WORKSHOP REPORT

Hawaii Ocean Observing System Stakeholder Workshop
Imin Conference Center, East-West Center, University of Hawaii at Manoa
May 20, 2008

Introduction

The Hawaii Ocean Observing System (HiOOS) members held their first stakeholder workshop May 20th, 2008, at the Imin Conference Center, East-West Center, University of Hawaii at Manoa. The aim of the workshop was to bring together stakeholders from various federal, state, and county agencies, private industry, academia, military, and non-governmental organizations to begin a discussion on the priorities that should guide the development of the observing system and the available resources through the regional community that can facilitate a more robust and timely development. Moderated breakout-group discussion provided a forum to address individual concerns of participants as well as focus group thought on two main questions:

1. What can HiOOS provide for you?

2. What can you contribute to HiOOS?

Summary of Input

Notes from each breakout group were reviewed to determine ideas and themes that were representative of the larger group thought.

Question 1: What can HiOOS provide for you?

Expansion of observing operations was the major area of need expressed by stakeholders:

- Expand four HiOOS focus areas (Sea-state monitoring, coastal resiliency, water quality, and ecosystem monitoring/stewardship) to include island population centers, ports, and sensitive biological areas (e.g. Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary).
- Validate and improve (in areas of both accuracy and resolution) coastal modeling systems to include plume dispersal, vessel route forecasting, and ecosystem composition (e.g. fish stocks, whale locations, algal blooms, jellyfish populations).

Data management was identified as a key area where HiOOS can focus initial development efforts:

- Provide a more efficient way to distribute data and information to the region—GIS-based interface that is easily understood and accessible.
- Serve as a data server and clearinghouse for available data from a variety of regional groups.

- Distribute multiple levels of data/products—unrefined, semi-refined, fully refined—to meet the needs of disparate user groups.
- Standardize web-based delivery system to provide for uniform presentation of all data sets for both HiOOS and PacIOOS.

Education and outreach was identified by a number of users as an area where HiOOS can maximize their impact on the user community:
- Offer tutorials on how to access data and utilize data/products.
- Work to develop an ocean-educated public through media engagement, workshops, internships, and in-house training.
- Build capacity in K-12 community by encouraging public-private partnerships in ocean education.
- Train an ocean-literate society through development of appropriate K-12 curricula.
- Provide a body of experts responsive to inquiries related to ocean observing, environmental issues, and social science.

Question 2: What can you contribute to HiOOS?

Additional dialogue with individual groups/agencies is required to accurately gauge the availability of resources that would be beneficial to the growth of HiOOS. However, initial discussions identified these key areas:
- Archived and real-time data from around the region related to biology, ecology, oceanography, and meteorology
- Platforms for instrumentation vital to HiOOS data gathering operations (offshore buoys, ships, terrestrial areas)
- Curricula and materials for education and outreach
- Venues and forums for public engagement and outreach (media, seminars, workshops, training sessions, educational displays)
- Identification and provision of alternate streams of funding to sustain core operations
- Software, hardware, and technical support for data management operations (integration, storage, access, product development, and evaluation)

Concerns:

Some concerns were identified through group conversation. These topics will be explored further as the system develops:

- Data availability can have negative consequences if data is used for unintended purposes (e.g. Whale locations, fish aggregation locations, and sensitive vessel location).
- HiOOS needs diverse streams of funding with core-funding base to sustain operations for highest priority data sets.
- Spread observations around using small, minimally expensive sensor packages v. building "super-sites" with full sensor suites?

Conclusion

This initial HiOOS workshop was successful in introducing the system to a large subset of interested parties, providing a forum for discussion related to the priorities for system development and the capacity of the region to assist in said development, and the identification of constituent concerns related to the growth of observations. Input from the plenary group participation, breakout group discussion, and individual follow-up with attendees will be used to steer the development of the system in the coming years and assist in strategic planning for long-term development related to governance, product development, education/outreach, and expansion of observing system instrumentation.