National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (Noaa) Encyclopedia Article

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (Noaa)

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National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (Noaa)

Established in 1970 under the Department of Commerce, the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) guides the United States' use and protection of its air and water resources. With respect to air resources, the agency conducts research and gathers data about the earth's air, and engages in subsequent technical analyses. Specific agency concerns are air pollution, acid rain, and global warming, all greatly influenced by human activity. With respect to water resources, the agency conducts research and gathers data about marine environments, and provides technical analyses of the human activities affecting such environments. Specific agency concerns are ocean dredging and dumping, which can have an adverse effect on marine environments.

For both air and water issues, the agency has adopted policies to address the adverse effects of human activities and provide recommendations to limit or eliminate them. For example, the agency's policy of requiring trawl fishermen to use turtle excluder devices has served to protect sea turtles. Aside from its policy initiatives, the agency enforces a number of laws and treaties (e.g., Coastal Zone Management Act, Endangered Species Act, Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act, Marine Mammal Protection Act, and Ocean Dumping Act), all of which promote the environmental protection of both the atmosphere and the earth's marine environments.

Bibliography

Natural Research Council, Committee on Global Change Research. (1999). *Global Environmental Change: Research Pathways for the Next Decade.* Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

Internet Resource

National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration Website. Available from http: www.noaa.gov/fisheries.html.