

California Ocean Acidification and Hypoxia Science Task Force

About this document - This charter was prepared by Ocean Science Trust in response to [Assembly Bill 2139](#), Williams, Ocean Protection Council: ocean acidification and hypoxia. It outlines the charge, activities, and timeline for the Task Force's efforts from the period of January 2018 – December 2019 (at a minimum, or funding dependent).

Background

Throughout its three-year tenure, the West Coast Ocean Acidification and Hypoxia Science Panel (Panel) produced a suite of [products](#) to advance decision-makers' understanding of the drivers and impacts of ocean acidification and hypoxia (OAH). Since the release of the Panel's "Major Findings, Recommendations, and Actions" in April 2016, California decision-makers have pursued a diverse set of actions that span management and policy jurisdictions. The Panel recommended expanding scientific engagement to meet evolving management needs through the creation of an OAH Science Task Force (Task Force) ([Panel Action 8.1](#)). [Assembly Bill 2139](#) (Williams) was passed in September 2016, which designated the establishment of the Task Force to ensure that Ocean Protection Council (OPC) decision-making and further action on the issues of OAH continue to be supported by the best available science. In 2017, OPC tasked Ocean Science Trust with convening and managing the Task Force, which will be composed of Ocean Protection Council Science Advisory Team (OPC-SAT) members and additional experts.

Charge and Objectives

Mission: The Task Force will serve as a responsive advisory body that will provide scientific guidance to the OPC in an ongoing manner to inform continued actions on ocean acidification and hypoxia in California and along the West Coast.

On behalf of the OPC, the Task Force will:

- **track scientific efforts and work products related to OAH** that advance Panel recommendations in order to identify opportunities to coordinate among and leverage investments, with a focus on OPC-funded initiatives
- **provide a technical forum for two-way engagement** between scientists and decision-makers to ensure actions are being informed by the best available science
- **serve as a gateway to the broader OAH science community** in order to provide sound science advice to the OPC
- **identify follow-up projects** that will fill key OAH knowledge gaps in California

Description of Task Force Functions

The Task Force will provide science advice to the Ocean Protection Council in the form of quarterly webinars, annual workshops and ad hoc requests for advising or scientific input.

- **Quarterly Webinars** - Webinars may be topic based, or serve as a means to discuss Task Force business (e.g., develop agendas, discuss outstanding items, finalize recommendations, etc.). These may be open or closed sessions, as needed.
- **Annual Workshop** - A workshop will be hosted annually and may be topic-based, or serve as a forum to inform annual recommendations for the OPC as it considers future actions to address OAH in California. Workshop attendees will include Task Force Members, as well as additional scientists, decision-makers, and managers as appropriate. Some workshops may be open to the public.
- **Ad-hoc requests for advising or scientific input** - The full Task Force, or individual members, may be asked to provide ad hoc scientific advice or input from OPC staff during their term. These may include providing scientific guidance on OAH materials in advance of OPC meeting, reports, RFPs, agendas, future legislation, recommendations for experts to serve on working groups, presenting at events, and other items as needed.

Deliverable

The Task Force will develop a summary report for the Ocean Protection Council and the California State Legislature that highlights the state's recent investments in OAH research and monitoring, and opportunities to continue to advance ocean science to gain new insights on mitigation and adaptation options for California and beyond.

Process for Task Force Coordination

As an *advisory committee* work mode of the OPC-SAT¹, Ocean Science Trust will coordinate the work of the Task Force working closely with OPC staff. This includes hosting Task Force meetings, workshops and webinars, developing meeting summaries, communication and online materials, and other content as appropriate.

Membership

Term

Members will serve a one-year term, from January 2018–December 2018, with the possibility of extension pending State need and available resources.

¹ See the [OPC-SAT: Responsibilities and Working Procedures](#) for a description of advisory committees and other work modes

Selection Criteria and Process

The Task Force will include interdisciplinary scientists from California and across the West Coast to encourage ongoing dialogue and co-production of adaptive actions and solutions in response to new information. Members will have demonstrated scientific expertise in an area or field of study germane to providing scientific advice, guidance, and recommendations to the OPC on the issues of OAH.

Ocean Science Trust will work with the OPC-SAT Executive Committee to identify a Chair(s) for the Task Force. Ocean Science Trust will then query the full OPC-SAT and other scientific networks for recommended experts in order to develop a diverse list of candidates. Final selection of members will be made by the OPC-SAT Executive Committee, Ocean Protection Council staff, and Ocean Science Trust.

Conflict of Interest

Ocean Protection Council grantees who serve as principal or co-principal investigators are ineligible for participation on the Task Force in order to reduce actual or potential conflicts of interest associated with fulfilling the duties of the Task Force. If an OPC grant is received during a Task Force member's term, that member will be asked to step down.

Communication and Public Engagement

Online Presence - Ocean Science Trust will continually update and maintain the OAH Panel Website (www.westcoastOAH.org) to serve as the forum for Task Force work throughout their term. Ocean Science Trust will utilize the former OAH Panel email distribution list to circulate any public announcements, notices or materials.

Public engagement - Some Task Force functions may be open to the public. Any open meetings or webinars will be announced via the website, newsletter, and social media.

Contacts

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