Improved Management models at four of Belize's highest priority protected areas 2020-2023





With the financial support of the European Union and the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States through the BIOPAMA Programme

BELIZE AUDUBON SOCIETY

Why is this project important?

- Belize completed the site-level assessments for its 2019 NPAS management effectiveness evaluation. Initial outputs indicate that, at the national level, management effectiveness has not increased as expected over the last ten years, and Belize may not meet its NBSAP target of a NPAS-MEE of 80%.
- It is critical that those protected areas that are being effectively managed provide models for the weaker elements of the NPAS.
- Each of the four BAS protected areas rated highly in the MEE assessment, with ratings of over 80%, approaching the levels required to qualify as Green List recognized protected areas – the first to take this step in Belize.
- With their high level of management effectiveness, both protected area management units provide models – Centres of Excellence – with opportunities for sharing of planning and processes with other protected area managers in Belize.
- Throughout the project, activities promote cross-fertilization and capacity building of other protected areas managers through inclusion in planning and activities - 'learning through participation'.

Project Summary

- Improving management effectiveness of four highest priority BAS protected areas.
- Supporting local communities through awareness and training.
- Protection and monitoring of key conservation targets in the four protected areas.

Project Summary cont'd



- Duration: 3 years
- Project Funds: 604, 742.00 Euros ⟶ 400,000.00 Euros BIOPAMA / 204, 742.00 Euros Belize Audubon Society
  $975,871.57 BZD
- Priority areas project focuses on:
  - Protected Areas Management,
  - Education & Outreach,
  - Research & Monitoring of conservation targets and ecosystems
- Scope: national, regional and international
- Project lead by Results:
  - 1. Shane Young and Roberto Rivero
  - 2. Dareece Chuc, Roberto Rivero, Shane Young
  - 3. Dominique Lizama
  - 4. Amanda Acosta
  - 5. Dareece Chuc

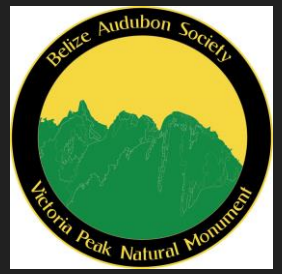
Project Goal

- Belize's four highest priority protected areas are Centres of Excellence, meeting Green List standards and providing landscape and seascape models for effective management of other protected areas of Belize's National Protected Areas System.

BIOPAMA Objectives

- **BIOPAMA SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 1:** Enhance the management and governance of priority areas by addressing existing limitations









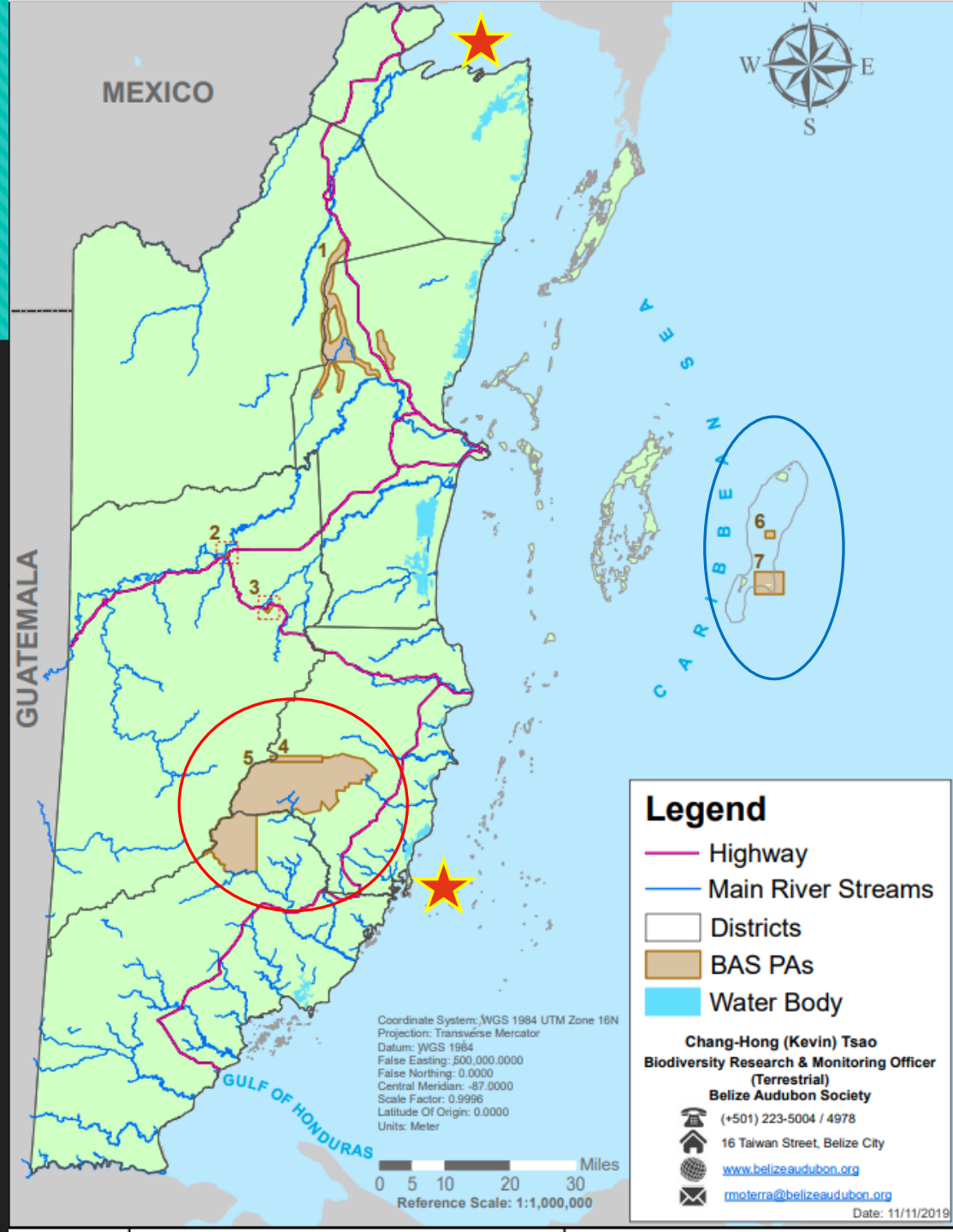
- **BIOPAMA SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 3:** Support local communities' initiatives aiming to enhance the livelihoods of local people whilst effectively contributing to protected and conserved areas management





