

**National Sea Grant College Program
Coastal Communities and Economies Theme Team**

**Theme Team Meeting
April 21 - 23, 2004
Meeting Goals and Objectives**

The Coastal Communities and Economies (CCE) Theme Team is one of [10?] theme teams created up by the National Sea Grant Program Office to provide a basis for describing the research, education, and outreach activities carried out collectively by Sea Grant institutions across the country. Importantly, these theme teams also serve as foci for developing and presenting new programmatic directions to respond to National needs.

Coastal communities represent vital economic, social, and cultural centers that provide jobs, recreation, and a quality of life for those who live there. Yet these communities face increasing pressure brought about by population growth, economic development, habitat degradation, and the over exploitation of natural resources (e.g., fisheries, water, and energy).

The CCE meeting in Charleston, S.C. provides an opportunity for the Theme Team to address the nature and extent of the problems confronting coastal communities and to explore the role that Sea Grant can and should play in addressing these problems. **The goal of the meeting is to develop the foundation for a stronger Sea Grant program, one that is fully engaged in working with coastal communities to produce vibrant, sustainable communities with the smallest environmental footprint.** This will involve:

- Looking at the existing suite of programs, products and services provided to coastal communities, their value, and the current gaps or unmet needs of coastal communities,
- Assessing the effectiveness of Sea Grant in delivering relevant research, education, and extension services to coastal community leaders, businesses, and citizens, and
- Fully exploring the potential for partnerships (with CSC, OCRM, EPA, etc.) in leveraging resources and importantly, in building integrated approaches for promoting and achieving community sustainability.

Three specific products are to be developed as a direct result of this meeting:

1. **White Paper** - The aim of the white paper is to define Sea Grant's current coastal communities program and activities and its future directions and priorities for assisting coastal communities through research, education, and outreach.
2. **FY '07 Budget Initiative** - The '07 budget initiative will flow from the white paper and is to be developed in concert with NOAA partners (such as CSC and OCRM) to address the "gaps" in current resources and programs for addressing critical coastal community needs.
3. **CCE Brochure** - The CCE brochure will also flow from the white paper and is to provide a clear summary of the nature of the problems facing coastal communities and how the Sea Grant program is helping to address these problems.