

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR THE NEW JERSEY/NEW YORK CLEAN OCEAN ZONE

WHEREAS, the New York/New Jersey Bight is defined as the waters from Montauk Point, New York, to Cape May, New Jersey, offshore to the outer edge of the Continental Shelf (to depths of 1,000 fathoms), consisting of over 19,000 square miles of the Mid-Atlantic Ocean; and

WHEREAS, the diversity of life in the NY/NJ Bight is unique in the world; more than 300 species of fish, nearly 350 species of birds, 5 species of sea turtles, and many marine mammals (including over 20 species of whales and dolphins, 1 species of porpoise, and 4 species of seals) frequent this region and the habitat found in the NY/NJ Bight serves as an essential migratory pathway for many of these species; and

WHEREAS, this ecological richness depends on protecting the quality of the environment; and

WHEREAS, the NY/NJ Bight sustains the economy of the region through its bounty of natural resources and intrinsic values for millions of people through tourism and recreation and is home to the nation's largest commercial port on the east coast and the thousands of industries related to, and dependent on, tourism and trade; and

WHEREAS, recreational and commercial fisheries provide enormous economic benefits, both in food production and recreational activities, therefore the continued use of these renewable natural resources in accordance with existing laws must be supported and enhanced; and

WHEREAS, our waters were known as the "ocean-dumping capitol of the world" due to eight ocean dumpsites, including an area called the "dead sea" (a 20-mile area created by excessive sewage and toxic muck dumping), beaches were littered with garbage, medical waste, and sludge balls, and water quality was so poor that it was unsafe for swimming. These activities all caused an ecological and economic crisis; and

WHEREAS, organizations, businesses, and citizens rallying to defend these precious resources and working to improve and protect the waters of the NY/NJ Bight, resulted in an end to ocean dumping and dramatically improved water quality, proves that citizens can positively impact their quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the NY/NJ Bight is downstream of, and receives pollution from, the most densely populated, industrialized, and urbanized area in the country which spews millions of gallons of contaminated wastewater and toxic sediments into the ecosystem each year threatening the vast ecological richness of the Bight and public health; and

WHEREAS, the NY/NJ Bight continues to be vulnerable to polluting and industrializing activities on a permit-by-permit basis, which is unproductive, and not sustainable. These destructive activities undermine the ecological and economic potentialities to sustain living marine resources in the NY/NJ Bight and must be prohibited; and

WHEREAS, current federal, state, and local laws and regulations are insufficient to protect the vast value of this ocean region and its living marine resources from pollution and habitat-destroying activities, and our elected officials must strive harder to protect the NY/NJ Bight; and

WHEREAS, it is time to lock-in the tremendous path of progress which has led to far-reaching improvements in our ocean water quality and lock-out environmentally harmful activities, thereby ensuring the continued economic and ecological value of the ocean today and for future generations; and

WHEREAS, a logical and essential next step is to use federal and state regulatory and legislative opportunities to designate the NY/NJ Bight as the “**New Jersey/New York Clean Ocean Zone**,” which would:

REDUCE POLLUTION:

1. Prohibit new ocean dumpsites.
2. Mandate capping of the Historic Area Remediation Site (HARS) -- formerly the Mud Dump Site -- with progressively cleaner sediment to ensure the remediation of the HARS and to protect against adverse ecological effects.
3. Prohibit new point sources of pollution (under the federal Clean Water Act definition) and increases of discharge capacity (e.g., wastewater discharge outfalls, industrial discharges).

PROTECT MARINE ECOSYSTEMS:

4. Protect valuable sand and gravel resources by prohibiting industrial strip-mining, while allowing beach replenishment activities.
5. Prohibit industrial and non-renewable energy facilities and infrastructure, including oil and gas exploration, development, and production, and liquefied natural gas import/export facilities.
6. Require the development of responsible regulations for siting renewable energy facilities and ensure that any leases, easements, right-of-ways, or permits issued to establish a renewable energy facility do not unreasonably degrade or endanger human health or the marine environment individually or cumulatively.

SUPPORT MARINE RESOURCES & USES:

7. Support recreational and commercial fishing by acknowledging that federal and state laws for fisheries exist. Prohibit the COZ legislation from being used to adopt or enact fisheries management actions for recreational or commercial fishing.
8. Support approved federal and state artificial reefs, and support underwater scientific and historic research and exploration that does not adversely affect the ecosystem.
9. Support, celebrate, and sustain maritime activities that depend on a healthy and clean ocean, such as boating, underwater diving, fishing, surfing, swimming, and the enjoyment of the sea. The COZ legislation will not be used to restrict or limit these activities.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that, on this date, _____,
MONTH/DAY/YEAR

_____ hereby supports the *New Jersey/New York Clean Ocean Zone*
MUNICIPALITY
that would permanently protect the waters of the New York/New Jersey Bight from the aforementioned polluting and habitat-destructive activities, thereby safeguarding the waters in this region for present and future generations.

Authorized by: _____
NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

Please send a copy of this signed resolution to:

Clean Ocean Action, 18 Hartshorne Drive, Suite 2, Sandy Hook, NJ 07732

The Clean Ocean Zone is a project of Clean Ocean Action.

Statement of Support prepared February 26, 2004 and most recently revised on January 23, 2012.