



Functional Bureau Strategy

BUREAU OF OCEANS AND INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND SCIENTIFIC AFFAIRS

FOR PUBLIC RELEASE

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1. Executive Statement and Mission Statement

Mission statement: To provide American leadership, diplomacy, and scientific cooperation to conserve and protect the global environment, ocean, health, and space for the prosperity, peace, and security of this and future generations.

The Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES) leads U.S. international engagement to conserve and protect planetary systems essential to human life — the air, water, ocean, soil, flora, fauna, climate and atmosphere, Arctic and Antarctic poles, and even the outer reaches of space. These resources are critical to human health, well-being, and prosperity worldwide. Furthermore, they are increasingly the arenas of both cooperation and competition in the 21st century.

Active U.S. engagement, rooted in multilateralism and our alliances, will be necessary to address an increasingly complex and interconnected world. The period from now until 2025 represents a pivotal moment for the future health of the planet and for the future of American foreign policy. International peace, security, and human health are increasingly tied to ensuring robust global health systems and multilateral cooperation on environmental challenges such as pervasive pollution, rapidly escalating global temperatures, and loss of biodiversity. These issues fundamentally drive and shape American interests and influence. We also believe that this work is urgent — if we fail to address these challenges soon, the consequences for people, nature, and the planet will be dire and irreversible.

The dedicated public servants in OES provide international expertise on these issues to advance American leadership and to promote sustainable and lasting global solutions. Only through intense diplomacy will we be able to prepare for and prevent the environmental and health crises to come and to build the sustainable world on which all our futures depend.

- Monica P. Medina, Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES)

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2. Bureau Strategic Framework

Bureau Goal 1: Restore and advance the sustainable well-being and prosperity of the American people, by conserving and protecting the global environment, ocean, health, and space.

- **Bureau Objective 1.1:** Promote the conservation and sustainable management of terrestrial, aquatic, and marine ecosystems, and increase global conserved and protected areas, to protect the environment and biodiversity and limit zoonotic disease spillover.
- **Bureau Objective 1.2:** Reduce pollution and promote environmentally sustainable consumption and production at international, national, and subnational levels.
- **Bureau Objective 1.3:** Strengthen global partnerships, improve research integrity, increase standards, and create new economic opportunities, especially for the American middle class, across OES engagements.

Bureau Goal 2: Mitigate threats to the global environment, ocean, health, and space that jeopardize security and the prosperity of the United States.

- **Bureau Objective 2.1:** Strengthen U.S. and international partners' capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to health, climate, environment, space, and ocean security threats.
- **Bureau Objective 2.2:** Support global action to effectively implement the Paris Agreement by reducing net greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing resilience to climate change.
- **Bureau Objective 2.3:** Improve the governance of ocean, environment, science, space, and health systems in countries and through U.S. leadership in multilateral institutions.

- **Bureau Objective 2.4:** Seek concrete gains to increase water security, finalize U.S. maritime boundaries, delineate continental shelves consistent with U.S. law, promote freedom of the seas, and further the peaceful use of outer space.

Bureau Goal 3: Lead international institutions to work transparently and accountably, while promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion, and advocating science-based decision making to advance American values and interests.

- **Bureau Objective 3.1:** Enhance transparency, accountability, and science-based decision-making in multilateral organizations.
- **Bureau Objective 3.2:** Increase representation of U.S. values, including recognition of diversity, equity, and inclusion, in agreements, statements, and other negotiated documents.
- **Bureau Objective 3.3:** Improve recognition of the importance of gender equity and equality, and the participation of civil society, indigenous peoples, and local communities in international fora.

Bureau Cross-Cutting Management Objective 1: Department employees increase ESTH literacy and employ ESTH knowledge in diplomatic engagements.

Bureau Cross-Cutting Management Objective 2: OES recruits, hires, and retains a workforce representative of the diversity of the United States.

