



Title: Sustainable Futures: Income Diversification Strategies for Fishing Communities

Subtitle: Protecting Fish Spawning Aggregations (FSAs) through Alternative Livelihoods in the Sapodilla Caye Marine Reserve

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TIDE



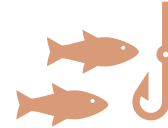
INTRODUCTION



Overview of the Cayman Crown Reef: A critical biodiversity hotspot and home to important Fish Spawning Aggregations (FSAs) such as Nicholas Caye, Seals Caye and Rise and Fall Bank



Challenge: Overfishing threatens the sustainability of FSAs, impacting fish populations and livelihoods.



Objective: Promote sustainable alternatives to reduce fishing pressure and diversify income sources.



Focus Areas:

- Seaweed Farming
- Coastal and Marine-Based Products and Services (Tour Guiding, Birding, and Restaurant Initiatives)

WCS – SUPPLEMENTARY LIVELIHOOD INITIATIVES 2024

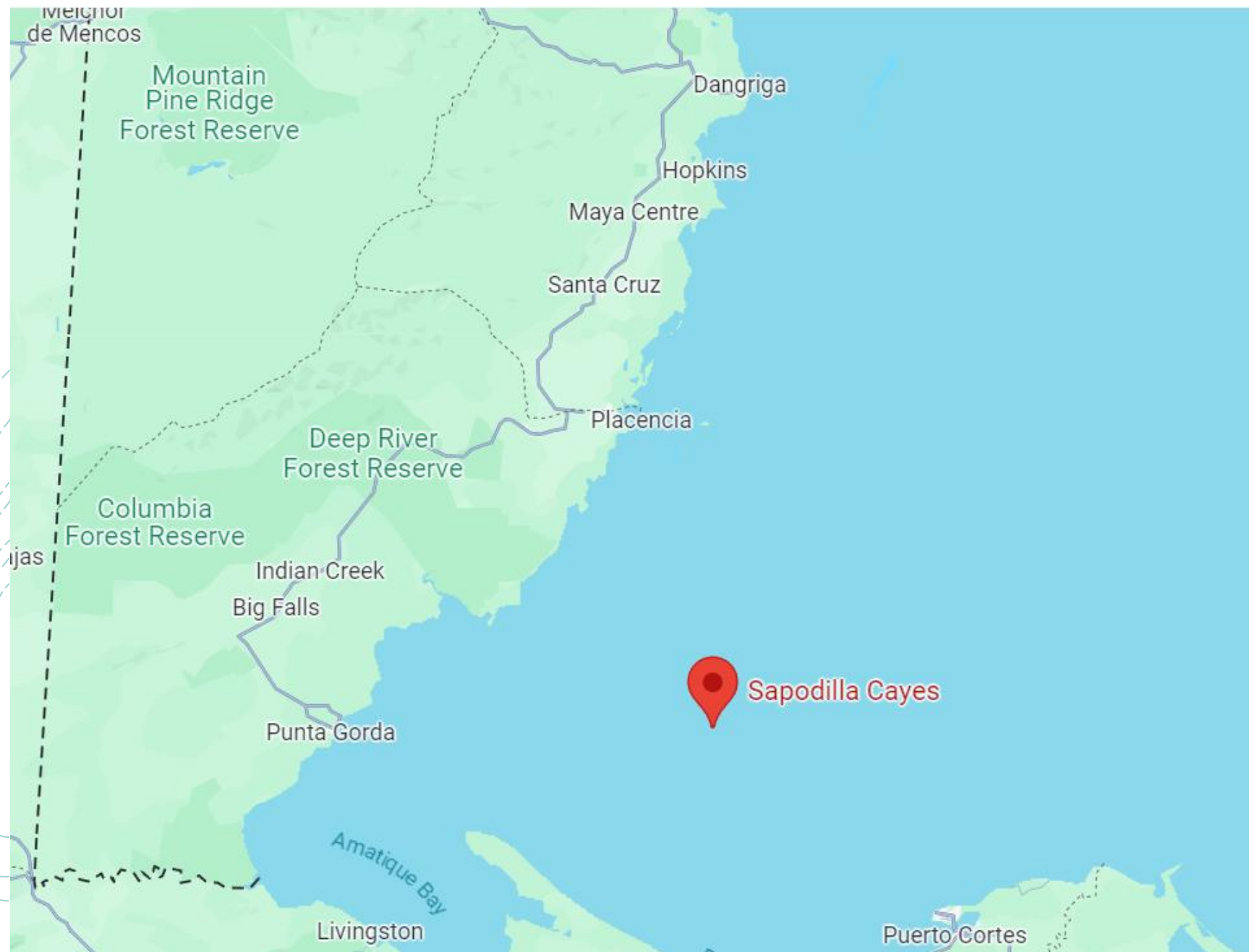
Results

- Seaweed farming and seaweed value-added production
- Coastal and marine tourism, with emphasis on tourism training
- Sewing and crafts, with emphasis on cultural heritage products



