



Lessons learned on regional governance. Presentations to the Iniciativa "Sustainable Northwest Mexico"

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Assessment of the Ordenamiento Ecologico Regional

The Ordenamiento Regional (OR) will produce a set of maps at a scale of 1:250,000 that will assign the region to four broad categories of land and water use, define the uses that are most suitable and less suitable within each category and set forth development standards for selected activities (see Attachment #1). The OR will therefore outline many of the “ground rules” by which the continuing development process will proceed.

While the OR is important as a form of “macrozoning,” experience suggests that the implementation of a formally approved OR is likely to be less satisfactory. It is unrealistic to expect that the OR will bring predictability and order to the development process in the Gulf region. It will likely have some influence over the manner in which the Escalera Nautica is constructed and managed but its influence will be limited by several factors. One of these is that the scale of the OR provides for cells that are several kilometers long on each axis. The OR can therefore only address the critical issues of marine facility siting in general terms. It will, however, set forth the criteria that will guide how further, more detailed planning as more specific Ordenamientos for critical areas, will unfold at a scale of 1:50,000.

The purpose of the OR is provide a guide to further development in the region. It does not establish an ongoing management structure or set goals for either development or conservation beyond defining in broad cartographic terms what kinds of activities are deemed suitable in generalized geographic areas. The limitations of the OR process are highlighted when one compares it to the characteristics of successful governance that have emerged from the assessment of mature and successful management programs for Large Coastal Ecosystem. These characteristics are:

1. An high level mandate for a sustained process of ecosystem planning and decision making.
2. A secure source of long term core funding that will sustain a comprehensive management process.
3. A decentralized system of planning and decision making that clearly defines roles and responsibilities at each level.
4. Clear, measurable goals for both conservation and development against which progress can be periodically assessed.
5. A consultation process that assures a high degree of involvement of stakeholders in shaping all phases of the management process.
6. The actions taken within a given time period balance the complexity of the issues with the capacity of the institutions involved.
7. Management unfolds in an incremental manner that provides for a learning based approach that begins by addressing some of the more tractable issues

and proceeds to tackling larger areas and/or more complex issues as institutional capacity and supportive constituencies are created.

[Desde aquí](#) The OR is governed by a body of law and practices that have been developed over nearly a decade. The OR process for the Gulf Region should not and cannot be modified to fulfill the needs for a dynamic and sustained management process. However, there was agreement among those who participated in the discussions at SEMERNAT that those engaged in the process of developing the OR for the Gulf region should work to influence the process in order to accomplish the following

- Incorporation of an overarching goal for the Gulf region and, if possible supporting sub-goals for some areas and activities of particular concern that will be the subject of future, more specific OEs at the 1:50,000 scale.
- One of the major benefits of the OR is that can identify and characterize both (1) areas particularly well suited for future development and (2) areas to be designated for conservation and restoration. It will be important to focus the process on the identification of such “critical areas” and then to articulate the criteria that will guide more detailed planning and decision making.
- The OR can also call for, and incorporate, the good practices that are being formulated with the industries most directly involved in such activities as fishing, marina development, aquaculture and shorefront development.
- Finally, the studies and dialog that will accompany the formulation of the OR should be an important source of “findings” on
 - the impacts of past development and use of the region’s resources,
 - the projection of established their development trends and their likely implications on the qualities of the ecosystem, and
 - the identification of conflicts and synergies among user groups.

Such findings can be subsequently reworked in a sustained public education program and help identify priorities for research on key management issues and extension directed at promoting good development practices and ecosystem stewardship. [Hasta aquí, sería magnífico compartir con Gerardo Bocco y Javier Medina y conocer su opinión.](#)

An Ecosystem Management Initiative Instigated by a Coalition Among Private Sector Leaders, the Conservation Community and State Governments

The most significant conclusion of the SEMERNAT discussions is agreement that leaders in the Gulf region should come together and propose a management structure and process by which sustainable conservation and development can be achieved that addresses the unique qualities of this ecosystem. The preparation and approval of the OR should be seen as one of several actions that can contribute to achieving this goal.

The first step is to prepare a draft of “ An Agreement for Attaining The Sustainable Conservation and Development of the Gulf of California”. An initial draft has been prepared as a basis for discussion (Attachment #2). This should be the basis for

discussions between leaders from the private sector committed to the well being of the Gulf and its people. The leaders that should be contacted are well known to Conservation International and have supported efforts to promote the stewardship of the Gulf for many years. Initial contacts will be made by Exequiel Ezcurra, followed by supporting conversations between them and Alejandro Robles. Once the purposes and strategy for attaining the Agreement has been refined this core group will formulate a process whereby the goals for the various components of the program can be discussed and revised. This process of consultation will likely involve a mix of one-on one meetings with key leaders, technical workshops that will address specific aspects of the program and public fora. A third step will be to seek the support of the Governors of the region's five states to seek their support and endorsement of the proposed program. The Governors, in turn, would approach the federal government to secure its support for a mandate for a sustained management process that will address the long term trajectory of the Gulf region as a whole.

