

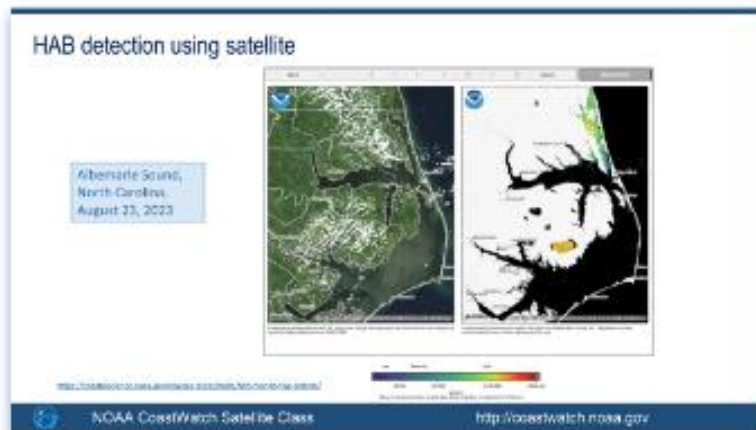
HAB Liaison National Engagement – 2021-2024

Key Project Partners: NOAA CoastWatch, NCCOS HAB-FB, Sea Grant

Harmful algal blooms (HABs) have been reported to occur in the surface waters of all 50 U.S. states and are increasing globally. While the ecological components and implications of HABs may vary across the national landscape, there are significant commonalities. HABs in Lake Erie, the Gulf of Mexico, and the U.S. West Coast have direct impact on public uses of the coast, which in turn affect waterdependent businesses. Similarly, issues regarding the effects of HABs on seafood and aquaculture product safety extend across states and regions.

The overall goal of the four-year National HAB Liaison position and project is to advance HAB decision-making by coordination, integration and transference of knowledge across the nation. A major component of the liaison project is harnessing the Sea Grant network of extension, outreach and education expertise to augment NCCOS', CW's and IOOS' research outcomes and engagement with end users. What follows are examples of national engagement activities undertaken by the liaison.

- 1. CoastWatch Training** – NOAA CoastWatch provides satellite derived products for local application. CoastWatch conducts user training classes on satellite products for technical audiences and works with partners to customize products for regions. In 2020, CoastWatch training transitioned from in person to virtual to accommodate learning during Covid-19. A learning portal was created with video lectures and video or step-by-step based tutorials. Today trainings are taught virtually, in-person, or thru a hybrid approach, and the learning portal continues to be populated with new satellite-based content. The liaison has contributed to the learning portal by developing, co-developing, or field-testing new lectures and tutorials, including a water quality and two harmful algae lectures and an ArcGIS tutorial. Additionally, the liaison co-organized a training for Sea Grant and Friends. The six-week course was held virtually in 2023.



One of two HABs training lectures in the CoastWatch Learning Portal

participants share HAB issues, updates, upcoming events, and much more. HAB chats occur every other month and have attracted participation from more than half of the Sea Grant programs, with some regularly participating. In a survey conducted at the end of 2023, participants indicated that HAB chats allows them to learn from and/or collaborate with others (100%), share activities and products (also meetings) (92%) and provide updates from their region (83%).

- 3. HABHRCA Interagency Working Group (IWG)** – The Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act (HABHRCA) is a congressional mandate for NOAA to advance the scientific understanding and ability to detect, monitor, assess, and predict HAB and hypoxia events. HABHRCA amendments created an Interagency Working Group or IWG, which is composed of 13 collaborating federal agencies. The liaison serves as a NOAA OAR Sea Grant member on the IWG. This role facilitates communication and collaboration and serves to elevate the Sea Grant's unique role within the HABs landscape. Additionally, beginning in 2024 the IWG will undertake regional vignettes as part of the anticipated HABHRCA reauthorization.

- 2. HAB Chats** – In 2023 the liaison initiated HAB Chats, a one-hour series dedicated to discussions around harmful algal bloom (HAB) topics of interest, exclusively for Sea Grant colleagues. HAB Chats are structured in two parts; a 30-minute presentation/Q&A is followed by a 30-minute open forum discussion, in which