

Welcoming Remarks

**On the occasion of the opening of the 22nd session of the Data Buoy Cooperation Panel
(DBCP)**

By

**Head of Delegation
United States of America
(La Jolla, 16 October 2006)**

**Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Good morning.

On behalf of the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, VADM (retired) Conrad, C. Lautenbacher, Jr., it is my pleasure to welcome you to the opening session of the 22nd session of the Data Buoy Cooperation Panel (DBCP).

When the United States first proposed to host the 22nd Session of the DBCP we had every intention of hosting it in New Orleans, Louisiana, and I, personally, looked forward to showing you my facility at NOAA's National Data Buoy Center in south Mississippi. After Hurricane Katrina on August 28, 2005, we were forced to change our plans as much of New Orleans and surrounding Louisiana and coastal Mississippi had been under water. And so we ended up here in beautiful La Jolla, California. I would like to thank the Scripps Institution of Oceanography for making their facilities available for the meeting and thank the staff of the DBCP for all their hard work since last year's meeting. Finally, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to each of you for taking time from your busy schedules to attend this meeting of the Data Buoy Cooperation Panel. Our coordination and cooperation is critical to establishment of an effective and efficient worldwide ocean observing system.

Each of the last two years has seen natural phenomena occur in epic proportions. Both the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004 and Hurricane Katrina are recent examples of the devastating power of the sea and the frailty of mankind. With these events Mother Nature reminds us, the international ocean science community, just how important our work is and that we have the opportunity to save lives and protect property. Throughout our meetings of the next two weeks we must keep this opportunity in mind. We can and do make a difference.

At this time I have the pleasure of introducing Dr. John Orcutt, Deputy Director of Scripps Institution of Oceanography.