

MARCO Portal Purpose

The MARCO Mapping and Planning Portal is an online tool that allows state, federal, and local decision-makers and the public to visualize, query, map, and analyze ocean and coastal data in the Mid-Atlantic region. Early on, the MARCO States recognized that addressing the region's habitat protection and offshore renewable energy priorities required the creation of a geographic information system. The Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program (with their CZM funds from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration-NOAA) provided financial support for the development of the Portal. MARCO worked with state and federal agencies and other partners to produce this first iteration of the mapping and planning portal--the first such portal produced by a regional ocean partnership.



About the portal's data

Currently, the portal includes map data layers grouped into five broad categories:

- ★ Administrative (e.g. official boundaries)
- ★ Biological (e.g. sea-floor habitats)
- ★ Geophysical (e.g. water depth, sediments)
- ★ Human Uses (e.g. fishing, shipping)
- ★ Decision Support (e.g. overlays of various uses and natural features).

Key data layers within each of these categories are present and many additional data acquisition and analysis needs have been identified.

About the portal's features and functions

Currently, the portal provides users with a relatively simple and fast-loading data access service. Features include:

- ★ Choice of three base maps: topographic, streets, or satellite view
- ★ Panning and zooming to areas of interest, or bookmarked selections
- ★ Selection of any combination of layers to create customized maps
- ★ Transparency adjustment for data layers to enhance overlay creation
- ★ Saving and printing maps in Adobe PDF format
- ★ Search and identify tools to obtain more detailed information on user selected map features
- ★ Drawing and measurement tools
- ★ Concise fact sheets plus GIS metadata for each data layer



Next steps for the portal

The MARCO Mapping and Planning Portal team is developing a plan to move the portal from its current server to a more permanent home and the VA-CZM program has secured new funding to support work to add additional data and features identified as essential by the team. To fully support a Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning process, the portal will need to evolve to include more sophisticated decision support features, including the ability for ocean users and managers to create spatial management scenarios and evaluate how well they meet goals held by diverse ocean resource stakeholders. Stay tuned!

Please take the DRAFT portal for a spin by following the link from:
<http://www.midatlanticocean.org/index.htm>