

**Resolution of the California Ocean Protection Council
On Climate Change**

June 14, 2007

WHEREAS the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has determined that warming of the climate system is unequivocal, as is now evident from observations of increases in global average air and ocean temperatures, widespread melting of snow and ice, and rising global average sea level; and

WHEREAS, due to increases in greenhouse gases, temperatures are expected to rise substantially in California during the next few decades with an average temperature rise of 1 to 2.3 degrees Fahrenheit by mid-century; and

WHEREAS, according to the California Climate Change Center, “if heat-trapping emissions continue unabated and temperatures rise into the higher warming range, sea level is expected to rise an additional 22 to 35 inches by the end of the century”; and

WHEREAS, the California Ocean Protection Council recognizes that the effects of climate change, such as rising sea levels, ocean warming and acidification, will have numerous deleterious impacts on the ocean and coastal environment; and

WHEREAS, California is the world’s 12th largest source of carbon dioxide emissions; and

WHEREAS, California’s approximately 1,100 miles of coastline and marine waters support an ocean-dependent economy valued at \$46 billion per year; and

WHEREAS, California has substantial wave and tidal energy resources that can contribute to the state’s development of clean energy alternatives and greenhouse gas emission reductions; and

WHEREAS, Governor Schwarzenegger has affirmed that human-induced climate change is real and that “we know the science, we see the threat and we know that the time for action is now”; and

WHEREAS, Governor Schwarzenegger and the Legislature have made California a leader in addressing global climate change by implementing the Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32), which sets ambitious reduction targets for greenhouse gas emissions and requires that “all state agencies shall consider and implement strategies to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions”; and

WHEREAS, the California Ocean Protection Council has already begun to take actions that will inform climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies statewide, such as installing ocean observing systems and supporting climate change research; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative to maintain or restore ecosystem resilience as a buffer to reduce the impacts of global climate change and other anthropogenic impacts on marine and terrestrial ecosystems; and

WHEREAS, draft legislation is being considered in Congress that would preempt laws enacted by states to control greenhouse gas emissions, such as California's Assembly Bill 32 (California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006) and California's low-carbon fuel standards.

NOW, THEREFORE, the California Ocean Protection Council (OPC) hereby resolves to:

1. Promote climate change mitigation or adaptation measures in OPC-funded projects – The OPC funding guidelines will be revised to require that applicants for OPC funds describe their efforts to consider the potential for their project to generate greenhouse gas emissions and what steps they have taken to reduce those emissions; and
2. Work with the California Climate Action Team's Subcommittee on Scenario Analysis – The OPC will work within this subcommittee to coordinate the efforts of the state and regional entities chiefly responsible for ocean-related issues; and
3. Encourage LCP amendments – The OPC encourages coastal communities to work with the California Coastal Commission to amend their local coastal plans (LCPs) to include an element that focuses on sea level rise, erosion, flooding, and other climate change impacts, and steps to mitigate those impacts; and
4. Pursue methods for assessing climate change impacts – The OPC will support the development of methods and tools for studying climate change impacts and erosion on coastal communities and integrating this information into state, regional, and local adaptation planning efforts; and
5. Examine the environmental impacts of ocean energy technologies – The OPC will evaluate the potential environmental impacts of California-based ocean energy projects in cooperation with the California Energy Commission, California Coastal Commission, and other state agencies. Staff is directed to hold one or more public forums to educate the public about ocean energy technologies and to receive feedback from members of local communities who would most benefit from and be impacted by such projects; and
6. Fund climate change impact research – The OPC will continue to fund research on climate change and sea level rise impacts on California's coastal and marine resources.
7. Federal preemption of state greenhouse gas law – The OPC opposes federal preemption of state efforts to control greenhouse gas emissions.