



For more than a decade, the Lenfest Ocean Program has supported peer-reviewed scientific research that informs decisions about the world's oceans. Our research grants produce impacts far beyond their dollar amounts, generating adaptive recommendations, seeding innovation, and empowering people with information.

OUR APPROACH TO GRANT MAKING

Our grant-making process begins with investing substantial time into engaging with policymakers, managers, and stakeholders. We seek to better understand their information needs and to identify the research gaps that impede their decisions. Through this process, we are able to target research questions squarely focused on the most important ocean policy and management questions.

Simultaneously, we engage with leading researchers about how to address the identified research needs and to develop rigorous projects. These projects may be led by a single researcher or by interdisciplinary research teams, depending on the research questions and scientific methods, and they may tackle issues at the regional, national, or international scale.

CONNECTING SCIENCE AND DECISION-MAKING

To sustain the connection with policy and management, we continue to involve decision-makers and stakeholders throughout the life of projects. This ensures the researchers stay focused on policy-relevant questions and approaches, and can adjust to any shifts in the policy landscape. And congruently, decision-makers are able to respond to scientific results as they emerge.

Through our work, we have become internationally recognized leaders in a range of practices that enhance the usability, relevance and dissemination of scientific research. We continue to adapt and refine these practices, so that our solutions keep pace with the mounting challenges facing the oceans.

To learn more about the Lenfest Ocean Program, visit www.lenfestocean.org.

Lenfest Ocean Program was established in 2004 by the Lenfest Foundation and is managed by The Pew Charitable Trusts.

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EXAMPLES OF SUPPORTED PROJECTS

The following case studies illustrate our approach to supporting ocean science that informs decision-making.

GENERATING ADAPTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

In 2014, we supported an expert task force to advance the implementation of ecosystem-based fisheries management (EBFM). This approach can improve management by accounting for how factors such as habitat and predator-prey interactions affect fish populations. However, some managers view EBFM as impractical because there was no clear way to make it operational. To address this and other obstacles, we charged the task force with providing a practical blueprint that managers can use to develop ecosystem-based approaches and tailor them to local conditions. The resulting blueprint is now informing the work of at least five U.S. regional fishery councils.

SEEDING INNOVATION

In 2013, we supported research in response to U.S. fishermen who were requesting tools to help them avoid catching endangered Atlantic sturgeon. The researchers combined big data from satellites with a five-year dataset on more than 300 sturgeon fitted with transponder tags. Using advanced statistical techniques, they developed a model that predicts the locations of sturgeon with 88 percent accuracy. This led to additional funding from NASA, and to creation of a text-messaging service that uses near-real-time predictions to help Delaware Bay fishermen avoid the species.

EMPOWERING PEOPLE WITH INFORMATION

One of our early projects was critical in providing decision-makers information to resolve an impasse on shark management. At the time, data on many Atlantic Ocean shark populations were not considered adequate to support any management action, yet some populations were thought to be depleted. We therefore consulted with experts to select a method to identify vulnerable species using limited data, and we supported a panel of leading experts to apply the method. In 2009, the year after the panel published its study, managers used it as part of their basis for protecting some of the shark species identified as most vulnerable.