MAR FISH PROJECT

Summit Foundation -
Activity 3.2.1 - A feasibility
study for income
diversification opportunities
for at least three (3)
communities of Cayman
Crown, Belize



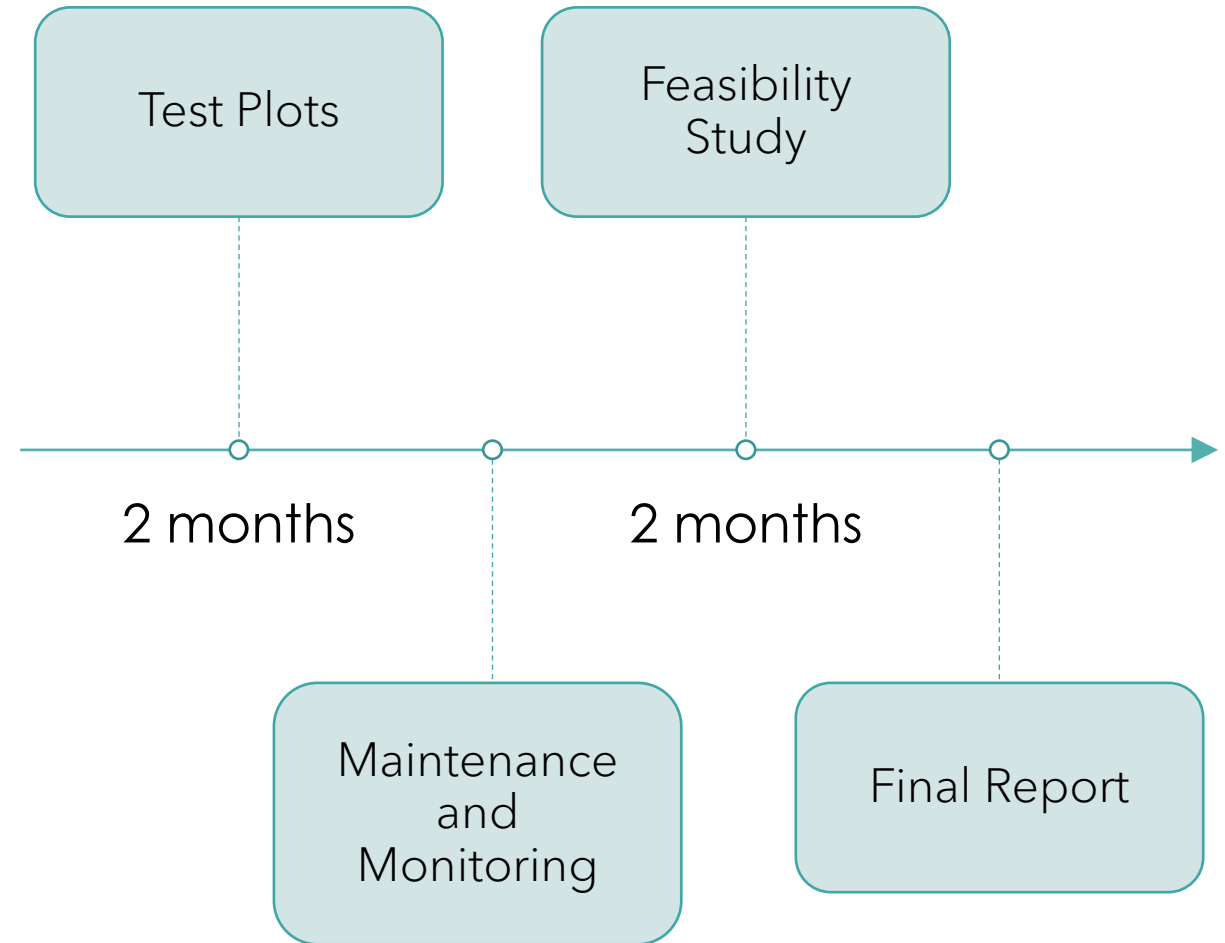
FEASIBILITY STUDIES ON SEAWEED FARMING IN SAPODILLA CAYE MARINE RESERVE

- 3 communities (Punta Gorda Town, Monkey River and Placencia Village)
- The Nature Conservancy conducted site inspection for test plots in SCMR in July 2024



FEASIBILITY STUDY

- TNC is lending technical support
- Rangers will undergo training in maintenance
- Biologist will be monitoring growth etc.