3. Bureau Goals and Objectives

Bureau Goal 1: Restore and advance the sustainable health and well-being of the American people by conserving and protecting the global environment, ocean, and space.

- **Bureau Goal 1 Description:** OES leadership is vital as we work to help the world to build back better (“B3W”), both to tackle current challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the climate crisis, and to position the United States as a global economic, scientific, health, and environmental leader for years to come. Our nation’s societal, economic, and public health vitality is dependent on our environmental health. We will use the best available science, embrace a shared commitment to exploration and improved understanding, and adhere to the high standards and integrity inherent in the American tradition to conserve and protect the environment as well as the health and well-being of the American people.

Bureau Objective 1.1: Promote the conservation and sustainable management of terrestrial, aquatic, and marine ecosystems and increase global conserved and protected areas.

- **Bureau Objective 1.1 Justification and Linkages:** To support global efforts to conserve 30 percent of land and waters and 30 percent of the global ocean by 2030, OES will work with partners to increase the amount of biodiversity under sustainable management. We will raise political will, mobilize resources, and strengthen operational capacity to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing and nature crime — individually and at their convergence — including wildlife and timber trafficking, and criminal forms of mining, fishing, and land conversion. We will encourage partner countries to establish new protected areas, including marine protected areas, and improve the effectiveness of existing protected areas to generate global benefits for biodiversity and carbon storage. We will support countries in building health security capacities that bridge human and animal health, leveraging a

One Health approach to prevent, rapidly detect, and respond to zoonotic disease spillover, while promoting the maintenance of biodiversity as key to discovery of new medicines. We will encourage the use of nature-based solutions, develop new financing mechanisms, including leveraging philanthropic and corporate funding. This objective supports JSP objective 2.2.

- **Bureau Objective 1.1 Risk Considerations:** Increasing biodiversity conservation requires considerable effort to coalesce governments, industries, stakeholders, and rights holders around a shared objective and then take concrete steps — often creating new laws and regulations or committing to enforce existing laws — to increase the amount of land, water, and sea under sustainable management. OES is well placed to lead on this effort, given the bureau’s leadership role in multilateral fora. OES will mitigate the risk of global apathy to take action to address nature conservation through robust public diplomacy and by working with likeminded partners, including indigenous and local communities, and non-traditional biodiversity stakeholders (e.g., in health) to hold governments accountable for their commitments and by leveraging private sector action and financing to incentivize conservation efforts.

Bureau Objective 1.2: Reduce pollution and promote and advance environmentally sustainable consumption and production at international, national, and subnational levels.

- **Bureau Objective 1.2 Justification and Linkages:** We will advocate for better air quality and improve capacity for air quality management, one of the largest determinants of global public health outcomes. We will work to reduce mercury pollution from mining activities. We will promote waste management and recycling to improve resource efficiency and minimize waste going to unsanitary landfills or released into the environment. We will improve Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) access, particularly in key locales such as health care facilities and schools, necessary to the health and wellbeing of global populations. We will lead U.S. negotiations on a new global instrument to reduce and ultimately eliminate plastic pollution. Exhaustible natural resources such as fish stocks and other living marine resources require careful

management to remain sustainable. We will advocate for more proactive tools to manage shared fisheries and protect marine ecosystems from the impacts of fishing. By advocating for strong environmental regulations around the world, the bureau helps to conserve precious natural resources, improve public health, accelerate innovation, and create markets for U.S. technologies and services. This objective supports JSP objectives 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3.

- **Bureau Objective 1.2 Risk Considerations:** Advancing U.S. economic and environmental security across the range of OES issues will require consistent and coordinated policy positions across the U.S. government, cooperation with other national and subnational governments, and investments by U.S. industries and other stakeholders. Countries with different development practices could undermine our efforts to advance a balanced approach to sustainable growth. OES will mitigate this risk by leveraging U.S. expertise and relationships with like-minded partners to advance our interests and counter malign attempts to undermine our leadership.

