

Shortly after her confirmation as NOAA administrator, Jane Lubchenco sat for [an interview](#) (subscription required) with *Science* and *Nature*. Asked about her priorities, she listed science at the top (others include ending overfishing, getting NOAA's satellite program back on track, establishing a National Climate Service, and protecting and restoring ocean ecosystems).

When pressed to expand on what it would mean to make science a priority, she explained:

It's my belief that a resilient society and economy depend on informed decisions regarding environmental challenges and resource-management issues. The role of science is to provide the knowledge to do that informing. . . . I use "informed" judiciously because I don't think the science should dictate any particular outcome. Decisions are going to take into account a number of different things — values, politics, economics — but science should be at the table in a way that is understandable and relevant and credible and salient. NOAA, as an applied-science agency, has the responsibility to develop and communicate and use science to make policy and management decisions, but also to inform policy and management decisions that are made by others.

Responding to the inevitable question about recurrent claims during the Bush administration that the public statements of NOAA scientists were censored, Lubchenco declared that "scientists will be free to share their scientific findings whether they fit any preconceived policy or not."