

Implementation and Integration Workshop



*Ecosystem Integration and Assessment Team
Proposal for Action Plan II*

August 2008

Ecosystem Integration and Assessment Team

Scope of Phase II:

Expand activities beyond habitat to identify data, fill data gaps and develop ecosystem decision support tools to inform resource management decisions for all priority issue teams and to assess international data.

Why a Regional Alliance is Important to this Issue Team:

A major difficulty is that the pertinent data are in many forms of print and electronic media and reside in local, state, and federal government offices, non-government organizations, and universities. This Team is beginning to address this difficulty.

Link to the ecology and the economy:

A natural resource data portal and information system will enable resource managers to develop sound recommendations for managing valued coastal resources. These resources contribute to the economic vitality and sustainability of the Gulf of Mexico residents.

Headlines

- Gulf States Publish Northern Gulf of Mexico Seagrass Status and Trends Report.
- Comprehensive Gulf of Mexico databases now available to the Public.
- New Maps of Gulf of Mexico highlight a complex valuable ecosystem.
- Digital Gulf Habitat Atlas released by the Gulf of Mexico Alliance.
- Critical Value of Wetlands Assessed by Gulf of Mexico Alliance.
- Mexico and US Universities jointly produce Satellite-based Gulf of Mexico Climate Impact Atlas.
- Gulf Environment Improved through better information. Saving Public \$\$

Action Plan II

Draft Actions

- **EIA-1: Develop a Gulf of Mexico Ocean and Coastal Mapping Master Plan.**
 - Partners currently include the USACOE, US Naval Oceanographic office, NOAA NOS. This activity will be lead through the Joint Airborne Lidar Bathymetry Technical Service Center located in MS.
 - Will include the identification of ongoing Federal, State and other mapping programs.
 - Develop a strategy to meet the gap requirements.
 - Federal partners will include USGS, HRI, EPA Gulf Breeze, NOAA
- **EIA-2: Enhance and broaden the Priority Habitat and Information System to provide public access and delivery of current and historic local, state and federal Gulf of Gulf of Mexico environmental data.**
 - NOAA Grant to HRI to provide support to each of the 5 Gulf States to identify and input data into PHINS. Hold semi-annual workshops to further identify data gaps and provide training to the States on PHINS data input and management. This grant will also develop and implement a strategy for viewing bathymetry and topography and provide travel to Mexico for the semi-annul meetings

Action Plan II

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- **EIA-3: Finalize and implement the Coastal and Marine Ecological Classification Standard.**

Accomplishments include improved compatibility with NWI and NVC classifications and an updated glossary of habitat terms.

Phase II plans will include:

- Finalize classes for Benthic, GeoForms and Water columns components

- Complete Red Fish Bay, TX and MS Coast Oyster Bed Demo classification projects.

- Improve data from demo projects to include continued work with GAME, REDM and PHINs to identify best way to incorporate CMECS terms.

- **EIA-4: Determine the Value of Ecological and Socioeconomic Services within the Gulf of Mexico.**

- New grant with EPA/GMPO –Pilot Project for Mustang Island, TX

- Tasks include creating a map using habitat data available. Determining what the ecological services of those map units are and then working with resource economists to value those services, using a socio- economic perspective.

- **EIA-5: Produce an Emergent Wetlands Status and Trends Report and Geospatial Data Set.**



Questions/Comments?