



We are happy to share new results of our activities with you. Some of the highlights include the creation of a sustainable use brand for lobster; local people were trained to become conservation stewards in their communities; and involving fishermen in co-management mechanisms. It is very important to us that we are contributing not only to conservation and sustainable use of resources, but also to the economic well-being of the region. Read on to learn more about these exciting results.

Small donations, big outcomes

The projects from our second request for proposals have been completed. Once again, NGO's and fishing communities have succeeded in their work towards sustainable use and conservation of natural resources within the MAR region.

TIDE Community Stewards Program in Protected Areas (Belize).

The Program was completed successfully by 13 stewards. They received training on basic computer, reporting, communication, and GPS skills. They also received training on natural resources. The stewards received radios, GPS units, spotlights, binoculars, life vests, rain coats and other equipment and material to carry out their role in the community in an efficient manner. They made an exchange visit to Cerro San Gil and Río Dulce, in Livingston, Guatemala. There, they exchanged experiences with the rangers of FUNDAECO, the local Guatemalan NGO that administrates Cerro San Gil.



1. Steward's visit to Livingston, Guatemala.



2. Stewards at a training session in TIDE's office.

Tobacco Caye Marine Station: a facility established for regional training and education and the foundation for a sustainable model of community co-management of the South Water Caye Marine Reserve through community outreach and education programs (Belize).

The Tobacco Caye Marine Station (TCMS) was built, equipped and furnished with the objective of establishing regional training and education programs. The outreach and education programs were delivered to six Stan Creek schools. A total of 180 students took part in the program. We invite you to visit the TCMS webpage (www.tcmsbelize.org) for more information on their activities.



3. Students of the outreach program visited the TCMS.



4. Tobacco Caye Marine Station completed

Please let us know if you have any questions / comments about our activities. We look forward to hearing from you.



5. Fishermen building the fish aggregators

Establishment of a "No-trawling zone" in the Río Sarstún Multiple Use Area (Guatemala).

To reduce perturbation and damage to their traditional fishing grounds, the fishermen from Cocolí Bay, of the Río Sarstún Multiple Use Area have proposed two different no-trawling zones. UNIPESCA, the Guatemalan Fisheries Authority, is evaluating both proposals with the intent of fusing them into one single no-trawling zone. Fish aggregators were built and installed near the shore of Cocolí Bay to increase and protect the fish populations.

Integrated management of Utila marine area (Honduras)

The Bay Islands Conservation Association of Utila (BICA-Utila) implemented an environmental education plan with school children from Pigeon Caye. The plan included activities such as Pumpkin Hill Beach Clean-up, Snorkeling Trip and Fish Talk, Puppet Show about Trash and Recycling, among others. Not only did BICA work with children, but they also repaired, mapped and numbered the dive site mooring buoys within the Utila marine area, and designed a Code of Conduct for tourists that was distributed among the visitors. The Visitor Center was completed and it is already in operation.



6. BICA marine guard and boat captain placing buoy numbers.



7. Utila Visitor Center

Sustainable fishing and commercialization of the Queen Conch (Strombus gigas) from the Banco Chinchorro Biosphere Reserve (Mexico)

The multi-institutional Environmental Crime Committee created through this project holds monthly meetings to discuss the progress of their surveillance mechanisms. Over 100 people from public entities that integrate the Committee were trained by the Natural Protected Areas National Commission (CONANP) and have improved their surveillance skills and results. The illegal fishing statistics of Queen Conch have decreased in Banco Chinchorro thanks to the enforcement of fishing regulations supported by this project.



8. Training workshop for people from different public entities.

Implementation of strategies for the sustainability and fair marketing in the productive chain. Pilot experience for the use of the collective brand label: "Banco Chinchorro and Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserves lobster" (Mexico).

The collective lobster brand "Chakay from Banco Chinchorro and Sian Ka'an" was born in June, 2009. Since its creation, lobster has increased its market value up to 30% more because its sustainable fishing methods are recognized by restaurants, hotels and individual buyers within the area. In addition, the Cooperative now sells the product directly to the customers, without going through middle men.



9. The Fishers Integrator Cooperative after a training session.

New Projects

Last December the Board of Directors approved five new projects, all involving innovative initiatives for community-managed fisheries and enforcement of fishing regulations. The projects initiated activities in January of 2010, and we are very excited about the activities they will be developing. Below is the list of approved projects:

- Building the Capacity of Fishermen Associations for Involvement in Community Management of Port Honduras Marine Reserve (PHMR). To be developed by TIDE, in Belize.
- Enforcement of Fishing Regulations within the Gulf of Honduras: Phase II. To be developed by TRIGO / FUNDAECO, in the Gulf of Honduras.
- Sustainable use of Queen Conch and Spiny lobster fisheries within the Banco Chinchorro Biosphere Reserve and the Arrecifes de Xcalak National Park. To be developed by the Banco Chinchorro Cooperative, in Mexico.
- Optimization of the sustainable use, artisanal innovation, and alternatives for the co-management and use of the lobster Collective Brand: "Chakay de las reservas de la Biosfera de Banco Chinchorro y Sian Ka'an". To be developed by RAZONATURA, in Mexico.
- Restocking the Cayo Centro zone with Queen Conch individuals for its protection and management by the Banco Chinchorro fishing community. To be developed by OCEANUS, in Mexico.

We look forward to sharing the results of these great initiatives in the future.

Moving Forward with GlobalGiving

Our project "Empowering Fishing Communities in the MAR Reef" continues to be hosted on Global Giving, and we appreciate their support.

Last year, during the months of November and December, GlobalGiving organized the "Give more - Get more Challenge" and the "Christmas Giving Challenge", respectively. These two challenges attracted new donors and new small donations for the project.

We encourage you to become involved and invite you to visit www.globalgiving.com/projects/mesoamerican-reef-conservation/ to discover an easy and practical way to support community fishing projects.

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About Fisheries Co-Management

The two pilot projects of our Community Fisheries Program have completed the first phase with some very interesting results.

In Mexico, the Puerto Morelos Fishing Cooperative, has completed two full monitoring exercises. With the assistance of the Mexican NGO Comunidad y Biodiversidad (COBI) the Cooperative has developed the baseline of the reef's status, and will now be able to measure long-term changes and restoration processes through a monitoring plan, inside and outside of the designated community marine reserves.



10. The Fishing Cooperative's technical team in action



11. Authorities discussing the co-management agreement

In Honduras, the three fishing communities of the Cuero y Salado Wildlife Refuge have organized themselves to create a new association called Asociación de Pescadores La Rosita, Cuero y Salado (APROCUS) that will represent them. They have developed a draft agreement between the association and the refuge administration for the co-management of a fishing territory, which will include no-take zones.

This agreement will allow APROCUS to design and develop the management plan for the fishing territory and to monitor the no-take zones jointly with the Cuero y Salado Foundation (FUCSA), which is the refuge administrator.