

REMARKS BY CEQ CHAIR BRENDA MALLORY

UN Ocean Conference

June 28, 2022

3 minutes

Word Count: 500

Hello, I am Brenda Mallory, representing the United States, where I serve as the Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality.

The mission of my office is to consider environmental issues as they relate to our economy and the lived experience of our communities—and in this Administration, justice and equity for underserved and overburdened communities are a priority.

Fundamental to this work is how we manage, conserve, and restore marine and coastal ecosystems.

In the United States—as with many nations—the coasts are densely populated areas that yield tremendous economic activity: shipping, tourism, fishing, offshore energy development, and more.

In order to conserve coastal ecosystems and restore their function, we must be very deliberate about planning where and how to affect that stewardship.

This is why President Biden set the first-ever national conservation goal of protecting at least 30 percent of U.S. lands and waters by 2030.

It is why the United States is honored to have joined the High Ambition Coalition for Nature.

But to be intentional about conservation, and to also honor the wishes of the public and especially indigenous and environmental justice communities, we have to be aware of historic, existing, and planned uses of the coasts.

In the early 2010s, spatial planning was an idea that began to develop federal interest, and then President Obama issued an executive order for the United States to develop a National Ocean Plan.

This process ran into political opposition within the legislative branch.

Fortunately, the subnational governments, specifically states in the northeast and mid-Atlantic, as well as the states on our Gulf of Mexico coast, saw that there was value in coordinating uses of the ocean and coastal areas, and they continued their planning efforts.

Now, each coastal region in the United States has forged voluntary regional ocean partnerships.

In October of 2021, the Biden-Harris Administration stood up the Ocean Policy Committee, which I co-chair.

One of our lines of effort for 2022 and beyond is to develop both the mapping and visualization tools and the best practices for how decisionmakers at all levels can coordinate co-use of the ocean and the coasts.

This is essential to our conservation goals.

But it is also essential for our climate change mitigation and carbon emission reduction goals.

Compared to some other Nations, the United States offshore wind industry is in its infancy, but we are working to develop it quickly.

The President has set ambitious goals to deploy 30 gigawatts of clean, ocean-based wind energy by 2030.

This is a must-do.

Our planet demands climate action—both a transition to carbon-free electricity, and also conserving the resources that act as carbon sinks.

We believe that by developing both the tools and the best practices to wisely plan co-uses of the ocean and coast, this will not only facilitate a robust blue economy, but ASLO afford EVERY American the opportunity to benefit from the ocean and coast.

Thank you.