

1. What do Focus Teams do?

Focus Teams provide needed national perspectives on issues related to the four focus areas identified in the 2009-2013 Network Plan: Hazard Resilient Coastal Communities, Sustainable Coastal Development, Safe and Sustainable Seafood Supply, and Healthy Coastal Ecosystems. Their role is largely advisory. Focus Team responsibilities include reviewing the entirety of Sea Grant Program impacts in a given focus area, identifying gaps in Sea Grant's portfolio and facilitating opportunities to address emerging issues, and developing new partnerships.

Examples of recent activities include:

- Helping determine priorities for Aquaculture, Aquatic Invasives, and Social Science NSIs
- Working waterfronts and waterways congressional briefing and NOAA seminar
- Coastal and Waterfront Smart Growth and Hazard Mitigation Roundtable
- Sustainable Coastal Tourism Roundtable
- Direct Marketing congressional briefing and NOAA seminar
- Community Supported Fisheries Summit
- Refine subject matter-specific RFPs

2. Who can be on Focus Teams?

Focus teams are comprised of subject-matter experts from across the Sea Grant network, other NOAA line offices and federal agencies, and the private sector. Each team is chaired by a National Office staff member selected by the NSGO director and co-chaired by a Sea Grant director chosen by the SGA. The Sea Grant Advisory Board also has a member on each Team. Nominations for new members are sought from the Sea Grant network, and care is taken to ensure geographic and functional area representation. Non-Sea Grant members provide opportunities to strengthen and develop partnerships. For example, one conversation of the Hazards Focus Team, which includes a National Weather Service representative, informed the NWS of ongoing partnerships between Sea Grant programs and local Weather Forecasting Offices and led to a productive half-day discussion on partnerships for rip-current reporting.

3. Can I be on a Focus Teams?

Anyone with subject-matter expertise, from within the Sea Grant network, or has an interest in developing partnerships with Sea Grant, is eligible to be on a Focus Team. Each Team has approximately a dozen members and there are periodic vacancies. Interest in joining a focus team(s) should be directed to the respective chairs, co-chairs, the Sea Grant Program Director or the NSGO director.

3. How do Focus Teams work?

In recent years, budget constraints and changing priorities have eliminated the money for Focus Teams to meet in person, so Focus Team meetings are carried out through quarterly teleconferences. Focus Teams noted the need for ongoing professional development for Sea

Grant staff and subject-matter capacity building for the network. Conferences, workshops and webinars were identified as the best means to address the need. Focus Area activities' funds were pooled in FY 2012 and competed among the programs through the Conferences and Workshops Special Projects portal. Ten projects were selected from the competition.

4. What is the difference among the Focus Teams, Performance Review Panel and Sea Grant Advisory Board?

The Focus Teams are organized for the duration of the network's Strategic Plan. Their primary responsibilities are to (1) provide the NSGO with a national perspective on progress toward achieving the Plan's goals, (2) identify specific gaps that should be addressed to help achieve the goals, and (2) help identify emerging issues.

Performance Review Panels (PRP) are organized, by Focus Area, every four years and attention is on the review of individual programs and their progress. PRP's review: (1) each program's progress towards achieving its four-year strategic plan, and (2) each program's overall impact (2008-2011) in that focus area.

The Sea Grant Advisory Board (SGAB) is mandated by law as a Federal Advisory Committee. It is comprised of 15 individuals with diverse backgrounds in marine affairs. The SGAB advises the Secretary of Commerce, the Undersecretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, and the director of the National Sea Grant College Program on scientific and administrative policy.

5. How do I find out more about Focus Teams?

Details on the founding concepts of the Focus Teams can be found in "Procedures Manual for the National Sea Grant College Program's Focus Teams, January 2011"

(http://www.seagrant.noaa.gov/focus/documents/focusteamproceduresmanual_final.pdf) and Fact Sheet

(http://www.seagrant.noaa.gov/focus/documents/fact_sheets_and_synthesis_stories/2010FS_FocusTeams.pdf)