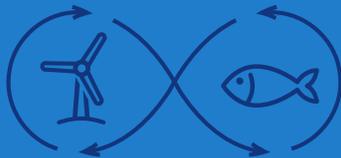




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RESPONSIBLE OFFSHORE SCIENCE ALLIANCE
Year in Review



The Responsible Offshore Science Alliance (ROSA)'s mission is to advance regional research and monitoring of fisheries and offshore wind interactions through collaboration and cooperation. ROSA efforts currently focus on the waters from Maine to North Carolina.



ROSA is dedicated to research, regional collaboration, and communication on offshore wind and fisheries.

Message from the Executive Director

Since its inception in 2019, the Responsible Offshore Science Alliance (ROSA)'s vision has been to lead science at the intersection of offshore wind and fisheries. We made great progress toward this vision in 2021 in the midst of a rapidly changing landscape. All of our goals for the year—from appointing research advisors and hiring a research director, to setting short-term research priorities and working on data management and a regional research framework—were realized. While we began exploring joint research funding in 2021—one of our goals for last year—this project remains high on our list for consideration in 2022.

Throughout 2021, Dr. Mike Pol, ROSA's research director, and I kept a constant pulse on developments in the field, leaning in on initiatives that aligned with ROSA's mission and serving as a connector among parties who might benefit from collaboration. We continued to build relationships with offshore wind developers, fishermen, agencies, and partners, while sitting on several state working groups and participating in a number of more informal convenings. The opportunities for engagement were extensive, and Mike and I considered each of them carefully to ensure that we focused on the highest-value projects for ROSA and the region.

With leadership from the Advisory Council, we advanced a number of significant projects in 2021 that have laid the groundwork for ROSA to start piloting research in 2022.

Highlights from 2021

A key development in 2021 was working with the Advisory Council to determine short-term research priorities, which serve as the North Star for ROSA's work. The following initiatives were deemed most critical by the Advisory Council:

- Data sharing and compatibility
- Survey gear standardization
- Regional scale learning objectives
- Fishermen's ecological knowledge

ROSA accomplished a range of projects related to these topics in 2021. These included: publishing the Offshore Wind Project Monitoring Guidance and Framework, hiring a consultant to review existing fisheries resources data and produce a report with recommendations on data standardization and sharing, and generating a white paper on gear standardization to provide guidance on this topic for researchers throughout the region.

Advancing Our Mission in 2022

As we enter the new year, we are eager to solidify our vision for a regional research approach. Many challenging questions still need to be examined, such as defining how to assess impacts and assign priorities, how to use the tools we have been creating—monitoring guidelines, data standards, and gear standardization guidance—in support of a regional framework, and what research methods can be employed to produce statistically significant data. I look forward to exploring these topics with the ROSA community this spring—and putting forth our best thinking on a regional research framework.

Twenty twenty-one was not an easy year. We were all hoping that we would turn the corner on the pandemic last spring and instead we have ridden the tide of two significant variants since then. Despite the difficulties of COVID, people throughout the ROSA community remained dedicated to our work and contributed in numerous ways to our mission. I am grateful for your commitment and look forward to our continued partnership this year as we launch our first research pilot together.

Best Regards,

Lyndie Hice-Dunton, Ph.D.
Executive Director

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Projects

Taking its lead from the priorities established by the Advisory Council, ROSA advanced the following projects in 2021:

