

**Public Law 95-273**  
**95th Congress**

**An Act**

May 8, 1978  
 [S. 1617]

To establish a program of ocean pollution research, development, and monitoring, and for other purposes.

National Ocean  
 Pollution  
 Research and  
 Development and  
 Monitoring  
 Planning Act of  
 1978.  
 33 USC 1701  
 note.  
 33 USC 1701.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That this Act may be cited as the "National Ocean Pollution Research and Development and Monitoring Planning Act of 1978".*

**SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.**

(a) **FINDINGS.**—The Congress finds and declares the following:

(1) Man's activities in the marine environment can have a profound short-term and long-term impact on such environment and greatly affect ocean and coastal resources therein.

(2) There is a need to establish a comprehensive Federal plan for ocean pollution research and development and monitoring, with particular attention being given to the inputs, fates, and effects of pollutants in the marine environment.

(3) Man will increasingly be forced to rely on ocean and coastal resources as other resources are depleted. Our ability to protect, preserve, develop, and utilize these ocean and coastal resources is directly related to our understanding of the effects which ocean pollution has upon such resources.

(4) Numerous departments, agencies, and instrumentalities of the Federal Government sponsor, support, or fund activities relating to ocean pollution research and development and monitoring. However, such activities are often uncoordinated and can result in unnecessary duplication.

(5) Better planning and more effective use of available funds, personnel, vessels, facilities, and equipment is the key to effective Federal action regarding ocean pollution research and development and monitoring.

(b) **PURPOSES.**—It is therefore the purpose of the Congress in this Act—

(1) to establish a comprehensive 5-year plan for Federal ocean pollution research and development and monitoring programs in order to provide planning for, coordination of, and dissemination of information with respect to such programs within the Federal Government;

(2) to develop the necessary base of information to support, and to provide for, the rational, efficient, and equitable utilization, conservation, and development of ocean and coastal resources; and

(3) to designate the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration as the lead Federal agency for preparing the plan referred to in paragraph (1) and to require the Administration to carry out a comprehensive program of ocean pollution research and development and monitoring under the plan.

33 USC 1702.

**SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

As used in this Act, unless the context otherwise requires—

(1) The term "Administration" means the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(2) The term "Administrator" means the Administrator of the Administration.

(3) The term "Director" means the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy in the Executive Office of the President.

(4) The term "marine environment" means the coastal zone (as defined in section 304(1) of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1453(1))); the seabed, subsoil, and waters of the territorial sea of the United States; the waters of any zone over which the United States asserts exclusive fishery management authority; the waters of the high seas; and the seabed and subsoil of and beyond the Outer Continental Shelf.

(5) The term "ocean and coastal resource" has the same meaning as is given such term in section 203(7) of the National Sea Grant Program Act (33 U.S.C. 1122(7)).

(6) The term "ocean pollution" means any short-term or long-term change in the marine environment.

#### SEC. 4. COMPREHENSIVE FEDERAL PLAN RELATING TO OCEAN POLLUTION. 33 USC 1703.

(a) **LEAD AGENCY FOR PLAN.**—The Administrator, in consultation with the Director and other appropriate Federal officials having authority over ocean pollution research and development and monitoring programs, shall prepare, in accordance with this section, a comprehensive 5-year plan (hereinafter in this Act referred to as the "Plan") for the overall Federal effort in ocean pollution research and development and monitoring. The Plan shall be prepared and submitted to Congress and the President on or before February 15, 1979, and a revision of the Plan shall be prepared and so submitted by February 15 of each odd-numbered year occurring after 1979. **Responsibility.**

(b) **CONTENT OF PLAN.**—The Plan shall contain, but need not be limited to, the following elements: **Submission to President and Congress.**

(1) **ASSESSMENT AND ORDERING OF NATIONAL NEEDS AND PROBLEMS.**—The Plan shall— **National priorities.**

(A) identify those national needs and problems, which relate to specific aspects of ocean pollution (including, but not limited to, the effects of ocean pollution on the economic, social, and environmental values of ocean and coastal resources), which exist and will arise during the Plan period;

(B) establish the priority, based upon the value and cost of information which can be obtained from specific ocean pollution research and development and monitoring programs and projects, in which such needs should be met, and such problems should be solved, during the Plan period; and

(C) contain, if pursuant to the preparation of any revision of the Plan required under subsection (a) it is determined that any national need or problem or priority set forth in the preceding version of the Plan should be changed, a detailed explanation of the reasons for the change.

