

**WORKSHOP ON “SOUTH FLORIDA ECOLOGICAL
SUSTAINABILITY CRITERIA”**

April 25-26, 1996

Final Report

Sponsored by:

**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
AND
CENTER FOR MARINE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSES (CMEA)
ROSENSTIEL SCHOOL OF MARINE AND ATMOSPHERIC SCIENCE
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI**

Convened by:

**CENTER FOR MARINE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSES (CMEA)
AND
THE EVERGLADES PARTNERSHIP**

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Workshop Report Cover: The photograph of Florida used on the cover of this report was taken by NASA Astronaut and marine geologist, Dr. Kathryn Sullivan, during space shuttle mission STS51C-44-026.

BACKGROUND

The South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force is comprised of seven federal agencies, six state agencies, the Governor's Commission, and two Native American tribes. To facilitate the immense task of coordinating and integrating the activities of these organizations, the Task Force created a Management and Coordination Working Group. Within this Working Group, there are a series of subgroups that focus on topics related to science, management, infrastructure, public information and education, and social science. The mission of these subgroups is to provide technical information and feedback to the Working Group. The Interagency Science Subgroup, the focus of our discussion in this report, is comprised of scientists from state and federal agencies involved in the restoration activities in South Florida. They serve as the principal scientific component of the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force and are responsible for addressing issues of critical interest and concern to the Management and Coordination Working Group.

The Science Subgroup completed its first report for the Working Group in 1993, entitled "Federal Objectives for the South Florida Restoration." In this report, the Science Subgroup suggested a number of precursor and ecological success indices for restoring at the regional and subregional scales. The original indices were reviewed by the Science Subgroup, and a subset was recommended for evaluating the overall restoration process (Table 1). Each of these indices was assigned to a Science Subgroup member, who was then asked to form a committee of experts to: 1) consider the indices and restate it in more specific terms; 2) provide a justification for its use; and 3) describe the ecological indices and related factors to be measured. These committees were also tasked with developing measurement factors that could be presented in an annual "report card," prepared at the end of each year to evaluate the outcome of implemented restoration strategies.

Because of the importance of selecting the appropriate indices for measuring the success of the restoration process, the decision was made to expand this process to include broader scientific input and public involvement. At a meeting of the Everglades Partnership in November 1995, plans were discussed for convening a group of regional scientists to review the appropriateness of the Science Subgroup's proposed suite of indices and measures. The University of Miami's Center for Marine and Environmental Analyses (CMEA), together with the Everglades Partnership, volunteered to co-host the workshop.

A workshop steering committee consisting of Stu Langton from the Everglades Partnership; Brad Brown (NOAA/NMFS), Wiley Kitchens (USGS), and John Ogden (SFWMD)

from the Interagency Science Subgroup; and Chris Harwell and Jack Gentile from CMEA, was formed to develop the initial workshop concept, agenda, working group assignments, and tentative list of participants. As a result of their efforts, the “Workshop on Ecological Sustainability Criteria for South Florida” was convened on April 24-25, 1996, at the University of Miami’s Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science on Virginia Key.

Partial funding for the workshop was obtained by CMEA from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ Jacksonville District Office and Waterways Experiment Station and from the Human-Dominated Systems Directorate of the U.S. Man and the Biosphere Program. Logistical details for the workshop and the production of the final report were managed by the Center for Marine and Environmental Analyses, University of Miami.