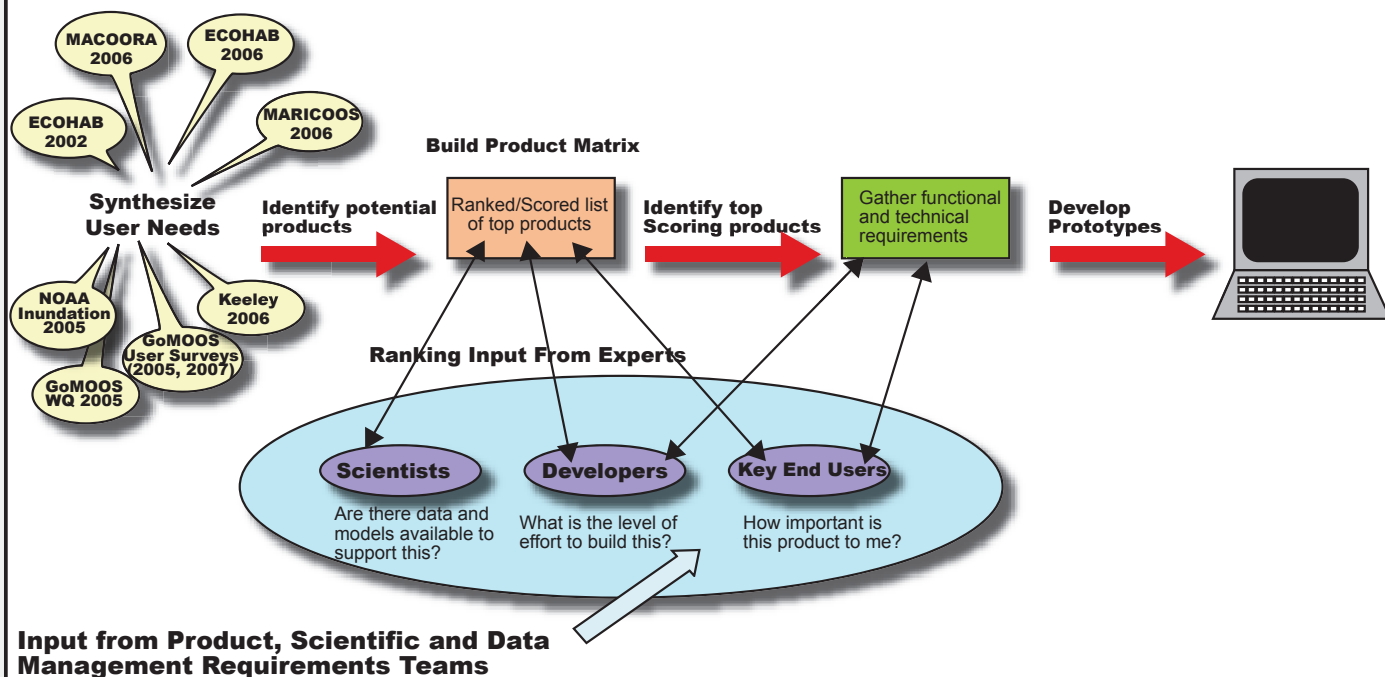


### Begin with the end in mind

To ensure utility of ocean observing endeavors in the Northeast, NERACOOS takes a disciplined approach to decision-making that focuses first on end user needs. Once stakeholder needs are understood and prioritized, the region can then begin to develop an ocean observing system that most effectively meets those needs.

## Turning User Needs Into Products



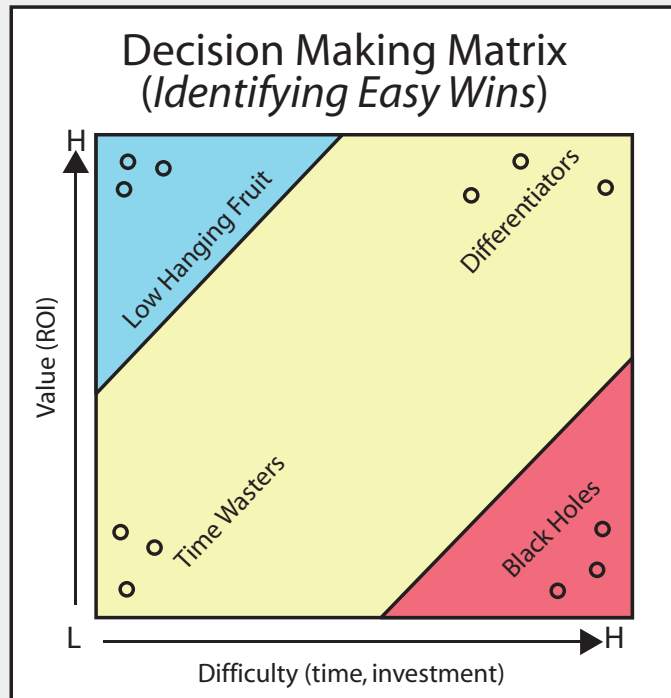
This process begins with an assessment of known user needs and identification of information products that would meet the needs and be useful to end users.

Coupled with the scientific capacities necessary to develop the products, this information enables the region to develop a gap analysis of existing versus needed ocean observing capabilities.

Each potential product is then scored based on utility to end users and feasibility to produce.

Those with high utility and high feasibility become first priorities, while system designers focus on products with high utility and low feasibility to help guide longer-term goals.

NERACOOS is currently applying this process to the multitude of user needs gathered in high priority focus areas of Harmful Algal Blooms, Inundation and Coastal Hazards, Water Quality, Living Marine Resources and Marine Operations.



In addition to gaps in available information, the inability to harness existing ocean observing data limits product development capabilities.

To that end, the northeast is actively engaged in developing systems and standards that will truly integrate the multitude ocean observing systems in the region, and ultimately worldwide.

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