

The Cooperative MEXUS-Gulf Research Program: Summary Reports for 1977-85

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Preamble

This special section of the *Marine Fisheries Review* includes six summary reports covering activities from 1977 through mid-1985 directly related to the MEXUS-Gulf Program.

MEXUS-Gulf is a fisheries agreement between the Instituto Nacional de Pesca of the Mexican Ministry of Fisheries and the Southeast Fisheries Center of the National Marine Fisheries Service. The focus is on cooperative fishery research and technology on projects of mutual interest in the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean. Working groups are formed to conduct research and report on specific fishery projects. A co-leader from each institution coordinates the work. Annual meetings are held, where results from the previous year are presented and discussed and where plans for next year's research are made and approved.

The Mexico delegation consists of the Director of the Instituto Nacional de Pesca, as Co-Director of MEXUS-Gulf, representatives of the Secretaria de Pes-

ca, co-leaders of the working groups, and representatives of the Instituto Nacional de Pesca. The U.S. delegation consists of the Director of the NMFS Southeast Fisheries Center, as Co-Director of MEXUS-Gulf, representatives from the Washington office of the National Marine Fisheries Service, co-leaders of the working groups, and invited fishery interest representatives from the Gulf Coast states.

MEXUS-Gulf had its genesis in the plan to phase out U.S. shrimp fishing in Mexican waters, which terminated in December 1979, under the November 1976 Bilateral Fisheries Agreement between the United States and Mexico. Incorporated in that agreement was a statement requiring that a bilateral scientific committee be established to maintain active fishery research in the Gulf of Mexico and to keep lines of communication open. At the request of either government, a bilateral panel could be established to deal with areas of fishery research of mutual interest.

In 1977, the Directors of the Instituto Nacional de Pesca and the Southeast Fisheries Center conceived the plan of MEXUS-Gulf, to be sponsored by their two organizations. The first MEXUS-Gulf meeting was held in Campeche, Mexico, and the second was held in Key Biscayne, Fla., where plans were made to form a series of working groups that would address specific problems in fisheries. The latest meeting was held in Houston, Tex., in October 1985.

The initial working groups were: Ichthyoplankton, shrimp, demersal fish, coastal pelagic fish, pollution, sea turtles, and hydroacoustics. Since then, some groups have been dropped and others added. The current groups are: Shrimp, demersal fish, coastal pelagic fish, ichthyoplankton, remote sensing and harvesting technology, sea turtles, recreational fisheries, and aquaculture, the latest addition. The reports published here are from the first six of these working groups.