Bureau Objective 1.3: Strengthen global partnerships, improve research integrity, increase standards, and create new economic opportunities, especially for the American middle class, across OES engagements.

- **Bureau Objective 1.3 Justification and Linkages:** Technology and innovation empower the United States to address some of the world's most pressing challenges. OES efforts to preserve U.S. leadership on science, technology, innovation, and space exploration and utilization are vital to our national security, economic strength, and democratic values. We will strengthen partnerships with likeminded allies to promote research integrity and shape the standards that ensure quality, protect consumer health and safety, facilitate trade, conserve the environment, and promote democratic values. A global technology revolution is underway, with leading powers racing to develop and deploy new and emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and quantum computing that will shape our lives and the 21st-century global economy. These same nations see the value of space technology and applications to drive their

economies and create new industries and jobs. OES leadership will help ensure the technological and digital transformations serve our people and pave the way for new trade, investment, and research opportunities for U.S. companies and academic institutions. This objective supports JSP objective 2.3.

- **Bureau Objective 1.3 Risk Considerations:** Adversaries seeking to undercut U.S. leadership, undermine global standards and values protecting research integrity, and/or launch cyber-attacks on our facilities have the potential to disrupt our democracies, damage property, and violate privacy and data protection laws. OES will work to mitigate these risks through building new partnerships as well as sustained engagement with likeminded allies to hold adversaries accountable.

Bureau Goal 2: Mitigate threats to the global environment, ocean, health, and space that jeopardize the security and prosperity of the United States.

- **Bureau Goal 2 Description:** Global crises, from climate change to pandemics, threaten the health and prosperity of the American people. Robust global health systems that fight threats posed by infectious and non-infectious disease are central to international peace, security, and prosperity - and human well-being. Environmental challenges such as rapidly escalating levels of plastics and other pollution, loss of biodiversity, and rising temperatures threaten global peace, security, and prosperity. These issues also fundamentally drive and shape America's interests and influence globally. And this work is urgent — if we fail to address these challenges, the consequences for people, nature, and the planet will be dire and irreversible. OES will work with U.S. partners and allies, and through international and multilateral institutions, to mitigate these global threats and protect the American people. Our unmatched web of alliances and partnerships are our greatest force multiplier in maintaining a stable, open, rules-based international system. Our alliances and partnerships enhance our ability to deter and disrupt threats before they reach our shores and to counter and compete with our adversaries. The world is looking to the United States for leadership at this critical moment and we must deliver to build the

economic, health, and environmental architecture on which our people and planet will rely for years to come.

Bureau Objective 2.1: Strengthen U.S. and international partners' capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to health, climate, environment, space, and ocean security threats.

- **Bureau Objective 2.1 Justification and Linkages:** Through the provision of key supplies such as vaccines and therapeutics, as well as technical expertise and assistance, the United States is leading the global fight against COVID-19 and putting global health security back at the top of the national security agenda and global health security architecture. Strengthening global health security improves our national and international security, economic resilience, and the well-being of all Americans – protecting us against the pandemics of the future. OES will continue to work with partners around the world through the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA) framework, which positions countries to develop capacity, technical knowledge, and a collaborative foundation to prevent, detect, and rapidly respond to threats and sustain health security in the long term. OES will continue robust lines of effort to advance the One Health approach, integrating knowledge and data across the human, animal, and environmental health sectors, to improve surveillance, detection, and prevention of zoonotic pathogen risks. OES will also work with partners to deter activities such as wildlife trafficking, which contribute to increased risks of zoonotic disease emergence and spread.

OES will work with partners to build resilience to overcome environmental shocks and combat the climate crisis. The Paris Agreement, which the United States played a leading role in negotiating, and the recently completed (2021) Glasgow Climate Pact, are the frameworks for the global response to the climate crisis. They set the goal of holding the temperature increase to well below two degrees Celsius and pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Environmental shocks, such as the more intense and more frequent impacts of climate change will require additional support for resilient investments, institutions, and collaborative decision-making.

