The Governor’s South Atlantic Alliance
Methods For Success

Mid-Atlantic Oceans Forum
Baltimore, Maryland
December 1 – 2, 2008
Key Components For Success

- Assemble policy makers as partners
- Identify a criteria and scope
- Get agreement in principle
- Develop framework of common issues
- Develop an agreement of process
- Speak with one voice
Establish Criteria For Success

- State led – federally Supported
- Well defined and issues focused (WI FM)
- Recognize state policy requirements
- Designed to level that it’s resourced
- Complements on-going regional activities
- Incorporates Federal view
- Seamless link of policy and science to planning and decision making
Establish Alliance Scope

To sustain the resources of the South Atlantic from the seaward boundary of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) through coastal waters and as far inland as necessary to address marine/coastal issues.
Implement science based actions and policy solutions to efficiently and effectively balance and sustain coastal and marine ecosystems’ capacity to support the economic vitality, quality of life, public safety, and national security mission requirements South Atlantic Region.
Alliance Goals

• A structure and forum for collaborating, coordinating and sharing information;
• Sustainability of resources;
• Better regional alignment;
• Cooperative planning and leveraging resources;
• Integrated research, observation, and mapping;
• Increased awareness of challenges facing the South Atlantic; and
• Inclusive and integrated at all levels.
Focus on What the Alliance Is Not

- It is **not** a governing body. Respective states retain the policy-making prerogative.
- It does **not** dictate actions or circumvent state authorities, policies, and jurisdictions.
- It does **not** duplicate actions already being undertaken by individual states, commissions, or other organizations.
- It is **not** insular; maintaining a singular regional priority at the expense of state needs, interests, as well as the people of North Carolina or any other state.
The alliance will leverage resources from a range of federal agencies, academic institutions, and non-governmental organizations in support of what we, through our respective state agencies, want to accomplish. I understand that these resources have been quite significant for states that have participated in other similar alliances in other coastal regions of the nation, including the Chesapeake Bay, Great Lakes, Puget Sound, and Gulf of Mexico. (Governor Crist may be able to tell us more since Florida is a member of the Gulf of Mexico Alliance.) Among the resources from which we could expect to benefit if we form the alliance are program funds, grants, research, and technical assistance. These benefits could well be lost if we do not seize the moment. I believe that the alliance is a practical, effective way to add value to the good work in ocean and coastal science and management that is already taking place in and among our states.

The recommendation to set up a Governors’ South Atlantic Alliance comes to us with the unanimous endorsement of the Southeast Regional Partnership for Planning and Sustainability (SERPPAS). The SERPPAS partnership was formed in 2005 and includes state natural resource and environmental agency heads from our four states and Alabama and from the Department of Defense agencies representing military installations across the Southeast. In addition, the creation of a state-led, federally-supported regional council is consistent with comments that each of our states made in 2004 on the Preliminary Report of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy.

I hope that each of you will join me in supporting the establishment of a Governors’ South Atlantic Alliance. As a next step and way to determine whether and how we might proceed, I am asking Bill Ross, my secretary of Environment and Natural Resources, to follow up by being in touch with your office and with his counterparts and their staffs in your states to answer any questions you may have and to develop a plan for moving ahead in a way with which we are all comfortable.

Thank you very much. With kindest regards, I remain

Very truly yours,

Michael F. Easley

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June 24, 2008

The Honorable Bill Ross
Franklin Freeman, Senior Assistant for Governmental Affairs
MFE:wgr
October 28, 2008

James L. Connaughton, Chairman
Council on Environmental Quality
722 Jackson Place NW
Washington, D.C. 20503

Ref: Governors’ South Atlantic Alliance

Dear Mr. Connaughton,

On behalf of the states of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida, I am pleased to announce that the four states have agreed to form a regional alliance focusing on ocean and coastal science and management priorities such as healthy coastal ecosystems and communities, clean coastal waters, working waterfronts, and disaster resilient communities. Enclosed is a copy of the letter of invitation from the Governor of North Carolina, and to which the Governors of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida have all responded in the affirmative. We are requesting that the federal government designate a federal agency lead or co-leads to provide direct support to the Alliance.

As a first step, we have directed our respective staffs to collectively develop a plan that formally establishes the Governors’ South Atlantic Alliance. We expect the Alliance to assist us in leveraging resources from federal agencies, academic institutions, and nongovernmental organizations in support of developing a Governors’ South Atlantic Action Plan. A Framework identifying initial priorities and a governance structure for the Alliance has been completed. We are scheduling a series of public workshops to gauge support for or refine the initial priorities in the framework and obtain input related to the Governors’ South Atlantic Action Plan.

We are pleased that the President’s U.S. Ocean Action Plan prescribes the federal government to support “regional collaborations on oceans, coasts, and Great Lakes policy in partnership with leadership of states, localities, and tribes,” and we look forward to working with your office and federal agencies interested in supporting our efforts. The Governors’ South Atlantic Alliance is a practical, effective way to add value to the good work in ocean and coastal science and management that is already taking place in and among our states and through a number of federal agencies.

The success of the Governors’ South Atlantic Alliance will be enhanced by strong support from federal agency partners. Federal partners bring established experience from diverse areas of expertise and the ability to integrate multiple federal resources that contribute to the long-term environmental and economic health of the South Atlantic region. We thank you for your interest in and support of regional ocean coordination efforts across the country, and we invite the federal government to designate a federal agency lead or co-leads to provide direct support to the Alliance as we collectively determine the most efficient and effective ways to partner and coordinate with federal programs in our regional effort.

We look forward to working with you and your staff as we proceed with our South Atlantic Alliance.

Sincerely,

William G. Ross, Jr.
Secretary, North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources

cc:
The Honorable Michael F. Easley
Governor of North Carolina

The Honorable Mark Sanford
Governor of South Carolina

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Governor of Georgia

The Honorable Charlie Crist
Governor of Florida

Enclosure
Summary

• Focus on process and not task.
• Design centrally and communicate locally.
• Follow the rules of partnership (mutual benefit)