

Steven Thur, Ph.D.



Dr. Steven Thur's career with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has focused on applying science to the management, restoration, and conservation of marine resources. He has a particular emphasis on how both the biophysical and social sciences are used to sustain coastal ecosystems and the vibrant human communities that depend upon them for livelihoods, recreation, and as a place for connecting with nature.

Dr. Thur is the Director of NOAA's National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS) and was the NCCOS Deputy Director from 2013 to 2017. NCCOS's mission is to deliver ecosystem science solutions for stewardship of the nation's ocean and coastal resources to sustain thriving coastal communities and economies. Dr. Thur oversees the work of approximately 260 staff in nine states and the

operations of five marine laboratories with an annual budget of \$55 to \$60 million. NCCOS's four priority research areas include marine spatial ecology, environmental stressors and their impacts, change along our coasts, and social science. In 2017, Dr. Thur led the development of *Advancing Coastal Science*, which is a five-year strategic science plan for NCCOS, and completed the reorganization of the office to more efficiently conduct its research.

From 2007 to 2013, Dr. Thur was the Coordinator of NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP). The CRCP is the nation's premier coral reef science program, dedicating its \$26 to \$30 million annual budget to studying and providing management support for the nation's imperiled but vitally important coral ecosystems. Dr. Thur oversaw the development of the National Coral Reef Monitoring Program, the first nationwide effort that combined physical, biological, and human community monitoring in an integrated manner. He also served as the Co-Chair of the Steering Committee for the interagency, intergovernmental U.S. Coral Reef Task Force.

From 2003 to 2007, Dr. Thur was an Economist for the NOAA Office of Response and Restoration. He worked on natural resource damage assessments following oil spills, chemical releases, and vessel groundings with the goal of recovering funds from those responsible to restore the injured natural resources.

Dr. Thur is a graduate of NOAA's Leadership Competencies Development Program. As part of that program, he had short-term assignments as the Deputy Director of the NOAA Office of Sustainable Fisheries, Deputy Director of the NOAA Beaufort Lab in coastal North Carolina, and with the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary in Key West.

Steve received his Ph.D. in marine policy from the University of Delaware's Graduate College of Marine Studies in 2003. His dissertation research was on sustainable financing mechanisms for coral reef marine protected areas. He holds Bachelor's degrees in biology and economics from St. Mary's College of Maryland.