One idea for orchestrating a mandate for such a structure and sustained management process would be to arrange for an event in the Gulf hosted by the President. The product of this high level event could be the naming of a Commission charged to oversee the formulation of permanent planning and decision making body and detail the processes by which a decentralized governance system would operate.

A Strategy to Integrate Research, Extension and Public Education in Addressing the Major Social and Environmental Issues Affecting the Gulf

One of the greatest challenges to achieving sustainable forms of development and conservation in the Gulf Region is the imperative of building well informed constituencies that actively support the Program's goals and participate in its efforts. This requires establishing the significance and the identity of the Gulf ecosystem in the hearts and minds of the resident population as well as many of those who come to the Gulf to enjoy its qualities. **A public education and constituency building process must become a central feature of the Program.** [Así como esta recomendación, pienso sería magnífico dirigir comunicado a Dr. Szekely, Roberto Acero y Javier Medina con recomendaciones para mejorar el proceso de oficialización e instrumentación del OR y los ordenamientos locales.](#) This should build upon world experience on how best to design and deliver a sustained flow of activities that socialize knowledge on the critical features of the ecosystem, the implications of trends in the ecosystem's condition and use and advocate for the behaviors that are required if the program is to achieve its long term goals.

Equally important is the need to implement a program that integrates public education with research and monitoring to address the priority expressions of ecosystem change. Research and education must in turn be linked to a sustained commitment to extension services directed at the user groups whose activities most directly affect the condition of the Gulf ecosystem. Priority topics for extension services include fisheries, aquaculture and the emerging marina based tourism industry. The US Sea Grant Program could provide materials and models for the delivery of such a linked education, research and extension program.

Attachment A: Features of the Ordenamiento Ecologico Regional for the Gulf Region

These notes are based on the discussions and the powerpoint presentation made at SEMERNAT on February 4.

The Objectives

- To achieve greater order and predictability in the development process and achieving desired social, economic and environmental outcomes
- To guide land use outside urban areas
- To regulate and promote forms of land use that compliment the features of the ecosystems involved and their existing condition,
- To promote the restoration of ecosystems where this will help achieve patterns of sustainable use
- To reduce poverty, promote a diversification of livelihoods and encourage appropriate forms of production and consumption
- To encourage the growth of development corridors
- To address pollution problems
- To define appropriate intensities of resource use and specify the density of development activities.
- To strengthen the linkages between federal and state levels of government
- To promote collaborative efforts among actors in the planning and development process.

The Scope of the Ordenamiento

These ambitious and multiple objectives are to achieved through a process that is divided into two major phases. [Pienso que el proceso de Ordenamiento se puede dividir en tres etapas: 1. fase técnica, dónde se prepara la propuesta de ordenamiento. 2. Etapa de consenso intersectorial y por lo tanto de ajuste de la propuesta de ordenamiento. 3. Instrumentación, la cual es la menos clara de todas.](#) The first, termed “gestion” calls for a planning and analysis process that defines what resources are present, how they are distributed and projects existing trends in their condition and use. The second phase, termed “instrumentacion” is the process by which activities are allocated within four categories of land use. These land use categories are:

- Protection
- Conservation
- Restoration, and
- Development.

The process as presented to us features a version of a “gaps and overlaps” analysis of existing plans, policies and regulations. It also calls for a historical analysis of changes in the demands placed by society on the resource base. Surprisingly, no mention was made of integrating information that sheds light on long term trends in the condition and use of the ecosystem and the well being of its people.

A Consensus Building Process

The Ordenamiento process emphasizes the need for public involvement in the planning process, consultation with stakeholders and interagency collaboration. The process begins formally with the signing of an Acuerdo de Coordinación by the Governors involved and the federal agencies that will participate in the process. The Acuerdo defines the contributions that will be made to the process by each party and defines the membership of a Technical Committee and a Scientific Advisory Committee.

The Technical Committee is composed of representatives of federal, state and municipal government, the private sector, academia, and social groups. The membership of the Technical Committee should promote ownership of the process by local stakeholders rather than the federal government. Conflicts arising in the planning process are referred first to the Technical Committee, then to a Science Advisory committee, and, as a last resort, to a decision by the federal government.

Public participation is provided through three public workshops that are convened by municipal, state and/or federal authorities. The workshops are designed to inform and solicit comments at:

1. An early stage in the assessment process to solicit views on issues, collect local knowledge and identify conflicts,
2. to review the results of the completed assessment (diagnostico) and the development scenarios, and
3. to validate the proposed zoning scheme.

In the case of the Gulf Region, the entire process is scheduled to be completed within a one year period so that the OR can be formally approved and published in the register of official documents by December 2002. As of February the diagnostico phase is nearly complete even though the Acuerdo de Colaboración has not yet been signed. This reinforces the observation that the process will be conducted primarily as a technical “study”. There is neither the time, nor the process provide for the mechanisms, by which adequate public involvement, and the buy-in of important stakeholders can be achieved. This is likely to be a primary reason for the poor implementation record of existing Ordenamientos Ecologicos.