

## Frequently Asked Questions

- 1) Q: What is the Multipurpose Marine Cadastre?

A: The Multipurpose Marine Cadastre (MMC) is a multi-agency effort to build a GIS-based marine information system for U.S. waters that provides authoritative geospatial data and supporting information to inform decision making on a range of ocean issues. The project leads are the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The project was initiated from the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (P.L. 109-58) – *Sec. 388 – Alternative Energy-Related Uses on the Outer Continental Shelf*, which directs the Secretary of the Interior, in cooperation with the Secretary of Commerce, the Commandant of the Coast Guard, and the Secretary of Defense, to establish an Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Mapping Initiative to assist in decision making related to alternative energy uses on the OCS. At its core, the MMC contains marine cadastral data, which encompasses the spatial extent, usage, rights, restrictions, and responsibilities of marine areas; as well as other regionally-specific data needed to support planning, management, and conservation of submerged lands and marine spaces. The combination of marine cadastral and regionally-specific data provides users with the spatial context needed to address issues such as alternative energy siting, and comprehensive coastal and marine spatial planning.

- 2) Q: What is the intended use of the MMC?

A: The MMC viewer is intended to be used as a planning and screening tool to inform decisions on ocean uses. It is not intended to be used for precise site selection, rather provide the spatial context needed to make decisions about where suitable areas exist for offshore activities and where to avoid development.

- 3) Q: What is the status of the Multipurpose Marine Cadastre project?

A: The project is in its third year of development. There is a Memorandum of Agreement between the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration through 2014. With the increasing need for spatial data and decision support tools to support coastal and marine spatial planning (CMSP), it is anticipated that the project will continue beyond 2014. While it will take many years to fully populate the MMC with authoritative and other data relevant to CMSP, the

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project team is taking a piecemeal approach to populating the viewer based on data availability and user requests. Additionally, you will see richer data content in areas where case studies have been conducted (e.g. biodiversity in Northern California).

- 4) Q: What was the rationale for creating thematic bins for data included in the MMC Viewer?

A: The project team, in consultation with stakeholder groups, devised a binning structure that covers the broad range of ocean and coastal data. The thematic bins are based on the National Spatial Data Infrastructure themes and data categories outlined in *OMB Circular A-16- Coordination of Geographic Information and Related Spatial Data Activities*.

- 5) Q: How does the project team decide which data to include in the map viewer and data portal?

A: The primary goal of the project is to visualize and provide access to coastal and ocean data from the *authoritative source* that will support renewable energy planning and siting and larger coastal and marine spatial planning efforts. The project team has developed the following criteria for core data inclusion:

- must be from an *authoritative source*
- must meet thematic content requirements of the MMC project
- must be tied to federal or state statute or agency mission requirement
- must be documented with FGDC-compliant metadata
- must not have copyright restrictions limiting distribution

There are many other non-Governmental data sources that are useful to coastal and marine spatial planning. These additional sources will be considered under the following conditions:

- must be from a *trusted source*
- must be reviewed by appropriate subject matter experts
- must be at an appropriate scale and resolution for regional planning, site analysis, and permit review
- must be documented with FGDC-compliant metadata
- must not duplicate or contradict existing viewer content

- 6) Q: Can I consume MMC data directly into my desktop GIS or Web Mapping Applications?

A: Yes. All of the data in the viewer are available as ESRI Image Services. Additionally, OGC-compliant Web Map Services (WMS) are available for the U.S. Maritime Boundaries and Limits and the Outer Continental Shelf Lease Blocks and Boundaries. There are plans to develop additional web services for federal marine protected areas and marine infrastructure.

For more information on WMS availability, visit the [Web Services Frequently Asked Questions \(pdf\)](#).

- 7) Q: How are data managed within the MMC?

A: The vision of the project is to consume data directly from the source through web map services. However, most agencies have not implemented web services, therefore, the MMC team has devised an interim strategy of harvesting data on a periodic basis for viewing purposes only. The data portal will refer users back to the authoritative source for download. The only data developed by and distributed through the MMC are value-added data bundles for the U.S. Maritime Boundaries and Limits and the Outer Continental Shelf Lease Blocks and Boundaries. These data have been standardized and are available in multiple formats directly from the MMC Website.

- 8) Q: How does the MMC plan to integrate with regional coastal and marine spatial planning efforts?

A: The *National Policy for Our Oceans, Coasts and Great Lakes* calls for a national CMSP information Management System along with centralized and/or regional portals that connect to CMSP information. The MMC can play a key role by integrating regional data into its map viewers, and conversely, by providing core data to regional viewers and desktop applications. The MMC project team plans to work closely with the National Ocean Council, regional planning bodies, and other agencies to develop a regional engagement strategy in keeping with the Interim Framework and any resultant policy.