

**GULF OF MEXICO STATES ACCORD
STATUS REPORT
WORKING GROUP & WORK PROGRAMS
2001-2002**

Responsible for Project	Project Description	Status
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE		
"Border States" Initiative	<p><input type="checkbox"/> The objective of the Initiative is to expand funding for trade infrastructure and education and increase commercial and tourism opportunities and development throughout the Gulf of Mexico region.</p> <p>The US and Mexican states of the Gulf of Mexico basin, unified under the Gulf of Mexico States Accord, have much to gain by maximizing their benefits under the NAFTA, and as political and policy advocates for being designated "border states."</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing – Program implementation outline:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Focus the Gulf of Mexico States Accord Working Groups on building the substance, research and policy recommendations to quantify and qualify the advantages of border state status and further the Border States Initiative.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Give Working Groups same mission, same page, same objectives, same accountability</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Seek practical, results-oriented proposals</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Recognize that there will be different approaches in Mexico and US states</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Work in tandem with "Gulf of Mexico Partnership" private sector group</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Undertake specific research projects</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Definitional research</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Where are we now?</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Where do we want to be? <input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Research <input type="checkbox"/> Gap analysis - What's missing? <input type="checkbox"/> Key sectors <input type="checkbox"/> Connectivity issues <input type="checkbox"/> Propose concrete policy and business recommendations <input type="checkbox"/> Seek support for creation of a business counterpart to bring private initiative into a partnership with the official Accord activities <input type="checkbox"/> Specific projects under the Initiative appear below.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Plan Puebla-Panama:</i> With the objective of providing substantive project and policy input into this national plan of the Fox administration, the Gulf of Mexico States Accord would propose to become a “working group” or “think-tank” for the PPP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Role designation:</u> As discussed and approved by the Executive Committee on August 14, 2001, inquiries have been made to ensure input in the forthcoming Presidential Informe, including naming the Accord as a resource and participant in the development of the Plan. <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Meeting:</u> A meeting with the Plan director has been proposed for late August—Early September, 2001. <input type="checkbox"/> <u>Conference</u>

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		<p><u>participation</u>: The Plan Director will be invited to address the Business Forums of the Annual Conference.</p>
	<p>☐ <i>NADBANK</i>:</p> <p>The North American Development Bank is a NAFTA institution designed to evaluate and finance certain environmental protection projects along the land border between the US and Mexico. The Executive Committee has concluded that a further investigation into this potential financing resource be made.</p>	<p>☐ The Deputy Director of NADBANK addressed the Executive Committee on April 26 in St. Petersburg, Florida.</p> <p>☐ Communications lines were established between the Executive Committee and the NADBANK.</p> <p>☐ A further work program to evaluate the NADBANK is under consideration.</p> <p>☐ The Gulf of Mexico States Partnership will consider its role in lobbying NADBANK.</p>
	<p>☐ <i>US Department of Transportation Maritime Administration</i>: “NAFTA Superhighway” Conference</p> <p>USDOT published a NAFTA report in 1994 which looks in tremendous detail at "the NAFTA Superhighway" across the Gulf of Mexico. A review of the report has determined that its elements, policy recommendations and opportunities for building business between and among the Gulf of Mexico States</p>	<p>☐ Discussions are ongoing with USDOT, and await an opportunity to engage SCT in Mexico.</p> <p>☐ Conference tentatively proposed for January-February 2002</p>

