

Visionary of tides By Victor Arturo Ricárdez García

Words for Peggy Turk-Boyer

Talking about Peggy means talking about the Intercultural Center for the Study of Deserts and Oceans (CEDO). It is impossible to discuss this civil association of Mexico and the United States' without mentioning Peggy Turk Boyer, one of the most influential figures in implementing environmental policies and conservation programs for ecosystems and priority species, as well as for the sustainable and inclusive development of the coastal communities of the Upper Gulf of California. She was one of the first to realize that there would be no future well-being without a healthy environment, and that exhausting nature and assuming technology would somehow resolve everything later was a fundamental misunderstanding of the essence of life. It ignored the fact that humans are part of an ecosystem, part of biodiversity, and our dependency is absolute.

Although she completed her undergraduate and master's studies in biological sciences at the University of Arizona, where she also served as an associate researcher, it has been the coastal communities of Baja California and Sonora that have been her most prominent teachers. They gave her the sensitivity and empathy necessary to recognize that vulnerability is greater in localities with poverty, governance challenges, and limited access to services and resources; in places where levels of conflict and violence are much higher. This vulnerability results in inequalities, marginalization, gender gaps, discrimination, and inequities.

Convinced of sustainable and inclusive development and aligned with nature conservation, her work has been key to establishing the Mexican and UNESCO Biosphere Reserves (Upper Gulf of California/Colorado River Delta and El Pinacate/Gran Desierto de Altar) and two internationally recognized Ramsar sites in the wetlands of the Gulf of California. She has been instrumental in developing conservation and management programs and encouraging local community participation in managing these protected natural areas.

She has been a pioneer in Environmental Impact Studies as a tool for managing fishery resources in three communities in the Upper Gulf of California and in marine and coastal spatial planning for managing ecosystems and fisheries in six communities in northern Sonora. She has directed efforts and resources toward training fishermen and cooperatives in self-management and co-management, as well as teachers in rural

communities in environmental education. Moreover, she has promoted the participation of children and youth in seeking solutions to local socio-environmental problems.

Without a doubt, her keen vision of the world, her deep understanding of the facts, her leadership exercised with love, and her unwavering will to align her life project with her professional career are the strongest foundations of CEDO. All her profound lessons are treasures that remain in the memory and hearts of those who are part of its ever-changing essence and history.