COASTAL AND MARINE TOURISM BASED PRODUCTS/SERVICES

Tour Guide Training

- Rationale:** Shift from extractive practices (fishing) to eco-tourism.
- Training Focus:**
 - Marine conservation and sustainable tourism.
 - Customer service and guiding techniques.
- Outcome:** Creation of **certified tour guides** leading sustainable tours of the Cayman Crown Reef and Sapodilla Cayes Marine Reserve e.g. Seaweed Farm Tours



BIRDING TRAINING

•Why Birding?

- Birdwatching is a growing eco-tourism niche.
- The Cayes and surrounding coasts attract many migratory species.

•Training Includes:

- Bird identification and environmental education.
- Proper use of birding equipment and guest engagement.

•**Outcome:** Establishment of **local birding guides**, promoting eco-tourism while raising awareness about conservation.



RESTAURANT INITIATIVE FOR WOMEN'S GROUP IN PUNTA NEGRA

Restaurant Initiative for Women's Group in Punta Negra

- **Goal:** Empower women through sustainable business ventures.
- **Support Provided:**
 - Business planning, branding, and food preparation training.
 - Assistance with sourcing ingredients and equipment.
 - Promotion of **traditional Belizean cuisine** to tourists.
- **Impact:**
 - Women-led restaurant contributes to household income and economic development.
 - Strengthens community cohesion and promotes gender equality.



Benefits and Impact of Income Diversification

Economic Impact:

Diversified income streams reduce community reliance on fishing.

New tourism-based jobs boost household income.

Social Impact:

Strengthened local communities with new skill sets.

Empowerment of women and youth through participation in the economy.

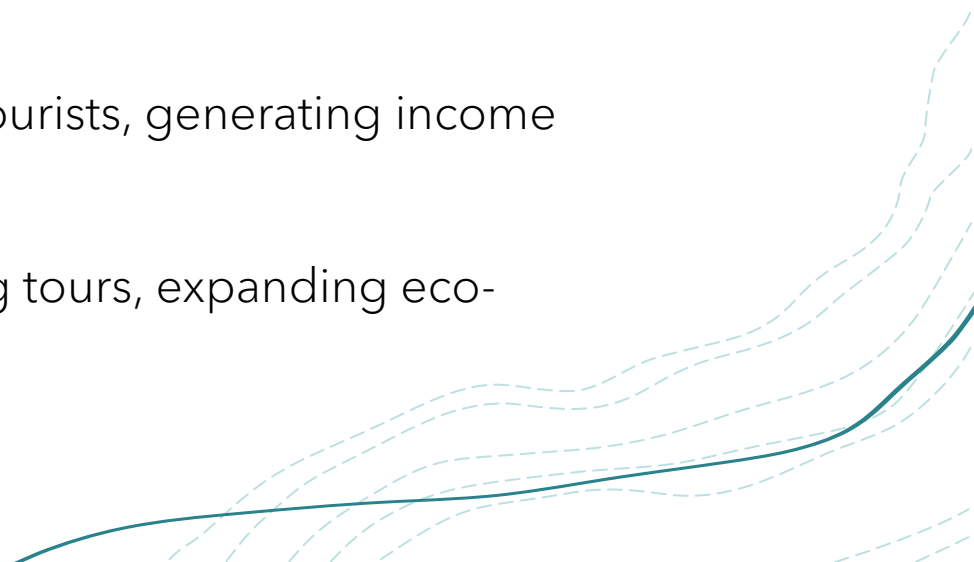
Environmental Impact:

Lower fishing pressure helps protect FSAs and marine biodiversity.

Eco-tourism fosters environmental stewardship in the community.



Success Stories and Case Studies

- **Example 1:** Seaweed project in Belize showing potential resulting in:
 - **MAIN SEAWEED PRODUCTS IN BELIZE.**
 - Packaged Raw Seaweed (wet and dry) - sold either as wholesale or retail.
 - Seaweed Beverages- unflavored, flavored (nutmeg, vanilla, honey, raisins, and peanuts) to name a few.
 - Seaweed Ice cream- flavored and unflavored.
 - Seaweed Dishes- salads, sushi dishes, porridge or risotto (rice cooked in a meat, fish or vegetable broth to a creamy texture).
 - Processed Seaweed Gel- to tone the skin; to reduce wrinkles; to use as a detoxifier and as blends for aromatherapy for the muscles and joints.
 - Seaweed spa and beauty products (for hair and skin)
 - **Example 2:** Punta Negra Women's Group restaurant attracts tourists, generating income and preserving cultural heritage.
 - **Example 3:** Trained tour guides successfully lead birdwatching tours, expanding eco-tourism opportunities.
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CONCLUSION

- Summary:** Income diversification strategies, such as seaweed farming and eco-tourism, are key to protecting FSAs while empowering communities.
- Call to Action:** Encourage stakeholders to support these initiatives and participate in sustainable development efforts.
- Together, we can build **sustainable futures** for the communities of the Cayman Crown Reef.





THANK YOU

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