

Villahermosa, Tabasco, 5th October, 2016.

CiiMAR-GoMC`s Topics of interest for the Campeche meeting Agenda

Dear Andy

Thank you very much for your patience. Our CiiMAR meeting last week in Tabasco allowed us to discuss, explore and obtain interesting feedback from our consortia members. We agreed in general with the GOMURC previous discussions and items to bring to the GOMSA Panel to jointly address the Gulf's common concerns and to stress the importance of the transboundary connectivity of the Gulf and cooperation among the various constituencies identified in the Gulf. In this case we are interested in developing a common agenda for both consortia and to explore ways of collaboration through the following aspects:

First we concur with Chris D'Elia's comment that the obvious question for a panel is "what are the major scientific issues that require a multinational research effort on the part of Gulf countries?"

Considering the political level and participant politicians, we would like to add two general questions:

- i) What is the current political, legal, financial, and installed capacity to develop a collaboration program among the US, Mexico and Cuba?
- ii) What are the main constraints or limitations to start at least a joint research program through the Gulf?

CiiMAR-GoMC has developed a live institutional network with experts and an infrastructure capable of collaboration with the US and Cuba, so we would like to highlight a discussion on Current Capacities and needs.

We also agree with your proposal to have a main conference from someone like Steve Murawski, Nancy Rabalais or Wes Tunnell, and someone from Mexico as well, followed with the panel discussion on what both consortia in the Gulf might do to address those issues and what are the positive interactions, gaps, and opportunities with respect to other organizations and ongoing initiatives such as GOMA, GOMSA, GoMRI, GRP-NAS, etc, in both countries and in Cuba as well.

We also agree with GOMURC's suggestion for panel sessions on a variety of topics:

- ✓ *Need and value of **open ocean** observations and monitoring to support ecosystem recovery from disasters and development of sustainable ecosystem goods and services; panelists from US and MX may include economists that overview ecosystem values, and ocean observing system leaders who can highlight needs and gaps.*
 - In this context we would like to put a bit more emphasis to:
 - The need to implement the Mexican Integrated Coastal and Ocean Observing System (MexICOOS), that requires full Mexican federal government participation and aligned to ongoing efforts and projects developed by the Universities in the Gulf.
 - Discuss and identify innovative mechanisms for funds to establish cooperation, perhaps through the NSF in the US and the National Council for Science and Technology (CONACYT) of Mexico, being these two the natural counterparts from federal governments to establish joint bilateral cooperation programs with appropriate funds.
 - Highlight all economic benefits obtained from the Gulf of Mexico ecosystem goods and services and the importance of their conservation, include here the blue economy.
 - Set a long-term collaborative agenda that includes high level government institutions to ensure its feasibility and implementation.

Agenda Topics for the GOMURC-CiiMar-GoM meeting on last day (Jan 27):

We agree to overview the new GOMURC Strategic Action Plan; student exchange programs (existing and possible new efforts); distance learning opportunities with current programs in the Gulf; building OneGulf network-of-networks for both communications and data/information sharing; Larry McKinney briefing on State of the Gulf Summit activities.

In such consideration we will also share our work plan and will address similar topics, student exchange programs etc. and would like to explore how to support a collaborative formal data and information exchange between the Mexican organizations. In this context the establishment of MexICOOS and support from the federal government will be crucial.

VENUE: The University of Campeche and its research center EPOMEX have agreed and ensure that they will be glad to provide their facilities at the University and administrative help with organizing this meeting along with CIIMAR-GoMC Secretariat as we always do.

Our colleagues from the organization Universities Corporation for Internet Development (CUDI) is currently supporting CiIMAR-GoMC, and we are able to use CUDI's internet services to broadcast overseas and their system we can hold up to 900 participants.

MAIN TOPICS of INTEREST

- Ocean and coasts observing and monitoring;
 - Continuous monitoring and observations,
 - Network of high frequency radars and buoys in Mexican Gulf coastal areas
- Oil spills, industrial safety, followup and operability in the long term,
- Base line data/information, and quick response mechanisms
- Disaster prevention and risk management,
 - Coastal resiliency and social and ecosystem vulnerability
 - Ecosystem restoration after extreme events and disasters
 - Coastal erosion
- Climate change, and ocean acidification
 - Blue carbon and coastal ecosystems
- Transboundary issues:
 - i) biodiversity,
 - transboundary living marine resources: marine mammals, whale sharks, sea turtles and commercial resources (fisheries)
 - ii) Pollution, HABs, water quality;
 - iii) Gulf oceanographic features (loop current, eddies)
- Capacity building
 - Training to deal with oiled fauna
- New alternative sources of energy, transition to blue growth

Other themes to discuss:

1. How to enhance the international collaboration
 - a. What are the existing opportunities (funds, RFAs, etc.)
 - b. What are the current existing programs and scope in the Gulf
 - c. Current bilateral (Mex-US), (Mex-Cuba), (US-Cuba) or trilateral agreements (available, ongoing, live, updated)
 - d. Communications, information exchange, student and scientist, experts exchange
 - e. Other means of communication and online courses,
2. How to establish a formal link and true cooperation with federal government agencies

Additionally include presenting

1. Posters, presentations in specific panels,
2. Prepare some theme questions to lead the discussion during the session

Best regards

Porfirio