



NOAA Sea Grant Internacional Latin America and Caribbean Program



September 2003 Update and Status Report

NOAA Research International Activities (IA), in conjunction with the University of Rhode Island Sea Grant and the Coastal Resources Center, has been actively working towards assessing the feasibility of adapting the Sea Grant model of applied research, extension and education to Latin America and the Caribbean. This project complements the U.S. State Department's "White Water to Blue Water" (WW2BW) initiative by providing a proven model that allows countries in this region to manage watershed and marine ecosystem based resource issues. The Sea Grant model allows for effective and efficient use of the often-limited resources that are available in developing countries by building a long-term institutional structure that includes constituency driven research, extension and education efforts. The domestic Sea Grant program consists of 30 programs and over 300 affiliated institutions. The network is eager to expand its scope by working with foreign partners and programs. Currently, Latin American partner universities include the University of Central America in Nicaragua and the University of Zamorano (Pan American School of Agriculture) in Honduras.

Progress and accomplishments from June to September 2003 are summarized below:

- Interviewed over 12 organizations and 30 individuals representing government ministries, universities, NGO's and private industry in coastal Ecuador to learn about the social, economic, environmental and political factors affecting marine and coastal resource use and management. Obtained feedback regarding their perspectives concerning the Sea Grant components and the potential benefits the model could provide for addressing marine and coastal resource issues. This first phase of issue-assessment and partnership building compliments similar, earlier efforts in Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador.
- Completed draft of University of Central America CIDEA institutional assessment. Continued preparation of draft institutional assessment for the University of Zamorano.
- Continued to provide updated information to the Sea Grant Association Program Mission Committee (SGA/PMC) International Subcommittee on the activities in Latin America.
- Continued to dialogue with the U.S. State Department and NOAA's Office of International Affairs on the Sea Grant International Project and identified ways to further integrate the activities into WW2BW's three subcommittee areas (Integrated Watershed Management, Marine Ecosystem Management and Education) as well as mechanisms to promote linkages to the Senior Specialist Fulbright Program.
- Completed first draft and Spanish translation of Background paper #1. (A review of the existing experience of international research and extension systems and their effectiveness in developing countries.)
- Continued work on Background Paper #2 (A review of the specific economic, political, environmental and social factors in the Gulf of Fonseca and coastal Ecuador that will affect how the Sea Grant model needs to be adapted to these local contexts.)
- Initiated preparations for roundtables in Central America (Oct.21-22, 2003) and Ecuador (Oct. 16, 2003). These sessions will serve to bring together a wide range of interests from public, private, university and NGO's to collaborate on what issues Sea Grant could address in the regions and how a potential program could be structured.
- Commenced development of an electronic survey instrument and searchable database to catalogue NOAA Research's products, services, technical expertise and language abilities to highlight the programs, labs and individuals that would be most interested in assisting with international related activities for Sea Grant and WW2BW.

Upcoming Sea Grant Latin America activities are summarized below.

Event/Paper/Report	Description	Projected or completed Date
Central America Country Analyses and Partnership Building	Continue to interact with U.S. Embassy, government ministries, universities and stakeholders to gain feedback regarding the Sea Grant program in Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador.	<i>Completed June/July 2003</i>
Ecuador Country Analyses and Partnership Building	Meet with U.S. Embassy, government ministries, universities and a broad range of stakeholders to disseminate information pertaining to the Sea Grant model and gain feedback.	<i>Completed June/August 2003</i>
1 st Background Paper	Review of the experience of extension, research and education programs in developing countries.	<i>First Draft completed August 31, 2003</i>
Host-Country Roundtables	Share information with in-country partners and gain feedback on proper University institutions to partner with.	Ecuador: 10/16/03 Central America: 10/21-22/03
2 nd Background Paper	An in-depth look at the social, economic, environmental and political factors affecting the Gulf of Fonseca and coastal Ecuador and the ways in which a Sea Grant program could address these issues.	By December 10, 2003
Widely distribute both Background Papers	In preparation for the January Symposium.	By December 15, 2003
Symposium	Focused discussions of both Background Papers with experts in the marine and coastal fields.	January 6-8, 2004
White Paper	Compilation of the two background papers, Host-country Roundtables and Domestic Symposium.	February 15, 2003
White Water to Blue Water Partnership Building Workshop	Highlight existing partnerships and develop new channels of cooperation in accord with regional network goal.	March 21-26, 2004
Development of Implementation Plans and Funding mechanisms.	Begin obtaining financial commitments and develop program implementation plans for each country in conjunction with in-country partners.	Ongoing

NOAA Research International Activities and the National Sea Grant Office are both committed to developing beneficial partnerships with a wide range of governments, resource management agencies, universities, non-governmental organizations and private industries to ensure that the Sea Grant model is adapted and utilized in the most effective way to address coastal and marine resource issues. IA openly welcomes your feedback, comments and opinions regarding this initiative. Please contact:

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