

The Influence of Political Climate on Transborder Wildlife Conservation: A Case Study on the United States-Mexico Transborder Region

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Wildlife professionals from both Arizona and Sonora were interviewed to understand the influence that politics has on transborder collaboration as well as to determine how wildlife managers react to the political climate on its influence, developing insights to generate recommendations for future transborder collaborations. Patterns were identified and insights were generated using political ecology theory and community-based conservation as the conceptual framework.

Key Findings

Interference from nation administrations and associated political rhetoric can reduce efficiency, durability, and overall impact of transborder collaboration on wildlife projects. Accordingly, wildlife projects that involve transborder collaboration rely heavily on the commitment and persistence of the agencies/organizations and individual managers within to both persist and perform. With this, politics do not allow for wildlife projects to diffuse at a consistent and efficient pace.

Recommendations

1. Allow wildlife managers and the communities to possess more control through a creation of natural protected areas among the Arizona-Sonora region.
2. More support for co-management to create a positive and successful environment between wildlife

managers in both Arizona and Sonora as well as between wildlife managers and those directly involved in politics.

3. Agencies and organizations must take the time to use community-based conservation strategies to re-evaluate the way in which they collaborate.
4. Administrations in both the United States and Mexico need to take action to better understand the impacts they have on collaboration and progress towards a more open and flexible approach to transborder collaboration.
5. Wildlife managers and collaborators must continue to learn to further adapt to ever-changing administrations and continue to be resilient against differing governmental backgrounds.

Conclusion

The insights generated from this study have the capacity to inform and enhance future collaboration between international countries who share a common border. It informs administrations in ways they can positively support future international collaborations.



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