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Virginia Sea Grant charter signed

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Six state universities agreed Monday to collaborate on research to promote marine and coastal science through the Virginia Sea Grant initiative.

Sea Grant's mission is "to enhance the practical use of conservation and natural resources in order to provide a sustainable economy and environment," said John Wells, director of the Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences, where the program is housed.

Virginia Commonwealth University, the University of Virginia, the College of William and Mary, Old Dominion University, Virginia Tech and George Mason University formalized their commitment to work toward that end at a charter-signing ceremony. University presidents, Lt. Gov. Ralph Northam and Secretary of Education Anne Holton attended the event.

ODU President John Broderick, chairman of the Virginia Council of Presidents, said he sees "a significant need for all of us to find solutions to sea level rise," a problem not only for Hampton Roads but for communities around the nation.

VIMS, the graduate school in marine science for W&M, is part of a network of 33 Sea Grant programs nationally.