

# Achievement in the Face of Adversity, and a Note of Thanks

30 December, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

It is difficult to argue that the year 2020 will be remembered globally as anything other than a challenging period, defined by pandemic, economic woes, and personal loss. Against this backdrop, it is appropriate to keep our community's challenges in perspective. Still, scientific ocean drilling has faced unprecedented adversity in the form of multiple expedition postponements, the suspension of workshops and meetings, lack of access to laboratory facilities, and forced separation from our colleagues.

Nevertheless, our community has responded in very positive ways. We want to first acknowledge the efforts of the *JOIDES Resolution* Science Operator, which adjusted ship schedules, operations, and protocols to accommodate the ever-changing conditions of the pandemic. In addition, the various IODP panels continued supporting scientific drilling efforts by holding virtual meetings across global time zones to address critical program business. It is also inspiring to see how the scientific community persevered in advancing ocean drilling science, reflected by participation in virtual post-cruise science meetings, presentations at various national and international conferences, and publications in highly-ranked scientific journals.

But we especially want to highlight the 2050 Science Framework document, the product of a vigorous international effort to develop new and transformative scientific goals for future ocean drilling research. Conceived and produced at an impressively swift pace, it reflects the determination of our community to document with an aspirational and compelling view the critical scientific and societal issues that can be addressed by the work we do. This effort was international in scope and design, reflecting the ideals of international collaboration that animate our field, but we would like to take a moment here to acknowledge the efforts of specific U.S. IODP community members who played prominent roles in generating this remarkable document.

First, while it is impractical to list all of the 137 attendees at the May 2019 NEXT Workshop, every person who participated in that meeting merits acknowledgement for their contribution to the discussions that built on outcomes from other international workshops and informed the eventual development of the Framework. In particular we would like to highlight the enthusiastic efforts of students and early career researchers at the workshop who assumed outsized roles in many of the discussions.

Similarly, scores of community members provided thoughtful reviews and comments during the two public review periods for earlier drafts of the Framework, making critical contributions from which the Framework authors and editors clearly benefited.

The NEXT Steering Committee put in months of planning and organizing prior to the workshop. In some cases, members attended the other international workshops that preceded NEXT, and the entire Steering Committee helped produce the workshop report that can be found at [https://usoceandiscovery.org/next\\_workshop/](https://usoceandiscovery.org/next_workshop/). Co-chaired by Anthony Koppers and Jim Wright, the Steering Committee also consisted of Cara Burberry, Gail Christeson, Beth Christensen, Patrick Fulton, Sean Gulick, Jessica Labonté, Dave Mallinson, Ken Miller, Dick Norris, Beth Orcutt, Ross Parnell-Turner, Sandra Passchier, Brandi Reese, Becky Robinson, and Kristen St. John, with Clive Neal serving in an ex-officio role. Gail, Dick, and Sandra also served as U.S. representatives on the international Science Framework Working Group, which Anthony chaired. This Working Group was charged with determining the consensus structure for what became the Framework and generating a road map for its publication in 2020.

Then there are the Science Framework writers and editors themselves, all of whom did phenomenal work. The U.S. authors and contributors were Cara Burberry, Steve D'Hondt, Sarah Feakins, Patrick Fulton, Chris Lowery, Ken Miller, Dick Norris, Ross Parnell-Turner, Brian Romans, Jason Sylvan, and Susanne Straub. On the editing side were Donna Blackman, Chris Charles, Sean Gulick, Ken Miller, Clive Neal, Beth Orcutt, Liz Scream, Kristen St. John, Harold Tobin, and Geoff Wheat. USAC member Mitch Schulte of NASA served as an external reviewer.

Finally, along with Roz Coggon of the University of Southampton, Anthony Koppers served as a Lead Editor of the Framework. It is frankly impossible to overstate Anthony's commitment, dedication and effort when it comes to ocean drilling. He was asked by USAC to co-chair the NEXT Workshop, and then by IODP Forum Chair Dick Kroon to chair the Science Framework Working Group. He was then asked by that Working Group to co-lead the Framework production effort. This is heroic work by any standard, and our community is fortunate to have leaders with Anthony's level of dedication and resolve. He deserves our gratitude.

On behalf of USSSP and USAC, we would like to thank all of you who contributed to this document, of which the community can be justly proud. You can find the 2050 Science Framework at <http://www.iodp.org/2050-science-framework>.

Happy New Year to all,

Carl Brenner (*Director*, U.S. Science Support Program) and  
Marta Torres (*Chair*, U.S. Advisory Committee for Scientific Ocean Drilling)