

**THE MARINE ECONOMY SATELLITE ACCOUNT (MESA):
A NEW MEASURE OF THE OCEAN, COASTS AND GREAT LAKES ECONOMY**

- The U.S. [Marine Economy Satellite Account](#) (MESA) is a first-of-its-kind comprehensive estimate of the U.S. marine and Great Lakes economy. It is a subset of national accounts and therefore comparable with other national account statistics (GDP, Gross Output, etc.); it is also consistent with the most advanced international practices of quantifying the marine economy.
- The MESA is funded by the NOAA and was a collaborative effort between NOAA (Chief Economist team in the Performance, Risk and Social Science Office (OCFO), OCM economists (NOS), and OAR offices) and the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) with support from academic partners and contractors. The NOAA collaboration with BEA started in 2017 when Congress directed the two bureaus to develop a satellite account for the U.S. marine economy (Commerce, Justice, and Science Appropriations, 2017).
- In September 2018, an experimental account was completed and received public comments from more than two dozen stakeholders in the private sector, academia, and government agencies. A refined prototype account was released in June 2020. The first official MESA was released on June 8, 2021, providing national-scale statistics for the years 2014 to 2019. We expect to release the 2020 statistics (showing the COVID-19 impacts) around June this year.
- This process also includes continuing coordination with analysts in other countries to promote global consistency in defining and measuring the marine economy. Other nations and international organizations performing similar work include Portugal, Ireland, Canada, France, the United Kingdom, China, South Korea, the World Bank, and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).
- The MESA statistics cover industries producing goods and services that: a) use inputs from the ocean and coastal environment; b) provide output for use in the ocean environment; or c) have a relationship to the oceans or coasts due to its geographic location. The data cover the following sectors: construction, government, living resources, minerals, professional and technical services, research and education, ship and boat, tourism and recreation, transportation, and public utilities.
- The MESA is covering activities taking place in the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone of the Atlantic, Pacific, and Arctic oceans, but also the Gulf of Mexico, the Great Lakes, major estuaries and embayments (e.g., the Chesapeake Bay and Puget Sound), and segments of inland river downstream from seaports (e.g., Portland, Oregon, New Orleans and Baton Rouge, Louisiana). The most innovative aspect of these statistics is that we developed coefficients to measure the relative contribution of marine dependent activities occurring in inland areas in the U.S. This is a major achievement of this effort and captures a comprehensive picture of the U.S. marine economy.
- This information is useful for policy makers in understanding the current state of the U.S. ocean and Great Lakes economy as a whole, as well as specific fields such as tourism and recreation, marine transportation, and commercial fishing and aquaculture. In addition, investors use this information to track emerging industries, such as marine pharmaceuticals, and determine where to make investments. Various ocean-related businesses use this type of information to advocate and promote their industries.