



# LEGISLATIVE SCIENCE SERVICES

Turning new scientific understanding into knowledge-based policy options

## THE CHALLENGE

California's legislators continually grapple with complex, important issues facing the state's ocean and coast. It remains a challenge to access and understand policy-relevant science to properly inform decisions. With special interests lobbying lawmakers from a partisan perspective, breaking through the noise to make policy grounded in science—not politics—is vital.

## THE SOLUTION

California Ocean Science Trust's Legislative Science Services program brings science directly to the state's lawmakers. We provide technical advice on key legislation, host expert briefings and roundtable discussions, and connect lawmakers with the latest research to empower smart, effective policy making.

## 2023 | BRIGHT SPOTS

- We hosted a legislative briefing regarding DDT+ pollution (i.e., DDT and associated compounds) in the Southern California Bight. Hosted in partnership with Asm. Josh Lowenthal, this briefing brought together experts from California Sea Grant, University of Southern California Sea Grant, California Ocean Protection Council, and scientists to discuss the report, "[A Deep Ocean DDT+ Research Needs Assessment for the Southern California Bight.](#)"
- We engaged marine mammal ecologists and policy experts to better understand the state of science behind whale patterns, their risk via ship strike, and data underpinning various policy responses. We provided relevant science to inform [AB-953](#), which proposed to expand a voluntary vessel speed reduction program to all state waters.
- Offshore wind energy was an active issue in the Legislature as bills for procurement ([AB-1737](#), passed), streamlining permitting and fisheries mitigation ([SB-286](#), passed), and science for environmental monitoring ([AB-80](#), held) were considered. We tracked these efforts closely, and OST's Executive Director raised the need to leverage the capacity of the science community in a hearing on offshore wind energy for the Joint Committee on Fisheries & Aquaculture.
- We conducted educational tours for the Legislature to explore marine carbon dioxide removal (mCDR) research and development at related facilities across California. In the San Francisco Bay Area we led a tour of Ebb Carbon, which was hosted by State Sen. Josh Becker and featured remarks from Asm. Diane Papan. The second tour was hosted by State Sen. Steven Bradford at AltaSea at the Port of Los Angeles, where the companies Captura and Equatic operate mCDR pilot projects.





## CALIFORNIA OCEAN SCIENCE TRUST

Recognizing the value of independent science and the wealth of scientific expertise in California's universities, research institutions, and scientific community, Ocean Science Trust (OST) was created as a nonpartisan 501(c)3 organization by California legislation to bridge the gap between cutting-edge scientific research and sound ocean management. OST is the only nonprofit organization in California serving as formal science advisor to the state government on ocean and coastal issues. Our role as leaders of the preeminent advisory body of California marine scientists, the Ocean Protection Council Science Advisory Team, has established us as the connective tissue between ocean science and public policy in California.

[oceansciencetrust.org](https://oceansciencetrust.org)

## 2024 & 2025 | OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPACT

In the coming years, our Legislative Science Services program seeks to ensure a thriving relationship between science and the California Legislature on ocean and coastal policy.

We endeavor to improve the value OST provides to our executive branch partners, such as raising awareness within the Legislature of agency science investments and actions. We also amplify solutions and recommendations emerging from OST projects, partners, or recent research discoveries to lawmakers and their staff.

Below are specific areas for program growth and expansion that we seek support for:

- Strengthening the relationship between science and policy within the California Legislature requires both an informed policy-making body as well as a policy-minded scientific community. To create an effective two-way relationship between science and policy, the program launched a first-of-its-kind [bill tracker](#) and periodic policy roundup on current state legislation, with a goal to provide scientists a reliable and independent platform on the current priorities and questions facing the California State Legislature.
- Hosting legislative briefings, including dynamic in-person events, on a range of ocean and coastal issues, such as the environmental effects of ports and shipping, ocean-driven impacts on California's weather, and ocean noise and soundscapes.
- Providing lawmakers with peer-reviewed communication briefs on key ocean and coastal policy topics and prioritizing our relationships with legislative decision-makers to address science questions and needs on timely issues such as marine carbon dioxide removal, aquaculture, and offshore wind.
- Exploring opportunities to expand our science services to federal legislators and increase state-federal alignment on science needs and opportunities.