SUZANNE LAWRENCE

Suzanne Lawrence has over 20 years of experience directing strategic initiatives aimed at bringing together policy makers, academic institutions, environmental organizations, agency representatives, and industry leaders to advance a common agenda.

Over the last ten years Ms. Lawrence has focused her efforts on connecting science and public policy. Her success in advancing mission agency agendas through promoting scientific excellence, building multi-institutional partnerships, nurturing interdisciplinary science teams, cultivating advocates and supporters, and delivering significant funding and recognition is demonstrated and well proven.

Having served as a strategic program advisor to Scripps Institution of Oceanography (SIO) and Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI), Ms. Lawrence has developed a unique perspective on the opportunities and challenges associated with engaging ocean and earth science institutions as full partners in advancing an ecosystems approach to resource management.

At SIO she created the institution's first formal state government relations program. The program's first initiative was to establish an integrated coastal ocean observing system for the California Coast. The objective was to develop direct links between this proposed observing system and the State of California's Ocean Action Plan. This was achieved by successfully advocating for a $21 million state investment in an ocean observation program designed specifically to provide the science and technology support for California's Ocean Action Plan. A similar process was used to establish a $10 million partnership with the California Energy Commission to form the California Climate Research Center.

In 2006, Ms. Lawrence was recruited by Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI) to serve as a strategic program advisor, charged with developing a strategic vision and partnering plan for enhancing WHOI's institutional relationships with federal agencies, as well as regional and international partners. Through that work the institution has established a leadership role in advancing science based decision support tools for improved response to coastal hazards, integrated ecosystems assessments, and forecasts of climate based Impacts in the Northeastern U.S region. Strong partnerships with agencies and institutions in the Atlantic Canada region were also forged throughout the process.

In 2008, working in collaboration with the Canadian Consulate General's Science and Technology Partnership Office in Boston, Ms. Lawrence developed a prospectus for an Ocean Innovation Initiative for the Northeastern U.S. / Atlantic Canada region to serve as a model for a national initiative.

Most recently Ms. Lawrence has been working with some of the world's top innovators in informatics, escience, and the emerging field of web-science to create next generation Virtual Collaboraties designed to enhance interaction and information sharing to support the diverse multi-disciplinary communities of practice engaged in the science, management, conservation and governance of Large Marine Ecosystems. The goal is to hasten scientific discovery, application, and innovation by enabling rapid and easy collaboration between scientists, educators, students, policy makers, and "citizen scientists" around the world via the Web.

Prior to her work with the ocean and earth science community, Ms. Lawrence served for seven years as a Legislative Aide to California State Assembly Member Susan Davis. During this time she directed several strategic funding initiatives including; a $50 million afterschool initiative, $84 million transportation initiative, and $2 million clean beach initiative for the U.S./Mexico border region, as well as several precedent setting watershed initiatives. In 2000, Ms. Lawrence worked to elect Assembly Member Susan Davis to the U.S. House of Representatives where she now serves as a member of Congress.