GRASSROOTS DIPLOMACY IN MESOAMERICA

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IUCN Mexico, Central America and The Caribbean
1. Water Diplomacy & Peace Building
2. Water Diplomacy in Mesoamerica
3. Grassroots Diplomacy
   - Goascorán (Honduras – El Salvador)
   - Sixaola (Costa Rica – Panama)
4. Lessons - Challenges
WATER DIPLOMACY & PEACE BUILDING
Water diplomacy is about **dialogue, negotiation and reconciling conflicting interests** among riparian states. It involves the institutional capacity and power politics of states (Hefny, 2011).

What images come to your mind when thinking on water diplomacy?
BUT WATER DIPLOMACY IS A PROCESS WITH:

- SOVEREIGN STATES
- MULTIPLE STAKEHOLDERS
- WATER USES
- MULTIPLE SCALES
GRASSROOTS DIPLOMACY IS WATER DIPLOMACY

Central Governments
High level dialogues

Local Stakeholders
Many types of arrangements

PEACE BUILDING MECHANISM
WATER DIPLOMACY IN MESOAMERICA
CUENCAS TRANSFRONTERIZAS DE CENTROAMÉRICA

Area en km² de Centroamérica: 523,775
Area en km² de Cuenças Transfronterizas en CA: 210,523
Porcentaje equivalente de CT en CA: 40,2%
Nota: no se consideran las áreas de los segmentos de cuenca presentes en México.

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<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Cuenca</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Río Hondo - Azul</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Ríos Corredores y Colorado</td>
<td>Costa Rica, Panamá</td>
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BRIDGE - BUILDING RIVER DIALOGUE AND GOVERNANCE
Strategic process towards water cooperation in transboundary basins
GRASSROOTS DIPLOMACY IN GOASCORÁN
(HONDURAS – EL SALVADOR)
GRASSROOTS DIPLOMACY IN GOASCORÁN (HONDURAS – EL SALVADOR)

• Goascoran Binational Management Group (2007)
  – Local stakeholders interested in reactivation (associations of municipalities, local development associations, NGOs, etc.)
CAPACITY BUILDING IN GOASCORÁN

GOASCORÁN 3D MODEL (8 workshops)
CAPACITY BUILDING IN GOASCORÁN

High Level Trainings
• Consensuated construction of a road map, backed by a legal-institutional analysis, in order to move forward in the legalization of national management bodies forming part of the GGBCG.

• The objective was to promote an initial cooperation agreement making it possible to materialize the transboundary cooperation intentions of the actors involved.
Local Stakeholders lead the process and upscale it in international events.
GRASSROOTS DIPLOMACY IN SIXAOLA (COSTA RICA – PANAMA)
GRASSROOTS DIPLOMACY IN SIXAOLA (COSTA RICA – PANAMÁ)

• Sixaola Binational Commission (2009)
  • Under a broader cooperation agreement.
  • No budget allocated.
PARTICIPATION IN SIXAOLA

Membership:
• Civil society
• Indigenous peoples
• Governmental Institutions
INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS IN SIXAOLA

• Bylaws
• Coordination Unit
• Thematic Working Groups
INCREMENTAL STEPS IN SIXAOLA

Road Map → Bylaws → Working Groups

Communication Channel (MoFA – Communities) ↔ Synergies

Visual Identity → Participatory Binational Planning

COMMISIÓN BINACIONAL
CUENCA DEL RÍO SIXAOLA
LESSONS AND CHALLENGES
LESSONS AND CHALLENGES

• Political will for transboundary cooperation
• Legal and Institutional water set ups: facilitation of processes
• Empowerment (local stakeholders) and active participation
• Holistic approach (IWRM)
• Sustainability mechanisms
• Grassroots ownership makes cooperation possible
• No grassroots participation = no water diplomacy = no peace

Panamanian students crossing the border to attend the school in Costa Rica