OES will also work on health threats stemming from air pollution and mismanaged chemicals and waste, including persistent organic pollutants, mercury, and plastic pollution. OES will serve as a hub for innovative partnerships with national and international actors to combat IUU fishing and related threats to the health of the ocean and the people who depend upon it. Open availability of data from increasingly capable and robust scientific and technical systems underpins these collaborative efforts. Work under this objective supports JSP objectives 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3.

- **Bureau Objective 2.1 Risk Considerations:** Risks to this objective stem from the lack of political will to make sustained and durable investments in global health and environmental security, with limited capacity to improve systems to prevent, detect and respond to infectious disease threats, and to make ambitious emissions reductions. To mitigate these risks, OES will deploy a multi-pronged diplomatic and foreign policy toolkit to advance sustainable financing for global health security, particularly through a financial intermediary fund.

Bureau Objective 2.2: Support global action to effectively implement the Paris Agreement by reducing net greenhouse gas emission reductions and enhancing resilience to climate change.

- **Bureau Objective 2.2 Justification and Linkages:** We face an existential climate crisis impacting the global economy, our national security, and the health of our people that can only be mitigated through aggressive, ambitious global action. The Paris Agreement, which OES played a leading role in negotiating, is the framework for the global response to this crisis. Given more than 85 percent of the greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) driving the planet's warming come from beyond our borders, OES will support urgent and transformative international actions that secure new or improved commitments on emissions reductions, strengthen the resilience of populations vulnerable to climate variability and change that is already occurring, and improve capacity to transparently report climate actions. These actions will not only mitigate threats to the United States, but also advance U.S. international leadership on climate

change by responding to the needs of our key country partners, promoting transformative systems, and enhancing climate resilience. This objective directly relates to JSP objective 1.2 and the State-USAID climate Agency Priority Goal.

- **Bureau Objective 2.2 Risk Considerations:** The Paris Agreement recognized the importance of limiting greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) to avert increasing and devastating natural disasters, protect livelihoods of the poorest communities, and advance a more just and prosperous global community. Support for green economic growth, including spurring new and renewable energy technologies, allow for greater GHG mitigation to keep global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius within reach. Failures related to limited financing, adopting cleaner or renewable technologies, or failure of communities to preserve forests, agricultural and other economic livelihoods, and enhance the adaptive capacity of communities will impede the attainment of our climate goals and objectives. To mitigate this risk, OES will conduct extensive public outreach to generate support for ambitious initiatives while working with stakeholders, including governments, the public, and the private sector, to mobilize public and private finance, enhance country strategies to incorporate climate-friendly technologies and practices, preserve forests and agricultural economies, and spur adaptive communities that protect and advance economic livelihoods and save lives amid a changing climate.

Bureau Objective 2.3: Improve the governance of ocean, environment, science, space, and health systems in countries and through U.S. leadership in multilateral institutions.

- **Bureau Objective 2.3 Justification and Linkages:** Global environment, water, ocean, science, polar, health, and space issues demand collective action on a global scale. Governments, however, are often faced with a dilemma: advancing these issues are costly and require long-term commitment while political capital and power retention often demand immediate economic benefits. Multilateral institutions working on these governance issues often have diffuse, overlapping, and even conflicting mandates. OES will continue to lead national and subnational governments and

international organizations toward better improved governance on our equities, including management of our collective interdependencies – ecological, economic, health, and social. OES will work to strengthen data-driven decision-making, and ensure equitable representation and participation of all interests, especially women and girls, in all their diversity, indigenous peoples and those in underrepresented and vulnerable sectors of society, within the institutional landscape for global governance. This objective relates to JSP objective 2.3.

- **Bureau Objective 2.3 Risk Considerations:** Achieving this objective could be undermined by insufficient targeted internal and external resources, lack of political will, institutional support and robust data, and restrictive guidelines. OES will work to mitigate these risks through extensive public outreach to build understanding and support and through sustained engagement with likeminded allies.

