

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
OES Assistant Secretary Monica. P Medina by
Representative Castor #01
House of Representatives Select Committee on the Climate Crisis
June 9, 2022**

Question 1:

As we know, the ocean is a global system, making international cooperation toward addressing the ocean-climate nexus even more critical. Can you tell us about why it is important that the ocean is increasingly being included in international negotiations like the Paris Climate Agreement or the upcoming Convention on Biological Diversity meeting?

Answer 1:

The ocean and climate crises are having a wide range of environmental, economic, and social impacts. These are global problems that require international cooperation and coordination to tackle their root causes. To address the threats facing the ocean, I believe we must engage the international community to identify concrete solutions and generate a combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches to implementation. Because the ocean is connected to climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution, I believe it is also critical to work with the international community to break down silos. By collaborating across fora, we can achieve better integration and efficiency in the implementation of ocean and climate solutions.

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
OES Assistant Secretary Monica. P Medina by
Representative Castor #02
House of Representatives Select Committee on the Climate Crisis
June 9, 2022**

Question 2:

How do ocean nature-based solutions support mitigation and adaptation to climate change, and what is the U.S. doing to advance these efforts globally? How do these compare to other mitigation and adaptation solutions?

Answer 2:

Nature-based solutions, such as the conservation and restoration of “blue carbon” ecosystems, contribute to mitigation by sequestering excess carbon from the atmosphere. Ocean nature-based solutions also provide adaptation co-benefits to coastal communities by reducing storm impacts, preventing erosion, and providing habitat for valuable marine species. In April, the United States launched the Ocean Conservation Pledge to encourage countries to join us in a commitment to conserve, protect, and restore at least 30 percent of ocean waters under their jurisdictions by 2030. Nature-based solutions are also a key cross-cutting theme across the President’s Emergency Plan for Adaptation and Resilience (PREPARE), the Administration’s cornerstone international adaptation response.

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
OES Assistant Secretary Monica. P Medina by
Representative Castor #03
House of Representatives Select Committee on the Climate Crisis
June 9, 2022**

Question 3:

How is climate change threatening U.S. security interests, and how can we better confront those escalating changes?

Answer 3:

The most vulnerable people, often those caught in or displaced by conflict, so often suffer the most from the climate crisis. The linkages between migration, health security threats, food insecurity, conflict, and climate change are clear. Climate change can exacerbate conflict and political instability – and conflict can undermine efforts to address climate change’s impacts. The U.S. government launched the President’s Emergency Plan for Adaptation and Resilience as the cornerstone of the U.S. foreign policy response to address the increasingly devastating impacts of the global climate crisis, improve the ability of vulnerable communities around the world to confront them, and, as a result, bolster regional stability and national security.

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
Chair Kathy Castor
Congressman Garret Graves #04
House of Representatives Select Committee on the Climate Crisis
Hearing on June 9, 2022**

Question 4:

The production and disposal of plastics, especially virgin single-use plastics, contributes to global emissions, while waste can end up in the ocean, where it further degrades, releasing emissions and threatening biodiversity. How is the U.S. collaborating with our partners abroad to address the damaging global effects of plastic pollution on the ocean?

Answer 4:

The United States is combating plastic pollution—both domestically and internationally—by building recycling and waste management capacity, investing in innovative research and solutions, and engaging with our global partners in international environmental bodies, such as the UN Environment Assembly. Most recently, we joined other countries to launch negotiations on a global agreement on plastic pollution. By working closely with interagency colleagues, as well as the private sector and civil society stakeholders, OES is assisting other countries in improving and implementing best practices, expanding public awareness, developing innovative solutions, funding related projects, and highlighting U.S. technology and expertise.