Project location

- **Seascape:** within the boundaries and adjacent areas of the LHRA and buffer communities.
  - Half Moon Caye Natural Monument
  - Blue Hole Natural Monument
  - Northern buffer communities (Chunox, Copperbank, Sarteneja)
- **Landscape-** within the boundaries and adjacent areas of Cockscomb Basin and buffer communities.
- **Partnerships-** location(s) where mentee NGO/CBOs are located, and their comanaged protected areas.



Project Objectives/Results

- **Result 1:** By December 2022, both CBWS / VPNM and HMCNM / BHNM management units provide effective models for innovative strategic landscape and seascape enforcement with improved management effectiveness
- **Result 2:** Both the Cockscomb and Lighthouse Reef management units provide models for effective, sustainable tourism management in the landscape and seascape
- **Result 3:** BAS has an information management system in place, supported by effective data collection that informs adaptive management of CBWS / VPNM and HMCNM / BHNM and provides accessible information to support conservation and communication strategies
- **Result 4:** BAS strengthens its adaptive management, governance and institutional frameworks to address gaps identified in the 2019 MEE assessment
- **Result 5:** Pressures on the natural resources of both CBWS / VPNM and HMCNM / BHNM are reduced through improved community and stakeholder communication, engagement and socio-economic benefit, with increased % of target stakeholders expressing support for the protected areas

Results, Activities & Impact Assumptions



Result 1: By December 2022, both CBWS / VPNM and HMCNM / BHNM management units provide effective models for innovative strategic landscape and seascape enforcement with improved management effectiveness (Target: 2.5% increase)

Activities:

- Improving surveillance and enforcement in all four protected areas
- Training staff, acquiring equipment and covering operational costs for improved surveillance and enforcement
- Providing opportunities for learning-through-participation for other protected area co-management partners in development of Strategic Enforcement Plans
- Implementing effective enforcement activities (patrols)

Impact Assumption:

By providing working models of effective management and mechanisms for other protected area managers to 'learn-through-participation', the participants will replicate strategies and best practices they learn in their protected areas, improving the management effectiveness at sites across the National Protected Areas System.

Results, Activities & Impact Assumptions





Result 2: Both the Cockscomb and Lighthouse Reef management units provide models for effective, sustainable tourism management in the landscape and seascape

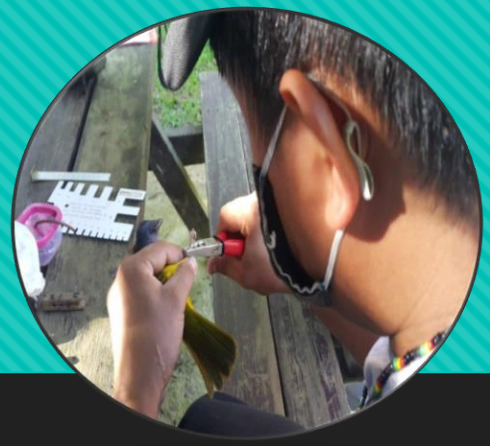
Activities:

- Electrifying (solar) and upgrading trail infrastructure for effective visitor management
- Ensuring the four protected areas have public use and limits of acceptable change frameworks in place and effectively implemented, integrating 'learning-through-participation' capacity building for other protected area management organizations
- Ensuring the protected areas are effectively marketed nationally and on-site
- Improving visitor experience and satisfaction on arrival at the protected areas

Impact Assumption:

By providing working models of effective management and mechanisms for other protected area managers to 'learn-through-participation', the participants will replicate strategies and best practices they learn in their protected areas, improving the management effectiveness at sites across the National Protected Areas System. In addition, improving the BAS sites through infrastructure upgrades and marketing will increase visitor satisfaction.