Bureau Objective 2.4: Seek concrete gains to increase water security, finalize U.S. maritime boundaries, delineate continental shelves consistent with U.S. law, promote freedom of the seas, and further the peaceful use of outer space.

- **Bureau Objective 2.4 Justification and Linkages:** Threats such as water insecurity, conflicts over maritime boundaries or entitlements, and disagreements over allocation of natural resources can jeopardize health and well-being, fuel tensions over much-needed resources and territory, which can in turn destabilize situations and result in conflict, thereby undermining security. OES will work to improve water security, establish recognized boundaries and limits for maritime space, to promote rule of law, and encourage cooperation to resolve conflicts and reduce tensions over natural resources in accordance with international law and instruments. Similarly, increased orbital debris and expanded use by an ever-growing number of countries threaten the peaceful use of outer space. The U.S. private sector is revolutionizing the use of outer space with new technologies and business models for space tourism, asteroid mining, space launch vehicles, new satellite applications, and other commercial endeavors. OES will lead U.S. government efforts to develop voluntary international standards and

guidelines that ensure the long-term sustainability of space operations and enable U.S. companies to responsibly launch innovative space ventures. This objective supports JSP objectives 2.2 and 2.3.

- **Bureau Objective 2.4 Risk Considerations:** Achieving this objective could be undermined by insufficient targeted internal and external resources, lack of political will, institutional support and robust data, and restrictive guidelines sought by some countries to preclude U.S. civil and commercial access to space. OES will seek to minimize these risks by expanding our engagement with like-minded countries to establish rules and norms in the maritime and outer space domains.

Bureau Goal 3: Lead international institutions to work transparently and accountably, while promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion, and advocating science-based decision making to advance American values and interests.

- **Bureau Goal 3 Description:** The United States' network of alliances and partnerships is one of our greatest strengths and has proven time and again to be central to the enduring security, health, and prosperity of the American people. In addition to recommitting to our alliances and partnerships, we will embrace international cooperation toward a better, safer, more resilient, and more prosperous world. U.S. and OES leadership in international institutions is vital as we join with the international community to tackle urgent and long-term challenges ranging from health security to the climate crisis. Our funding mechanisms for our international agreements are also critical for success and we will work to increase their transparency and effectiveness. Together with like-minded partners and allies, we are better able to keep pace (often outpace) our competitors and disrupt the ability of malign actors to undermine our interests. This includes championing transparency and accountability, promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion, and shaping the rules and norms of the international order.

Bureau Objective 3.1: Enhance transparency, accountability, and science-based decision-making in multilateral organizations.

- **Bureau Objective 3.1 Justification and Linkages:** Transparency and accountability are essential for multilateral institutions to operate democratically and are proven weapons against corruption. They stimulate public engagement, improve government responsiveness, and strengthen and enrich the democratic process. Transparent and accountable institutions open the organization to the people they represent, listening to diverse voices and using feedback to shape and improve policies, programs, and negotiating positions. OES will continue to lead multilateral institutions to work in this way and promote science-based decision making in international negotiations. This objective supports JSP objectives 1.1, 1.2, 2.3, and 3.3.
- **Bureau Objective 3.1 Risk Considerations:** Most multilateral organizations operate under consensus. Under these rules, individual or small groups of countries may work to block actions to improve organization transparency, accountability, and science-based decision making in these bodies. To mitigate this risk, the United States will work with like-minded partners and allies to hold institutions accountable publicly to standards of transparency and use data and information to improve institutions and advocate for science-based decision making in international negotiations.

Bureau Objective 3.2: Increase representation of U.S. values, including recognition of diversity, equity, and inclusion, in agreements, statements, and other negotiated documents.

- **Bureau Objective 3.2 Justification and Linkages:** Promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in multilateral outcome documents will send a strong signal of U.S. support and priorities for advancing diverse viewpoints and stakeholders in these settings. Advancing these goals will improve transparency, accountability, and democracy through promoting equitable opportunity internationally. This objective supports JSP objectives 2.3, 3.3, and 3.5.

