



Ocean Carbon and Biogeochemistry Scoping Workshop on Terrestrial and Coastal Carbon Fluxes in the Gulf of Mexico, St. Petersburg, FL, May 6-8, 2008: Open-File Report: 2009-1070

U.S. Department of the Interior, United States Geological Survey (USGS), et al., L. L. Robbins

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Despite their relatively small surface area, ocean margins may have a significant impact on global biogeochemical cycles and, potentially, the global air-sea fluxes of carbon dioxide. Margins are characterized by intense geochemical and biological processing of carbon and other elements and exchange large amounts of matter and energy with the open ocean. The area-specific rates of productivity, biogeochemical cycling, and organic/inorganic matter sequestration are high in coastal margins, with as much as half of the global integrated new production occurring over the continental shelves and slopes (Walsh, 1991 Doney and Hood, 2002 Jahnke, in press). However, the current lack of knowledge and understanding of biogeochemical processes occurring at the ocean margins has left them largely ignored in most of the previous global assessments of the oceanic carbon cycle (Doney and Hood, 2002). A major source of North American and global uncertainty is the Gulf of Mexico, a large semi-enclosed subtropical basin bordered by the United States, Mexico, and Cuba. Like many of the marginal oceans worldwide, the Gulf of Mexico remains largely unsampled and poorly characterized in terms of its air-sea exchange of carbon dioxide and other carbon fluxes. In May 2008, the Ocean Carbon and Biogeochemistry Scoping Workshop on Terrestrial and Coastal Carbon Fluxes in the Gulf of Mexico was held in St. Petersburg, FL, to address the information gaps of carbon fluxes associated with the Gulf of Mexico and to offer recommendations to guide future research. The meeting was attended by over 90 participants from over 50 U.S. and Mexican institutions and agencies. The Ocean Carbon and Biogeochemistry program (OCB <http://www.us-ocb.org/>) sponsored this workshop with support from the National Science Foundation, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the U.S. Geological Survey, and the University of South Florida. The goal of t

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