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	<p>remains valid.</p> <p>USDOT’s Maritime Administration has offered to serve as a catalyst and convenor for a conference that brings together all the stakeholders related to Gulf of Mexico maritime trade development – port directors, shippers, freight forwarders and customs brokers, etc.</p> <p>This represents an excellent opportunity for a collaborative conference hosted by US DOT, SCT and Gulf of Mexico States secretaries of transportation, under GOMSA leadership, to discuss building this important infrastructure for building trade and investment. It would be an excellent new project for the Working Group on Transportation, Infrastructure and Communications, in collaboration with the Trade and Investment group.</p>	
WORKING GROUPS		
Education & Culture	<p>☐ <i>“Fulbright Scholarships” Program:</i> Fulbright scholarships enable student exchange between the US and qualified countries around the world. The US and Mexico have a highly successful track record under this program.</p>	<p>☐ Mexico’s director of the Fulbright Program has proposed a special scholarship program within the Gulf of Mexico States.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ <i>Gulf of Mexico States Scholarship Program:</i> Offered by the Latin America & Caribbean Studies program of the University of South Florida (Tampa) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Scholarships are available beginning in the 2001-02 academic year for qualified student from the Gulf States.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ <i>“Technology Incubator Program:</i> Proposed as a collaboration between the UAV, USF and the University of Texas at Austin, this program would create an “incubator” system amongst these universities to provide technical assistance, training, information exchange and technology transfer to start-up technology development companies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ The program is currently being developed amongst the universities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ <i>Sister Cities Program:</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ In 2001, new Sister Cities relationships were completed between the Municipio of Isla Mujeres (Quintana Roo) and Pinellas County (Florida); a new relationship is being proposed between Tampa (Florida) and Veracruz (Veracruz). ❑ An inventory of existing Sister City and other such relationships is being prepared.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ <i>Organization of the Annual Conference “Business Forum”:</i> The Education and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Forums will be held at the Annual Conference in Veracruz on

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	Culture Working Group is organizing the first “Business Forum” at the Annual Conference. Topics will include financing small & medium enterprises in international markets; trade corridors and disaster management; among others.	September 28-29.
Transportation, Infrastructure & Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ <i>“Escalera Nautica/Nautical Staircase”</i>: This project is designed to support the development of marinas along the Mexican Gulf coast, with a view toward attracting more and new investment in tourism facilities, infrastructure, and to create new opportunities for tourism, pleasure boating and fishing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ The Plan has been prepared and project areas identified. ❑ A final plan will be presented to the Annual Conference. ❑ The Plan will also be introduced to the Gulf of Mexico States Partnership, to elicit business interest.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ <i>“Gulf of Mexico Coastal Highway” designation</i>: This project would seek formal designation of the highway network from Key West, Florida to Chetumal, Quintana Roo, as an official Gulf States coastal highway. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Each Mexican state has identified “gaps” in its highway network that need to be completed under this project. ❑ Plans have been made to visit with the Departments of Transportation in the US Gulf states in order to brief them on the project and to determine a state strategy for achieving the designation in the US.
Health, Ecology & Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ <i>“Environmental Assessment of the Estuaries of Veracruz, Mexico” Pilot Project</i>: This 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ A full work program has been established through July 2002

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	<p>project represents a collaboration between the Secretariat of Economic Development of Veracruz (Under Secretariat of Environmental Protection), the Universidad Autonoma de Veracruz, the US Environmental Protection Agency, and the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.</p> <p>The study is designed to research, investigate conditions and prepare policy recommendations in the following areas:</p> <p>1) Influence of fresh water in the estuaries; 2) Water quality; 3) Prevalence of algal blossoms; 4) Sedimentary contamination; 5) Changes in fisheries habitats; 6) Biological integrity of the estuaries; and 7) Public health issues.</p>	<p>(expected project completion)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Approximately ¼ of the project funding of over \$1 million have been received, including funds from EPA, NOAA and the World Bank. ❑ The University of South Florida College of Marine Sciences has expressed interest in participating in the project, and in assisting its expansion around the Gulf of Mexico.
Trade, Investment & Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ No activities reported. 	
Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Binational research & technology transfer for the agricultural sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Project is ongoing.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Binational cattle & dairy repopulation project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Project is ongoing.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Aquaculture, fisheries and forestry projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Projects are ongoing.

