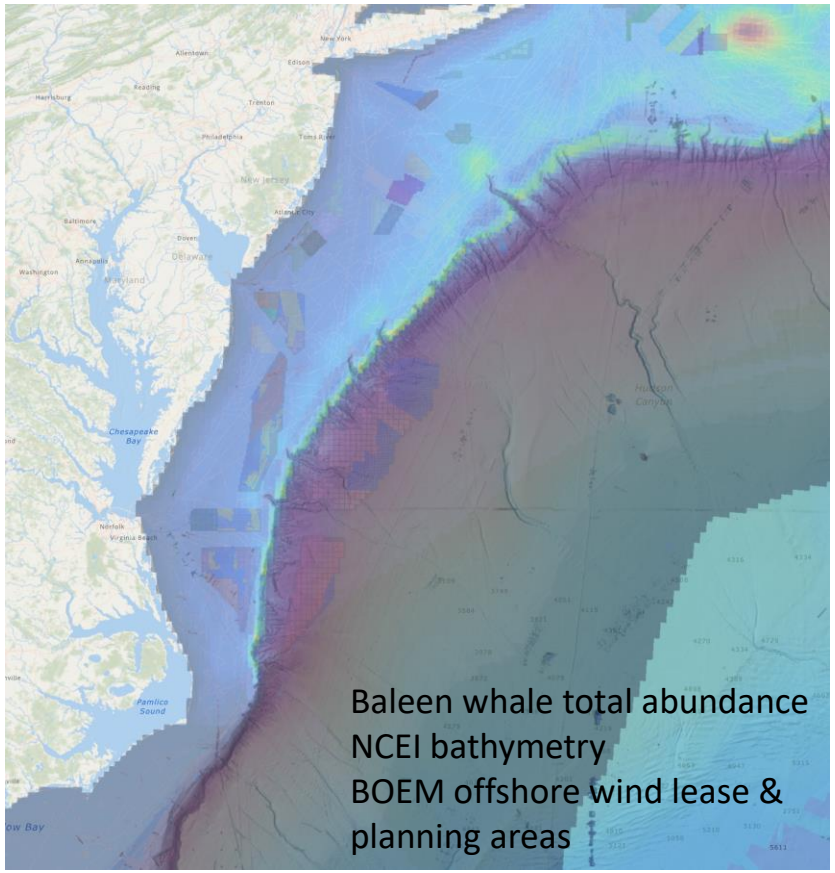
RWSC Science Plan



What do "next-generation" data products look like?

- Integrate observations from multiple methods (visual, imagery, acoustics, etc.)
- Near real-time + climatological visualizations
- Nested spatial scales
- Provide context for targeted studies of effects of one or more stressors (climate change, human activities)

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Contact

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Upcoming meetings, materials, Science Plan documents will be posted at rwsc.org

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