- **Offshore Wind Project Monitoring Guidance and Framework:** The guidance was published in the spring and was very positively received. Dozens of people attended a webinar ROSA hosted in April to introduce the guidance, which led to a fruitful conversation on how to best employ the framework and suggestions for other tools that would be helpful.
- **Fisheries Resource Data Project:** RPS Ocean Science was hired to undertake a landscape review of research data related to offshore wind and fisheries on the East Coast. This project resulted in a report that provides an overview of types of fisheries resources data that are being collected, sampling gear and monitoring methods used, and gaps that could be addressed to improve data sharing. The report will help ROSA design strategies to enhance data standardization and accessibility in the region.
- **Regional Research Framework:** After goals for the framework were defined through a series of meetings with the Advisory Council subcommittee, Mike Pol compiled a list of research needs identified by various research efforts, categorized them under eight topic headings, and outlined research gaps in each category. This analysis will be used to help determine research priorities, and then ROSA will create a regional framework, with the support of consultants, to guide the advancement of these priorities.
- **Gear Standardization:** Mike Pol drafted a white paper outlining goals, guidelines, and considerations related to gear standardization for offshore wind monitoring surveys, following a discussion at the June Advisory Committee meeting on this topic. This paper, presented at the American Fisheries Society (AFS) annual meeting, may ultimately lead to the formalization of recommendations for data and gear standardization across research projects, as well as the creation of a regional working group.
- **ROSA-Funded Research:** In conjunction with the Advisory Council, ROSA staff explored piloting ROSA-funded research to lay the groundwork for ROSA to administer and oversee research funds. Late in the year, the decision was made to consider funding one or more small-scale research projects in 2022, using existing data, methods, and tools, to learn more about offshore wind impacts.
- **Fishermen's Ecological Knowledge:** Mike is collaborating with commercial fishermen, social scientists, and others to find ways to bring fishermen's knowledge more to the forefront.



“ROSA has assisted by bringing people together to come to a consensus to address the ongoing idea of gear standardization. This collaborative effort has the potential to create gear standardization throughout the region for research studies, making research more consistent and reliable.”

– FRED MATTERA, COMMERCIAL FISHERIES CENTER OF RHODE ISLAND

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Partnerships

Partnerships are at the heart of ROSA's mission—and will become increasingly important as the organization begins undertaking research. Key partnerships that were fostered in 2021 include:

- **Rutgers University:** ROSA is working with Rutgers University and others on a National Science Foundation Convergence Accelerator grant for the project, "Regional climate change projections to enable equitable ocean planning for the blue economy." The main focus of the project is to collaboratively design web tools that empower community members to integrate climate information into their decision-making, and make projections of climate impacts actionable and useful for the ocean economy in the Northeast U.S. This first phase of the project will be completed by September 2022. The team will apply for a second phase of funding this summer that would enable researchers to build the tools designed in phase one.
- **Regional Wildlife Science Entity (RWSE):** During the summer 2021, ROSA and RWSE staff explored synergies between their missions and how the organizations might best work together, laying the groundwork for productive collaboration. As a new organization, RWSE is working on its governance, operations framework, and preliminary priority topics; as these become more clear, ROSA and RWSE will formalize strategies for working together.
- **Responsible Offshore Development Alliance (RODA):** ROSA continues to collaborate with RODA to gain input from fishermen and design strategies for involving fishermen in regional research. Highlights of the ROSA-RODA partnership in 2021 included: engaging with RODA on the Synthesis of the Science (SoS) project, including coordinating peer review; incorporating research needs identified in the SoS project as well as fishermen's research priorities into the ROSA regional framework; and working closely with RODA staff on leading a symposium at the AFS annual meeting.



"Collaboration with ROSA is a critical component of New Jersey's Research and Monitoring Initiative. A regional research framework will align our shared goal of maximizing the potential for a comprehensive, non-redundant, scientifically rigorous evaluation of offshore wind and fisheries."

– COLLEEN BRUST, NJ DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Outreach

Throughout 2021, ROSA staff participated in a number of conferences and webinars to spread the word about the organization's mission and agenda, and engage interested parties in dialogues about key topics related to regional offshore science. The following are highlights of some of these presentations:

- **AFS Annual Meeting:** Mike and Lyndie co-organized a symposium with others titled "Interactions Between Offshore Wind, Fisheries, and Fisheries Resources" for the November AFS annual meeting. Lyndie presented on "Responsible Offshore Science Alliance (ROSA): Advancing coordinated regional research and monitoring for offshore wind and fisheries" and Mike presented on "Considerations for Gear Standardization for Research and Monitoring in Offshore Lease Areas." They also moderated a panel on Facebook Live. The symposium catalyzed discussions on topics ranging from how to conduct research at a regional scale to how to disentangle offshore wind from climate impacts on ecosystems. Symposium presentations were well attended, drawing from the thousands of meeting participants.

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- **International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) Annual Science Conference:** Lyndie presented “Responsible Offshore Science Alliance (ROSA): Establishing regional research and monitoring for offshore wind and fisheries in the U.S.” in a session focused on offshore wind at the ICES conference in September.

