

## **ESTABLISHING HUMAN AND ECOLOGICAL GOALS FOR EBM: APPLIED CASE STUDIES ALONG THE WEST COAST**

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### **SLOSEA (San Luis Obispo Science and Ecosystem Alliance): A Boundary Organization Helping Develop Marine EBM on the Coast of Central California**

Everyone is talking about ecosystem-based management of marine resources, but how do you do it? The US Commission on Ocean Policy, the Pew Oceans Commission Report, and the subsequent Joint Ocean Commission Initiative, each call for “ecosystem-based management” (EBM) of marine resources that emphasizes a more holistic management concept involving participation of scientists, stakeholders and managers in an institutional network that defines and encompasses the linkages and boundaries of ecosystems, that evaluates cumulative impacts to ecosystem services, and tradeoffs with among management decisions. Managers, scientists and policy-makers, however, continue to struggle with how to implement ecosystem-based management in marine environments.

The San Luis Obispo Science and Ecosystem Alliance (SLOSEA) will present an overview account of five years of work that led to a formalized EBM program on the central coast of California. We will provide a brief summary of the local area including some of the recent science and conservation efforts in the areas of fisheries and water quality and how our organization is helping resource managers move toward a more integrated and holistic management regime through an EBM program.

We will then present a more detailed account of the steps SLOSEA has taken to identify, develop and refine its EBM goals and conservation targets. In 2006 SLOSEA first identified its goals by working with resource managers at different agencies to develop user-driven research that informed their most pressing issues. In 2008, SLOSEA underwent a formal strategic planning effort that drew on the collective knowledge and work of the group’s integrated management entity, the SLOSEA Advisory Committee, which includes elected and municipal officials, resource managers from state and federal agencies, stakeholders such as fishermen and conservationists, and scientists from academic institutions. Using the Miradi Adaptive Management software tool, the committee focused on priority ecosystem targets and developed strategies based on importance, feasibility, and the group’s capabilities. The eight ecosystem targets identified were: watersheds, estuarine systems, shoreline habitats, nearshore subtidal, iconic species, marine invertebrates, finfish, and working of bay/port systems / marine economy.