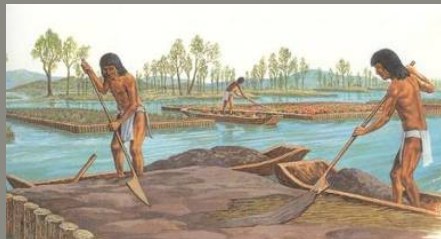


**Flying the flagship: delivering
the axolotl action plan at
Xochimilco,
México**



Elsa Valiente Riveros , Laboratorio de Restauración Ecológica, Instituto de Biología ,
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

**México Valley in prehispanic and
colonial time**



México City, 2009



Xochimilco, 2009



Threats to Axolotl



Urbanization



Water hyacinth proliferation



Exotic species

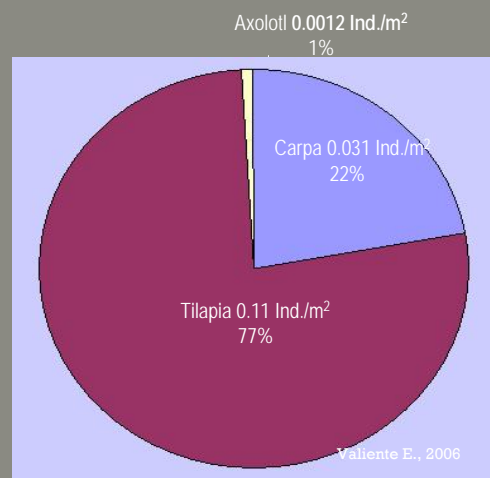


Wastewater

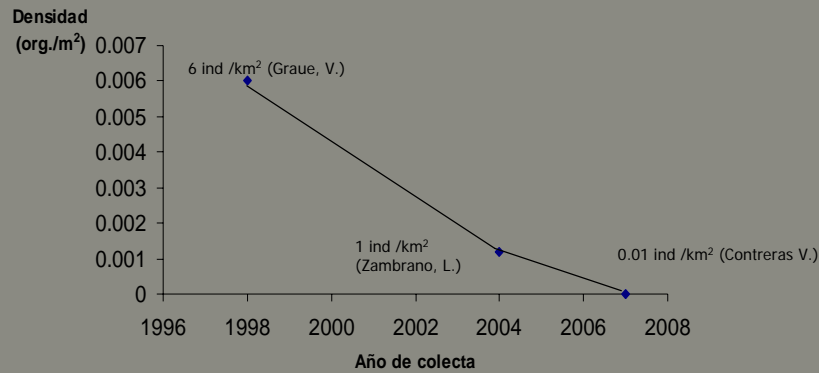


Chinampa's landslide

Axolotl densities vs exotic species densities



Axolotl's population density



Grupo de Investigación del Ajolote de Xochimilco (GIA-X)

- Created on 2005
- To increase the development and diffusion of Mexican axolotl (*Ambystoma mexicanum*) research at its natural habitat
- To promote ecosystem rehabilitation
- To promote appropriate management policies of this endemic specie

Main activities

- The first two meetings were held on November 2005 and June 2006, when the goals and working ethic of the GIA-X were agreed on.
- Participants came from Academy and Government Institutions.
- A web page was developed:
<http://ajolote.ibiologia.unam.mx>

Main Activities

- For the third meeting, on January 2007, were joined:
- The Academy and Government Institutions
- Foreign Institutions such as the Toronto Zoo
- Local inhabitants from Xochimilco with different economical activities: fishermen, remeros, touristic facility owners and land farmers

Main Activities

Four main topics to work on were established:

- Biology and Systematic
- Ecology and Environment
- Legislation and Conservation
- Resource Management

Working lines born inside GIA-X



With the collaboration of Mexico city's Chapultepec zoo and Faculties from two universities, 20 presentations about biology, captivity maintenance methods, feeding, disease and other topics were presented to students and people from Xochimilco.

Working lines born inside GIA-X

The axolotl monitoring in Xochimilco channels and research about trophic webs were done with the support of the Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums.



Working lines born inside GIA-X

With local producers and fishermen from Xochimilco, three projects came up:

- a) exotic species reduction



Working lines born inside GIA-X

- b) Creating refuges for axolotl, in the middle of Xochimilco's traditional agriculture region, with land owners worried about Axolotl and Xochimilco conservation.



Working lines born inside GIA-X

- c) Manure production with local raw material and reopen old little channels, to let water flow. Using exotic species to make this manure help axolotl to improve its survival probabilities.



What we left behind

- Academy team work and the link with the government was left behind while work with local people improved.
- Difussion of new knowledge about axolotl and the ecological functions of its habitat has also been relegated.

Next to do

- To review improvements in research.
- To construct a strong link between Academy members.
- To turn research results into action plans .

Next to do

- To establish the path for these action plans to become government decisions.
- To develop communication strategies for the non- academic public to understand the great importance of Xochimilco and axolotl preservation.