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Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Status report on tourism development in Mexico 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Delivered to the Executive Committee on August 14, 2001
GENERAL SECRETARIAT		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ <i>Gulf of Mexico States Partnership:</i> As proposed by the Accord Secretariat and endorsed by the Gulf of Mexico States Accord Executive Committee (2/22/01), the Gulf of Mexico States Partnership (GUMP) will complement the official activities of the Accord members by bringing together private initiative and public policy in the areas of increased commerce, trade advocacy and education and directed research. <i>Mission:</i> The binational Gulf of Mexico Partnership is a public/private organization working in collaboration with the bilateral Gulf of Mexico States Accord to maximize the benefits of NAFTA among the Mexican and US states bordering the Gulf of Mexico. The Gulf of Mexico Partnership is a not-for-profit, tax-exempt 501(c) 6 organization, and will be funded by business contributions and membership dues. The Partnership's objectives are: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ By July 1, 2001, the organizational structure and administrative Board of Directors for the Partnership was completed, and a US Co-Chair was named to head up the membership Chairman's Council. Legal status as a business association is expected during the fourth quarter of the year. ❑ A formal announcement of the formation and leadership of the Partnership is expected at the Accord Annual Conference at the end of September 2001. ❑ By the beginning of FY 2001-2002, the Partnership is expected to have completed Phase 1, or initial membership and organizational phase, of its existence, and to have embarked on work programs and research that would include the following areas:

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To create a business network that would seek to increase commercial relationships amongst the states bordering the Gulf of Mexico. • To build a “NAFTA Superhighway” across the Gulf of Mexico with new seaborne transportation initiatives, air freight and passenger service, and E-Commerce and business to business internet-based commercial solutions. • To expand economic development opportunities within and among the states bordering the Gulf of Mexico. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To increase mutually beneficial trade and investment linkages amongst the states bordering the Gulf of Mexico. • Investigation and quantification of the benefits of “border state” status available from the Mexican and US governments. • Identification of “gaps” in the commercial relationships amongst the Gulf States and create business bridges across those gaps • Communication of the benefits of “border state” status • Advocacy within policy circles of “border state” designation for the states bordering the Gulf of Mexico. • Maximization of the benefits of “border state” status available from the Mexican and US governments. □ To support research for the above general areas, the Partnership would also seek to leverage

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		<p>research funding for Gulf of Mexico states institutions of higher education in the areas of infrastructure development; marine, fisheries and environmental management; eco-tourism; sustainable development; health care systems; seaport and airport development; human resource development; and job creation.</p>
	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Website Development:</i></p> <p>During the fourth quarter of the 2000-2001 fiscal year, the Secretariat was awarded a special grant by the Florida Department of State to be utilized for completion of Phase 1 of the GOMSA website; that project was completed in June 2001, and now comprises an ongoing component of the work of the Secretariat. The Secretariat frequently partners with the Universidad Autonoma de Veracruz (Veracruz) and the NAFTA Institute (Washington, DC) for technical assistance and substantive content.</p> <p>The GOMSA website (www.gomsa.org) is designed to be a central communications network for the Member States of the Accord, serve as an</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Project is ongoing.</p>

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	<p>archive for the ongoing official work of the Accord and its six working groups, and as an informational content provider on the Gulf of Mexico states. Construction of the site – particularly the inclusion of appropriate content – is an ongoing project of the Secretariat. A decision was taken to move the website to a private sector server in order to allow for private sector sponsors to take full advantage of the GOMSA website. In addition, the University of South Florida – the host institution of the GOMSA Secretariat – has included funding for student assistance in its grant application to the US Department of Education under the Title VI (b) statute. If approved, the monies from the grant will be available to support Secretariat projects in FY 2002-2003.</p> <p>The former Education & Culture Working Group website – www.golfonet.net – and domain name has been formally transferred to the Secretariat as of June 30, 2001. The Secretariat will recommend to the Executive Committee certain steps in order to take advantage of the “branding” value of the “GolfoNet” domain, while utilizing the formatting and content of the GOMSA official site.</p>	

