



Council of Canadian Academies  
Conseil des académies canadiennes

# Communiqué

The Council of Canadian Academies Releases a Workshop Report  
***40 Priority Research Questions for Ocean Science in Canada***

## For Immediate Release

**Ottawa (July 17th, 2012)** – With the longest coastline on the planet, and bordered by three oceans, Canada is acutely aware of the changes and stresses affecting the world's oceans. The complexity of ocean science issues means that addressing them requires a high degree of coordination among various institutions and technology hubs. A key challenge for Canada's science community is determining research priorities in the field of ocean science.

Today, the Council of Canadian Academies takes the first step in identifying these priorities by releasing the report, ***40 Priority Research Questions for Ocean Science in Canada***, developed by a core group of 22 ocean science experts in the first of a two-phase initiative.

"This report has already started to create a synergy amongst Canada's ocean scientists, leading to potential future collaborations and an increased understanding regarding research priorities and needs," said David Fissel, Chair of the Core Group and Senior Scientist of ASL Environmental Sciences Inc.

In an effort to develop a comprehensive understanding of the needs facing Canadian ocean research, the Canadian Consortium of Ocean Research Universities (CCORU)<sup>1</sup>, in 2011, asked the Council to undertake a two-part initiative on ocean science. During the first phase, a priority setting exercise was undertaken which included an extensive web-based survey of Canada's ocean science community and an expert workshop. With the support of a core group of 22 ocean experts, 40 priority research questions were ultimately identified, which were grouped under the following four research themes:

1. Improving fundamental scientific understanding
2. Monitoring, data, and information management
3. Understanding impacts of human activities
4. Informing management and governance

"As the world's oceans are incredibly important for Canada, the Council was pleased to have had the opportunity to oversee this priority setting exercise," said Elizabeth Dowdeswell, President and CEO of the Council of Canadian Academies. "I would like to commend the members of CCORU for their leadership and dedication to ocean science. We are confident that our report will provide the information needed to prioritize and set a clear direction for future research."

With phase one now complete the Council will begin work on phase two of the oceans initiative. This will involve an evidence-based expert panel assessment that will examine Canada's needs and capacity regarding the major research questions in ocean science and issues related to Canada's coasts.

For more information, or to download a free copy of the workshop report, please visit

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<sup>1</sup> **The Canadian Consortium of Ocean Research Universities includes:** Dalhousie University, Université du Québec à Rimouski (UQAR), Université Laval, University of British Columbia, University of Victoria, Memorial University, University of Prince Edward Island, University of New Brunswick, and the University of Manitoba.

<http://www.scienceadvice.ca/en/assessments/in-progress/ocean-science.aspx>

**About the Council of Canadian Academies**

The Council of Canadian Academies is an independent, not-for-profit organization that began operation in 2005. The Council supports evidence-based, expert assessments to inform public policy development in Canada. Assessments are conducted by independent, multidisciplinary panels of experts from across Canada and abroad. The Council's blue-ribbon panels serve free of charge and many are Fellows of the Council's Member Academies: the Royal Society of Canada; the Canadian Academy of Engineering; and the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences. The Council's vision is to be Canada's trusted voice for science in the public interest. For more information visit [www.scienceadvice.ca](http://www.scienceadvice.ca).

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