Results, Activities & Impact Assumptions





Result 3: BAS has an information management system in place, supported by effective data collection that informs adaptive management of CBWS / VPNM and HMCNM / BHNM and provides accessible information to support conservation and communication strategies

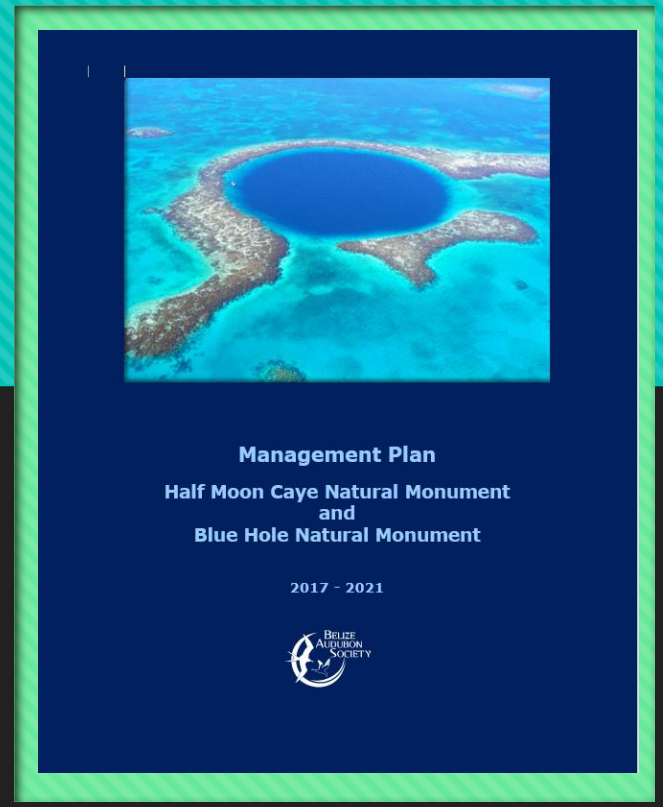
Activities:

- Implementing updated, targeted research and monitoring plans that provide the data required for informing management decisions
- Institutionalizing effective data management system and training of staff for analysis and reporting of data outputs, that informs management decisions
- Effectively sharing data outputs internally and disseminating information to stakeholders
- Improving visitor experience and satisfaction on arrival at the protected areas

Impact Assumption:

By providing training for staff supported by putting systems in place and improving data collection and analysis, staff will be able to provide better reports for effective communication to stakeholders.

Results, Activities & Impact Assumptions



Result 4: BAS strengthens its adaptive management, governance and institutional frameworks to address gaps identified in the 2019 MEE assessment

Activities:

- Update management plan for LHR protected area management unit
- Strengthen BAS organizational capacity for improved governance of the four priority protected areas

Impact Assumption:

By revising the organizational strategic plan, updating relevant protected areas management plan and undergoing governance reform, BAS will have strengthened its adaptive management, government and institutional frameworks.

Results, Activities & Impact Assumptions



Result 5: Pressures on the natural resources of both CBWS / VPNM and HMCNM / BHNM are reduced through improved community and stakeholder communication, engagement and socio-economic benefit, with increased % of target stakeholders expressing support for the protected areas

Activities:

- BAS has information to guide its community communication, engagement and support strategies
- Improve communication with protected area stakeholders
- Increasing opportunities for income diversification for natural resource-based stakeholders

Impact Assumption:

By providing frameworks for effective communication with communities and other stakeholders, of effective management and mechanisms for other protected area managers to 'learn-through-participation',

Beneficiaries







All beneficiaries of the project depend on the resources and environmental services of the protected areas.

Indirect beneficiaries of good seascape/landscape management and conservation actions :

- Government of Belize & Co-management partner-Forest Department
- General public through information sharing mechanisms
- Natural environments through effective management and research and monitoring efforts

Direct project beneficiaries:

- Community members through awareness and training
  - Maya Center Women's Group
  - Fishermen
  - Tour operators/tour guides
  - CBWS youth groups
- Students through BAS's EE and BR&M Programs continue to educate and engage the local communities, increase scientific literacy in coastal, coral reef and forest conservation, and foster stewardship of the resources
- Conservation Partners: (Protected Areas Management Organizations) through training in scientific monitoring and surveillance and enforcement
  - Southern Environmental Association (SEA) and Sarteneja Alliance for Conservation & Development (SACD) for scientific monitoring training
  - 2 marine and 2 terrestrial partners for enforcement trainings
- BAS Staff through training in science, communications, etc.