

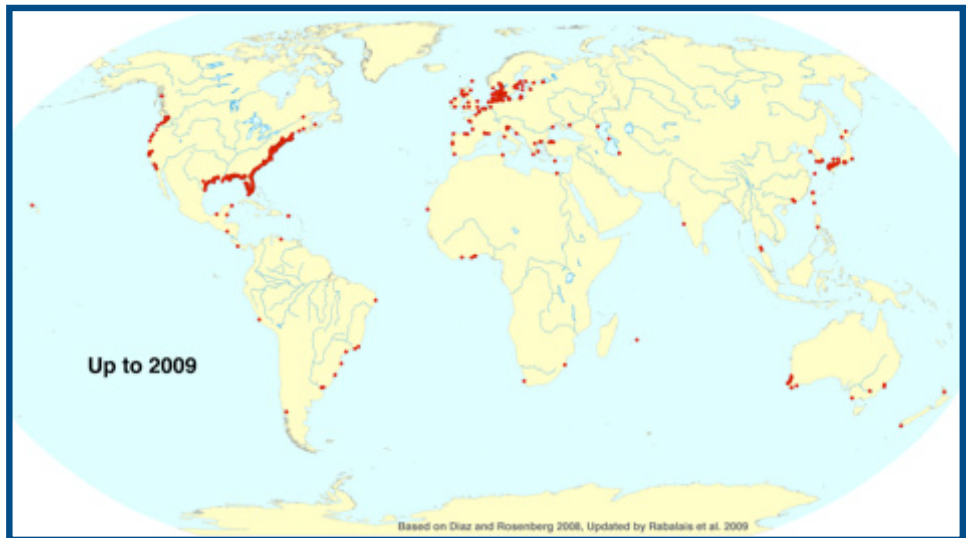
Diaz contributes to White House “dead zone” report

(September 3, 2010) Research by Professor Bob Diaz of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science lies at the heart of a new White House report on the growing problem of low-oxygen marine “dead zones.” The report, released today to Congress and the public by the President’s Office of Science and Technology Policy, notes that low oxygen dead zones now affect nearly half of the 647 U.S. waterways assessed for the report, up from 38 percent reported in the 1980s.

Diaz was lead author for the report’s chapters on the science, economics, and societal impacts of marine dead zones. He was one of only 3 academic researchers involved in the report’s development.

The report is the final of 5 reports mandated by Congress in the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Amendments Act of 2004 and is available online through the White House Office of Ocean Science & Technology. “Since the Gulf spill,” the authors write, “Virginia’s industry has found itself unable to continue to process and distribute products critical to its established customer base while expending considerable capital to develop self-sufficiency through emerging aquaculture techniques and productivity.”

Murray and Kirkely warn that unless shipments of Gulf oysters to Virginia resume quickly, the local oyster industry “may not be able to financially sustain itself while attempting to recover the full potential of oyster aquaculture in the Commonwealth.”



Global Hypoxia 2009: Global pattern of coastal hypoxia in 2009. Each red dot represents a documented case related to human activities.

Modified from Diaz and Rosenberg (2008) and updated by Rabalais et al. (2009).

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