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**Subject: Message from the Assistant Secretary - Draft Scientific Integrity Policy for employee review and comment**



## Message From the Assistant Secretary

February 8, 2011

Science is the foundation of all we do in NOAA.

Our weather forecasts and warnings, our nautical charts, our fishing regulations, and our satellites in the sky all depend on science. The quality of NOAA science is exemplary and many of our scientists are national and international experts in their fields.

To ensure that quality science will continue, as well as to foster an environment for scientific innovation and creativity, NOAA embarked on a thoughtful and transparent effort to draft an updated policy to uphold the principles of scientific integrity and establish a process for impartial review of alleged breaches of those principles.

As we moved forward, I was reminded of a statement by Dr. Lubchenco in her first address to NOAA employees on March 24, 2009 when she pledged to “bring diligence, transparency, fairness, integrity and accountability to the job in a collaborative fashion.” I’m proud that this process contains all of those elements.

Scientific integrity is essential to elevating science to its rightful place in informing government decisions, and more fundamentally, scientific integrity is essential for democracy. The Obama Administration has shown its commitment to scientific integrity by issuing clear principles in the President’s March 9, 2009 memorandum. We have been operating by those principles as we worked with the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) and our sister agencies on developing guidelines and standards for implementing those principles. On December 17, 2010, Dr. John Holdren, the President’s Science Advisor and Director of the OSTP, issued a memo laying out that additional guidance.

This additional guidance was timely as it meshed with our work to develop a NOAA scientific integrity policy as a benchmark for strengthening science within NOAA as prescribed in Dr. Lubchenco’s Annual Guidance Memorandum. This new draft NOAA Administrative Order (NAO) is founded upon our existing policies within NOAA and the Department of Commerce, but updates and extends them substantially based on the guidance from President Obama and Dr. Holdren. Also, please note that we have been

and remain in close and regular communication with other Bureaus within the Department as we work to complete this new policy.

Today we take another step in our process by making the draft available for comment by those whom it affects the most – the NOAA employees. You can find the draft at: <https://www.intranet.noaa.gov/scientificintegrity>. Comments can be sent to [oar.rc.execsec@noaa.gov](mailto:oar.rc.execsec@noaa.gov) until Feb. 18. There will be an opportunity for our constituents and others to comment after we hear from our employees.

I welcome your comments to help us create a policy that builds upon our scientific mission, fosters a creative and dedicated workforce, and ensures the quality of NOAA science to benefit the Nation.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Larry Robinson".

Larry Robinson, PhD  
Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Conservation and Management

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