

**COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

HEARING

Harmful Algal Blooms: Formulating an Action Plan

September 17, 2009

Statement of Subcommittee on Energy & Environment Ranking Member Bob Inglis (SC-4)

Good afternoon and thank you for holding this hearing, Mr. Chairman.

In the 110th Congress, this subcommittee held a hearing on Harmful Algal Blooms and Hypoxia issues. We discussed previous legislation and the progress made on a new national plan, HARRNESS: Harmful Algal Research and Response: A National Environmental Science Strategy 2005-2015, and how it will help coordinate the federal government's efforts on HAB and hypoxia research.

Today we are here to discuss next steps. We will discuss legislation that will push Federal efforts beyond previous statutes and make use of what we've learned to date. Hopefully we can place greater emphasis on the critical areas of monitoring, control, and mitigation.

South Carolina's Phytoplankton Monitoring Network is a collaborative effort of scientists and academics from all over the United States. Since it was started in 2001, the Network has reported over 70 algal blooms. Cooperative efforts like these and advancements in monitoring coordination are important first steps in dealing with harmful algal blooms, but we have a lot of work left to do to develop an event response program.

Once blooms are identified, several questions arise: Could the bloom have been predicted? How do we control the bloom without causing further harm? What can we do to mitigate the economic impacts of these blooms?

I'm also interested in how to properly use regional partnerships to leverage greater resources and appropriately differentiate the HAB and hypoxia issues and impacts on our diverse coast line. Moreover, I hope the witnesses can talk to the appropriate level of resources that the Federal government should invest in an event response program.

I hope as we discuss this piece of legislation we can keep in mind that the end goal is to minimize the negative impacts of HABs and hypoxia on our coasts and economy.

I look forward to hearing from our distinguished panelists about all these issues. Thank you again, Mr. Chairman, and I yield back the balance of my time.