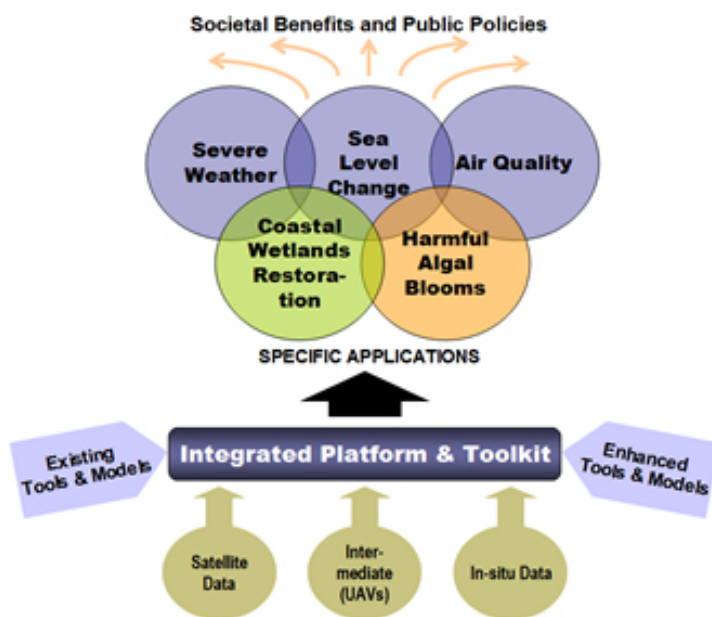


## Gulf of Mexico Regional Collaborative

The Gulf of Mexico Regional Collaborative (GoMRC) is a partnership of the NASA Marshall Space Flight Center (MSFC), the University of Alabama in Huntsville (UAH), and Battelle/Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. It was established to provide both U.S. and Mexican Federal and State government agencies and decision-makers an integrated Earth observation system capability that will support a broad understanding of the Gulf of Mexico's marine and coastal environments at a regional, bi-national scale.

The objective of GoMRC during 2006-2007 is to develop an integrated, operational, prototype IT infrastructure for ecosystem science, data and models for the Gulf region. The IT platform will be developed to support a broad set of applications that enable decision-makers to identify and test a range of potential options for environmental assessment, resource management, and restoration needs. The GoMRC team will do this by developing value-added tools that leverage and complement existing datasets, models, and applications.

During its first year, GoMRC will demonstrate the ability of the IT platform to help decision-makers better understand critical Gulf-scale issues in at least one application area. The value of the prototype system will be demonstrated initially with a *Coastal Wetlands Restoration* application, which will involve partnering with local scientists and end users to develop a tool for prioritizing wetlands restoration decisions and for disseminating data and knowledge about coastal systems. A second application that GoMRC recognizes as being critical in the Gulf is *Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs)*. In year one, GoMRC will assess the need and potential value of integrating data and systems developed under various federal and state agency programs to support Gulf-wide HABs monitoring and prediction.



In future years, GoMRC will work with regional problem-holders to incorporate a broader set of applications that address priority issues in the Gulf, such as sea level change and air quality. An expanded set of applications will strengthen the ability of decision-makers to understand complex ecosystem dynamics and relationships across datasets and applications. It is hoped that GoMRC's efforts to improve the ability to make more timely and informed decisions about resource management in the Gulf of Mexico will help enhance and sustain the environment and economy of this vital region.

Initial funding for GoMRC is provided by NASA. Direct and in-kind resources from participating agencies will be critical to provide the basis for a long-term, sustainable regional collaboration.

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