

Biography

Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Jr, Ph.D. Vice Admiral (USN Ret.)

Conrad C. Lautenbacher is Executive Chairman of GeoOptics, Inc., an environmental data company founded by working scientists, engineers, and data users in response to the increasingly urgent need for actionable information about the state of our planet and the impacts of human activity on quality of life and on Earth's future.

He retired as Vice Admiral from the U.S. Navy, where he was Commander of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command Riyadh during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Lautenbacher also served as Deputy Chief of Naval Operations in charge of programs and budget. During his 40-year naval career, he won accolades for his performance in a broad range of operational, command and staff positions both ashore and afloat. His military career was marked by skilled fiscal management and significant improvements in operations through performance-based evaluations of processes.

After leaving the Navy, he served as Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and as the eighth Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), 2001-08. As the NOAA administrator, Lautenbacher spearheaded the first-ever Earth Observation Summit, which hosted ministerial-level representation from several dozen of the world's nations in Washington July 2003. Through subsequent international summits and working groups, he worked to encourage world scientific and policy leaders to pursue a common goal of building a sustained Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) that would collect and disseminate data, information and models to stakeholders and decision makers for the benefit of all nations individually and the world community collectively. The effort culminated in an agreement for a 10-year implementation plan for GEOSS reached by the 55 member countries of the Group on Earth Observations at the Third Observation Summit held in Brussels in February 2005. Lautenbacher was selected to serve as co-chair to the Group on Earth Observations at GEO-I in Geneva, Switzerland in May 2005. This effort has expanded so there are now currently 114 member countries and 144 participating organizations working together.

Other significant milestones of during his NOAA leadership:

- Establishment of the Pacific-Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning System and deployment of DART Buoys and Argo Floats
- Adoption of the Hurricane Weather Research and Forecasting (HWRF) Model
- Expansion of the Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS)
- Development of a Climate Change Science Initiative
- Implementation of the Seven-Day Weather Forecast
- Coral Reef Protections and deployment of Ocean Acidification Buoys
- Establishment of the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands (Papahānaumokuākea) Marine National Monument), doubling the size of the Pacific Islands Sanctuary
- Revitalization of the NOAA Corps and additional of NOAA fleet vessels

- Adoption of the Open Rivers Initiative that supported local efforts to remove obsolete dams, modernize water infrastructure, and restore rivers across the western United States to benefit people, fish, and wildlife.

Before joining NOAA, Lautenbacher formed his own management consultant business, and worked principally for Technology, Strategies & Alliances Inc. He was president and CEO of the Consortium for Oceanographic Research and Education (CORE), a non-profit organization of institutions of higher learning whose mission is to increase basic knowledge and public support across the spectrum of ocean sciences.

A native of Philadelphia, he is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and holds M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in applied mathematics from Harvard University.