

CUBA - MEXICO - USA
TRINATIONAL INITIATIVE
FOR MARINE SCIENCE AND
CONSERVATION IN THE
**GULF OF MEXICO
& WESTERN CARIBBEAN**



INICIATIVA TRINACIONAL
EN CIENCIAS MARINAS Y
CONSERVACIÓN DEL
**GOLFO DE MÉXICO Y EL
CARIBE OCCIDENTAL**
CUBA - MÉXICO - EE.UU.

November 3rd, 2013

Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, Texas

Workshop Summary



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Cuban, US and Mexican Scientists Participating in 6th Trinational Initiative Workshop

Summary

On November 3rd, 2013, 48 scientists from Cuba, Mexico and the United States gathered in Corpus Christi, Texas for the 6th workshop of the *Trinational Initiative for Marine Science and Conservation in the Gulf of Mexico and Western Caribbean* (www.trinationalinitiative.org). The workshop was hosted by the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies and coordinated by the Cuba Marine Research and Conservation Program of the Ocean Foundation and the Cuban Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment (CITMA). Fifteen Cuban scientists received visas in time to attend the workshop. Another six scientists from Mexico participated.

The Initiative began in 2007 as an international platform for scientists, government officials, and other experts to gather, discuss common regional objectives and disseminate data resulting from joint research on marine resources shared by the three countries. Workshops have been held in Cancun (2007), Veracruz, Mexico (2009), Havana (2009), Sarasota, Florida (2010), Havana (2012) and Corpus Christi (2013).

Experts from the three countries with expertise in the following six research themes work together on ongoing research projects and use the annual workshops to report progress:

1. Fisheries
2. Marine Mammals
3. Sharks
4. Marine protected areas
5. Sea turtles
6. Coral reefs

The Trinational Initiative has the full backing of over 20 institutions in Mexico, Cuba and the US as well as the Cuban government.



Figure 1. Scientists representing the shark group discuss research plans at Corpus Christi workshop

A summary of outcomes is contained below. A full report of the workshop and the updated Plan of Action will be disseminated within the next month.

Recommendations from Corpus Christi workshop include:

- The regional lionfish epidemic will be included under the Fisheries group under a banner of “Invasive Marine Species.”
- The Sharks group is now expanded to include Sharks & Rays, because the rays are close relatives of the sharks and are subject to the same issues as sharks.
- Need to create group to look at communications and information exchange (particularly internet communication) to address challenges for data sharing.
- Condense Plan of Action document from 40 pages to 18-20 pages and provide Spanish translation
- Groups to report annually on progress, and a white paper report will be published within 6 months.
- A steering group will be created to help inform future Trinational Initiative activities.
- Bahamas or Mexico were discussed as possible venues for the 7th Trinational Initiative workshop in late 2014. Other sites are still under consideration

The institutions participating in the Trinational Initiative are:

Cuba: Acuario Nacional de Cuba; Centro Nacional de Áreas Protegidas; Ministerio de Ciencia, Tecnología y Medio; Centro de Investigaciones Pesqueras; Ministerio de la Industria Alimentaria; Centro de Investigaciones Marinas de la Universidad de la Habana; Centro de Investigaciones Ecosistemas Costeras

Mexico: Centro Interdisciplinario de Ciencias Marinas; Comisión Nacional de Áreas Naturales Protegidas; Instituto Nacional de Pesca; Instituto Politécnico Nacional; Secretaría de Marina; Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México; Universidad Veracruzana

USA: The Ocean Foundation; Center for International Policy; Environmental Defense Fund; Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies; Mote Marine Laboratory; Chicago Zoological Society; The Nature Conservancy, Sea2Shore Alliance, Brookfield Zoo