- **New York State Energy Research and Development Authority Learning from the Experts Series:** Lyndie presented with Emily Shumchenia, Ph.D., Director of the Regional Wildlife Science Entity, on regional science at the intersection of offshore wind and ecosystems in September as part of the series.



- **International Offshore Wind Partnering Forum (IPF):** Lyndie took part in two panels—“Collaborative Science at the Science-Policy Interface” and “What’s love got to do with it? The role of ocean user coexistence in building offshore wind at scale”—at the August IPF conference, which was attended by more than 1,000 people. IPF is sponsored annually by the Business Network for Offshore Wind.
- **Mid-Atlantic Ocean Forum:** Hosted by the Mid-Atlantic Committee on the Ocean, this May event featured panel discussions about offshore wind energy, climate-induced ocean changes, ocean justice, and emerging monitoring technologies. Lyndie presented on ROSA’s mission and work, and participated in the closing plenary for the virtual gathering.
- **Rutgers University Center for Ocean Observing Leadership Partners in Science Workshop:** Lyndie presented about ROSA’s monitoring guidance and moderated break-out discussions at this January workshop. The event was designed to gather community input on monitoring objectives, sampling parameters, and data sharing and access needed to evaluate offshore wind impacts.



“We at Atlantic Shores fully commend ROSA’s continued commitment to industry collaboration between the offshore wind and fishing industries. The partnerships that ROSA has been able to foster will ensure the sustainable coexistence between the preservation of our cherished natural resources and the advancement of offshore wind. We are at a critical crossroads, and the work ROSA is doing is vital to the advancement of offshore wind so we can preserve the environment and grow our industry in a mindful way.”

– JENNIFER DANIELS, ATLANTIC SHORES OFFSHORE WIND

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Thank you to all in the ROSA community for your contributions to ROSA's mission during 2021. We look forward to our continued collaboration in 2022!

Governance and Staff

ROSA staff and the organization's governing bodies continued to refine how they work together to best advance ROSA's mission. In mid-2021, staff surveyed members of the organization's governing bodies to ascertain understanding of ROSA's mission and initiatives, and obtain feedback on the effectiveness of meetings and communications. Staff continue to act upon input obtained in this survey.

Program staff at ROSA tripled, to three professionals, in 2021 with the addition of Mike Pol as research director and Helen Henderson as administrator.



Highlights of the year include:

- **Research Advisors:** Nearly 50 research advisors were selected in the spring to provide independent, scientific input to the Advisory Council and its committees. Research advisors were actively engaged in subcommittee work throughout 2021 and will become increasingly involved after ROSA launches research projects in 2022.
- **Research Director:** Mike Pol, Ph.D., joined ROSA in June 2021 as the organization's first research director. Mike led a number of projects, including gear standardization and fishermen's ecological knowledge, and co-led with Lyndie efforts to define and create a regional research framework. He also managed the RPS data standardization and sharing project, and has been coordinating peer review of the SoS sections undertaken by ROSA research advisors. Mike has been instrumental in working closely with Advisory Council subcommittees, synthesizing and prioritizing research needs, and deepening ROSA's engagement with fishermen.
- **501(c)(3):** ROSA received confirmation of its 501(c)(3) status from the federal government.

More information on the above-outlined topics can be found on the [ROSA website](#).

2022 Goals

ROSA is excited to generate a regional research framework, launch its first pilot research project, and accelerate collaboration on prioritized research in 2022. Specific goals for the year include:

Core Projects:

- Develop the regional framework
- Work with the Advisory Council subcommittee to refine next steps related to improving data sharing and compatibility
- Pilot ROSA-administered research
- Explore strategies to improve utilization of fishermen's ecological knowledge in research and monitoring
- Evaluate regional interest in a working group on survey standardization in lease areas

Partnerships:

- Assist in finalizing the SoS white paper
- Identify specific opportunities for partnering with RWSE
- Continue collaborating on the National Science Foundation Convergence Accelerator grant
- Actively explore research funding opportunities with partners

Operations and Administration:

- Develop strategies to expand and diversify ROSA's funding sources
- Explore joint funding for research priorities identified in the regional framework
- Establish a process for ROSA to administer research
- Consider opportunities, such as internships, for expanding ROSA's scientific capacity

The Advisory Council will meet quarterly during 2022 to guide all of the above-outlined work.