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NOAA helps fund the launch of harmful algal bloom control center

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By Responsible Seafood Advocate

New center to advance the development of harmful algal bloom control technology projects with commercial potential

The University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES) has been awarded a \$7.5 million grant from the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to lead an innovative U.S. Harmful Algal Bloom Control Technology Incubator (US HAB-CTI). The purpose will be to “advance innovative ways to control harmful algal blooms (HABs) that are impacting the health of people and marine ecosystems, as well as regional economies.”

“Overall harmful algal blooms frequency has been increasing a tremendous amount over the past five years due to climate change, increasing temperatures, and legacy nutrients,” said Al Place, professor at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science.

Harmful algal blooms, such as red tide, cause a wide variety of environmental, economic and human health problems. As scientists, governments and agencies work to assess approaches, there has been an increasing need to incorporate environmental compliance, risk assessments and other permitting in the decision-making process to use a control agent or approach.



NOAA awarded \$7.5 million to launch a technology incubator with a mandate to “advance innovative ways to control harmful algal blooms.” Photo via Wikimedia Commons.

The U.S. Harmful Algal Bloom Control Technologies Incubator is a unique partnership between UMCES’ Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology and Mote’s Red Tide Mitigation and Technology Development Initiative to offer the first-of-its-kind center to solicit, fund and assist the development of

innovative harmful algal bloom control technology projects with commercial potential. It will also provide guidance on navigating the relevant licensing and permitting processes through an online clearinghouse of proven control methods.



(<http://penverproducts.com>).

“Field demonstration of harmful algal bloom control techniques is needed to fill the gap between laboratory research and larger scale implementation,” said Peter Goodwin, president of the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science. “This is an ideal partnership to address a concerning global issue.”

IMET has the capability to perform lab-based experiments with freshwater toxic HABs in freshwater, and Mote has extensive experience with Florida red tide in the Gulf of Mexico, including their lab-based testing of mitigation strategies at their inland Mote Aquaculture Research Park and their facilitation of pilot field tests during past active red tide blooms.



Eye in the sky: Europe employs satellites to advance aquaculture

Copernicus – the European Space Agency's €4.3 billion Earth Observation System – holds potential benefits for fisheries and aquaculture. The SAFI project is approaching the aquaculture sector about harnessing, and monetizing, this unique service from up above.



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IMET and Mote will make available to grantees their research infrastructure to test mitigation compounds, technologies and deployment mechanisms for marine, estuarine and freshwater HAB species that negatively impact the U.S. economy, environment, and quality of life.

“We know firsthand how devastating HABs can be,” said Dr. Michael P. Crosby, Mote president. “NOAA recognized the important role that our innovative collaboration will have in effectively and efficiently bringing together many diverse partners from industry, academia and non-profit organizations with a laser focus on utilizing past research and existing knowledge to develop new technologies and approaches for mitigating the impacts of HABs to the environment, economy and quality of life in communities across the U.S.”

Annual solicitations will be announced on the US HAB-CTI and NOAA websites and through national harmful bloom networks beginning in Spring 2023.

[Read more here \(https://www.umces.edu/news/innovative-incubator-to-jumpstart-efforts-to-control-harmful-algal-blooms\)](https://www.umces.edu/news/innovative-incubator-to-jumpstart-efforts-to-control-harmful-algal-blooms).

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