(2) **EXISTING FEDERAL CAPABILITY.**—The Plan shall contain— **Existing Federal capability.**

(A) a detailed listing of all existing Federal programs relating to ocean pollution research and development and monitoring (including, but not limited to, general research on marine ecosystems), which listing shall include, with respect to each such program—

(i) a catalogue of the Federal personnel, facilities, vessels and other equipment currently assigned to, or used for, the program, and

(ii) a detailed description of the existing goals and costs of the program, including, but not limited to, a categorical breakdown of the funds currently being expended, and planned to be expended, to conduct the program; and

(B) an analysis of the extent to which each such program, if continued on the basis and at the funding level described pursuant to subparagraph (A) (ii), will assist in meeting the priorities set forth pursuant to paragraph (1) (B) during the Plan period.

(3) **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS.**—If it is determined, as a result of the analysis required to be made under paragraph (2) (B), that the priorities set forth pursuant to paragraph (1) (B) will not be adequately met during the Plan period using the existing Federal capability described pursuant to paragraph (2) (A), the Plan shall contain those recommendations for changes in the overall Federal effort in ocean pollution research and development and monitoring which would ensure that those priorities are adequately met during the Plan period. Such recommendations may include, but need not be limited to—

(A) changes in the goals to be achieved under various existing Federal ocean pollution research and development and monitoring programs;

(B) suggested increases and decreases in the funding for any such existing program consistent with the extent to which such program contributes to the meeting of such priorities;

(C) specific proposals for interagency cooperation in cases in which the pooling of the resources of two or more Federal departments, agencies, or instrumentalities under existing programs could further efforts to meet such priorities or would eliminate duplication of effort; and

(D) suggested legislation to establish new Federal programs considered to be necessary if such priorities are to be met.

Budget review.

(4) **BUDGET REVIEW.**—The Plan shall contain a description of actions taken by the Administrator and the Director to coordinate the budget review process for the purpose of ensuring interagency coordination and cooperation in (A) the carrying out of Federal ocean pollution research and development and monitoring programs; and (B) eliminating unnecessary duplication of effort among such programs.

“Plan Period.”

(c) For purposes of this section, the term “Plan period” means—

(1) with respect to the Plan as required to be submitted on February 15, 1979, the period of 5 fiscal years beginning on October 1, 1978; and

(2) with respect to each revision of the Plan, the period of 5 fiscal years beginning on October 1 of the year before the year in which the revision is required to be prepared under subsection (a).

33 USC 1704.

## SEC. 5. COMPREHENSIVE OCEAN POLLUTION PROGRAM IN THE ADMINISTRATION.

Establishment.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRAM.**—The Administrator shall establish within the Administration a comprehensive, coordinated, and effective ocean pollution research and development and monitoring program. The Administrator shall carry out all projects and activities under the program in a manner consistent with the Plan.

(b) **CONTENT OF THE PROGRAM.**—The program required to be established under subsection (a) shall include, but not be limited to—

(1) all projects and activities relating to ocean pollution research and development and monitoring for which the Administrator has responsibility under provisions of law (including, but not limited to, title II of the Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act of 1972 (33 U.S.C. 1441-1444)) other than paragraph (2);

(2) such projects and activities addressed to the priorities set forth in the Plan pursuant to section 4(b)(1)(B) that can be appropriately conducted within the Administration; and

(3) the provision of financial assistance under section 6.

## SEC. 6. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

(a) **GRANTS AND CONTRACTS.**—The Administrator may provide financial assistance in the form of grants or contracts for research and development and monitoring projects or activities which are needed to meet priorities set forth in the Plan pursuant to section 4(b)(1)(B), if such priorities are not being adequately addressed by any Federal department, agency, or instrumentality.

