

2024 Marine Economy Report

GULF OF MEXICO REGION



The marine economy is defined as those businesses whose existence depends on the oceans or Great Lakes. The economic data found here helps leaders better understand trends and consider the needs of these businesses when making decisions about the future of the coast. Six sectors make up the marine economy: marine construction, offshore mineral resources, tourism and recreation, living resources, ship and boat building, and marine transportation.

THE BIG PICTURE - GULF OF MEXICO REGION'S MARINE ECONOMY IN 2021

25,699
BUSINESSES

584,813
EMPLOYEES

\$32 BILLION
WAGES

\$133 BILLION
GDP

THE DETAILS

LARGEST EMPLOYMENT SECTOR

Tourism and Recreation employs **57%** of the region's marine economy.

LARGEST GDP SECTOR

Offshore Mineral Resources produces **72%** of the total gross domestic product (GDP) derived from the region's marine economy.

HIGH EARNERS

The average wage of marine economy employees in the Gulf of Mexico region is **\$54,774**, which is lower than the region average (**\$61,365**). Offshore Mineral Resources has the highest average wage per employee at **\$169,102**.

NATIONAL RANKING

The Gulf of Mexico region is ranked **3** out of **8** coastal regions for marine employment and **1** out of **8** coastal regions for GDP.

TOP COUNTY: EMPLOYMENT

Harris County, Texas, is home to **16%** of marine jobs in the Gulf of Mexico region.

TOP COUNTY: GDP

Harris County, Texas, produces **65%** of the marine economy's gross domestic product in the Gulf of Mexico region.

A DECADE OF CHANGE (2011-2021)

3%

BUSINESSES

The Gulf of Mexico region had an increase of **650** marine businesses, which was a **3%** increase over the decade.

6%

EMPLOYEES

The Gulf of Mexico region had an increase of **32,715** marine jobs, a **6%** increase over the decade.

-4%

AVERAGE WAGES

On average, an employee working in the Gulf of Mexico region's marine economy made **\$54,774** in **2021**, compared to an average wage of **\$56,800** in **2011**. The marine economy average wage in the Gulf of Mexico region decreased by **4%**.

44%

GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT

The value of the Gulf of Mexico region's marine economy increased by **44%** over the decade. Changes in GDP can be driven by volatility of the price of resources.

	Establishments %	Employment %	Wages %	GDP %
Living resources	6	3	2	2
Marine construction	3	3	4	2
Marine transportation	9	21	23	9
Offshore mineral resources	11	12	37	70
Ship and boat building	2	6	7	3
Tourism and recreation	69	55	27	14

This report is based on 2021 Economics: National Ocean Watch (ENOW) data, produced by NOAA's Office for Coastal Management in 2024. The employment and gross domestic product statistics are derived from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages data (accessed in September 2023) and the Bureau of Economic Analysis' gross domestic product by state data (released in July 2021). For more information, visit coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/data/enow.html.

NOAA OFFICE FOR COASTAL MANAGEMENT

coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/data/enow.html