- **Bureau Objective 3.2 Risk Considerations:** Some countries may push back due to anti-democratic concerns over inclusion/promotion of groups who could criticize international leaders or policies. To mitigate this risk, the United States will work with like-minded partners and allies to build coalitions of support.

Bureau Objective 3.3: Improve recognition of the importance of gender equity and equality, and the participation of civil society, indigenous peoples, and local communities in international fora.

- **Bureau Objective 3.3 Justification and Linkages:** OES will make a concerted effort to include diverse delegations, striving to achieve gender parity, in their international engagements where possible and appropriate. OES will also advocate for increased representation of indigenous peoples and under-represented and vulnerable sectors of society in international organizations. This objective supports JSP objectives 2.3, and 3.5.
- **Bureau Objective 3.3 Risk Considerations:** This will be in line with human resources and a consideration for the makeup of the delegation but not a controlling factor such as experience and purview. To mitigate this risk, OES will consistently demonstrate adherence to these principles in its own delegations and will engage in extensive public diplomacy supporting the rights and participation of civil society, indigenous peoples, and local communities in international fora.

4. Bureau Cross-Cutting Management Objectives

Bureau Cross-Cutting Management Objective 1: Department employees increase ESTH literacy and employ ESTH knowledge in diplomatic engagements.

- **Bureau Cross-Cutting Management Objective 1 Justification and Linkages:** U.S. diplomats need to receive training on ESTH issues to successfully advance those U.S. government priorities. Working closely with the Foreign Service Institute, OES can provide that training through in-person and virtual classes and workshops. In some situations, embassies can utilize technical expertise from other U.S. government agencies and U.S. citizens. OES manages two programs – the Embassy Science Fellows and the U.S. Science Envoys – which leverage United States talent in the conduct of diplomacy. The Embassy Science Fellows program matches U.S. government employees from the science inter-agency with U.S. Posts abroad to advance U.S. policy goals. The U.S. Science Envoys program identifies eminent private American scientists or executives to meet foreign counterparts and public audiences to advance U.S. objectives. Both programs have a strong track record of addressing key foreign policy issues, such as health security and the climate crisis. This objective supports JSP objectives 2.3, 2.4, and 4.1.
- **Bureau Cross-Cutting Management Objective 1 Risk Considerations:** Increasing training opportunities may require additional financial and personnel resources as well as the support of the Foreign Service Institute. U.S. Science Envoys are private citizens who may not support U.S. policy in every situation. To mitigate the risk, OES will continue to advocate for necessary financial resources with BP and will work internally with other bureaus to identify low-cost, in-house opportunities to increase awareness and understanding of ESTH issues.

Bureau Cross-Cutting Management Objective 2: OES recruits, hires, and retains a workforce representative of the diversity of the United States.

- **Bureau Cross-Cutting Management Objective 2 Justification and Linkages:** A diverse workforce representative of the United States is fundamental to pursuing our foreign policy goals and strengthening national security. When we integrate diversity of identify, experience, and expertise into decision-making processes, our foreign policy is more effective. When we create more equitable and transparent processes for onboarding and career advancement, OES is stronger, more resilient, and better equipped to address complex national security issues and priorities. OES efforts to recruit, hire, and retain a representative workforce support the Department's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Strategic Plan. They also advance our goal to build a more just, equitable, and accessible institution that will enhance our ability ensure a more equitable and inclusive world. This objective supports JSP objective 4.1.
- **Bureau Cross-Cutting Management Objective 2 Risk Considerations:** Achieving this objective may require additional financial and personnel resources as well as the support and collaboration of offices and Bureaus across the Department including S/ODI and GTM. It also requires an appropriate applicant pool for OES jobs. To mitigate these risks, OES will continue to advocate for necessary financial resources and engage in robust public outreach, together with GTM, to increase interest in the OES bureau.