(b) **APPLICATIONS FOR ASSISTANCE.**—Any person, including institutions of higher education and departments, agencies, and instrumentalities of the Federal Government or of any State or political subdivision thereof, may apply for financial assistance under this section for the conduct of projects and activities described in subsection (a), and, in addition, specific proposals may be invited. Each application for financial assistance shall be made in writing in such form and manner, and contain such information, as the Administrator may require. The Administrator may enter into contracts under this section without regard to section 3709 of the Revised Statutes of the United States (41 U.S.C. 5).

(c) **EXISTING PROGRAMS.**—The projects and activities supported by grants or contracts made or entered into under this section shall, to the maximum extent practicable, be administered through existing Federal programs (including, but not limited to, the National Sea Grant Program) concerned with ocean pollution research and development and monitoring.

(d) **ACTION BY ADMINISTRATOR.**—The Administrator shall act upon each application for a grant or contract under this section within six months after the date on which all required information is received by the Administrator from the applicant. Each grant made or contract entered into under this section shall be subject to such terms and conditions as the Secretary deems necessary in order to protect the interests of the United States. The total amount paid pursuant to any such grant or contract may, in the discretion of the Administrator, be up to 100 percent of the total cost of the project or activity involved.

(e) **RECORDS.**—Each recipient of financial assistance under this section shall keep such records as the Administrator shall prescribe, including records which fully disclose the amount and disposition by such recipient of the proceeds of such assistance, the total cost of the project or activity in connection with which such assistance was given or used, the amount of that portion of the cost of the project or activity which was supplied by other sources, and such other records as will facilitate an effective audit. Such records shall be maintained for three years after the completion of such project or activity. The Administrator and the Comptroller General of the United States, or any of their duly authorized representatives, shall have access, for the purpose of audit and examination, to any books, documents, papers, and

33 USC 1705.

Grants and contracts.

Contract authority.

Recordkeeping.

Accessibility.

records of receipts which, in the opinion of the Administrator or of the Comptroller General, may be related or pertinent to such financial assistance.

33 USC 1706.

**SEC. 7. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION.**

The head of each department, agency, or other instrumentality of the Federal Government which is engaged in or concerned with, or which has authority over, programs relating to ocean pollution research and development and monitoring—

(1) shall cooperate with the Administrator in carrying out the purposes of this Act;

(2) may, upon written request from the Administrator or Director, make available to the Administrator or Director, on a reimbursable basis or otherwise, such personnel (with their consent and without prejudice to their position and rating), services, or facilities as may be necessary to assist the Administrator or the Director to achieve the purposes of this Act; and

(3) shall, upon a written request from the Administrator or Director, furnish such data or other information as the Administrator or Director deems necessary to fulfill the purposes of this Act.

33 USC 1707.

**SEC. 8. DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION.**

The Administrator shall ensure that the results, findings, and information regarding ocean pollution research and development and monitoring programs conducted or sponsored by the Federal Government be disseminated in a timely manner, and in useful forms, to relevant departments, agencies, and instrumentalities of the Federal Government, and to other persons having an interest in ocean pollution research and development and monitoring.

33 USC 1708.

**SEC. 9. EFFECT ON OTHER LAWS.**

Nothing in this Act shall be construed to amend, restrict, or otherwise alter the authority of any Federal department, agency, or instrumentality, under any law, to undertake research and development and monitoring relating to ocean pollution.

33 USC 1709.

**SEC. 10. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

There are authorized to be appropriated to the Administration for the purposes of carrying out this Act not to exceed \$5,000,000 for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1979.

Approved May 8, 1978.

**LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:**

**HOUSE REPORTS:** No. 95-626 pt. 1 (Comm. on Science and Technology) and 95-626 pt. 2 (Comm. on Merchant Marine and Fisheries).

**CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:**

Vol. 123 (1977): Aug. 3, considered and passed Senate.

Vol. 124 (1978): Feb. 28, considered and passed House, amended.

Apr. 24, Senate agreed to House amendment.