



Mesoamerican Reef Fund

Dedicated to inspiring innovative, transnational solutions to critical Mesoamerican Reef issues.



April 2012

Special Update: Endowment Fund



TIDE Belize

The Government of Germany Contributes €10 million to MAR Fund Endowment

Dear friends,

We are thrilled to share with you that the MAR Fund now has an endowment! On December 30, 2011, the Government of Germany, through KfW, (http://nachhaltigkeit.kfw.de/EN_Home/index.jsp) contributed €10 million (\$13.05 million) to endow the MAR Fund.

An endowment fund has been a principal goal of the MAR Fund since its creation in 2004. Having an endowment will allow the MAR Fund to provide steady, long-term support to the Mesoamerican Reef region. We are very thankful to the German Government for helping us kick off our endowment fund in such a big way.

In the next pages, you will find more information about this donation and how we'll be using the endowment fund to support conservation in the MAR region.

We thank you for your continued interest and support!

The MAR Fund Team

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TIDE Belize

Regional Conservation

A reminder of the importance of conservation on an ecoregional scale.

The German Government's objective in donating to the MAR Fund's endowment is to preserve biodiversity in the Mesoamerican Reef region. Endowment earnings will be used to support the MAR Fund's Small Grants and Community Fisheries programs and the MAR Fund annual operations. The German Government's choice of the MAR Fund as its instrument to protect the MAR region is a testament to the MAR Fund's leadership role in transnational conservation.

Conservation without borders

Transnational conservation is important when ecosystems extend beyond national borders. In the case of the MAR region, the various ecosystems (such as coral reefs, mangroves, and sea grass beds) are tightly interwoven and depend on one another for survival and proper functioning. Any event that affects one ecosystem or one section of the ecoregion can impact the rest of the region, regardless of national borders.

The Mesoamerican Reef Fund operates in all four countries of the MAR Region – Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras – and is therefore in the capacity to effectively address

strategic regional priorities. Its goal is to recover and/or maintain healthy ecosystems that can continue to provide natural goods and services able to support the local populations that depend on a healthy reef system for their livelihoods.

Efficient and effective

An ecoregional approach helps design conservation actions effectively across borders of shared ecosystems and resources. Furthermore, successful initiatives like the MAR Fund's Community Fisheries Program can be scaled across the region, ensuring that the knowledge accumulated through experience is shared regionally.



Hol Chan Marine Reserve



Ian Drysdale



Ana Giro



Peter Rockstroh

Endowment

Steady, long-term funding

In a 2008 report published by the Conservation Finance Alliance, the authors note that:

“[N]umerous significant and important conservation efforts are currently being carried out in the MAR. These initiatives, however, are often limited by project cycles and established time horizons. It is therefore essential to achieve long-term financial sustainability for the protection and resource management efforts promoted by local organizations in the eco-region.”

The MAR Fund was created as a mechanism to provide financial sustainability for the Mesoamerican Reef region’s conservation efforts. One important means of achieving this goal was the establishment of an endowment fund. After six years operating in the region, the MAR Fund is proud to have achieved this objective. While this €10 million donation is extremely important, it is a first step. The MAR Fund will continue to fundraise for the endowment fund in order to provide more support for conservation in the region.

Endowments are beneficial to environmental funds because they allow a sustained, long-term response to environmental threats. Endowed environmental funds can support continuous conservation activities over many years.

The MAR Fund’s endowment will help ensure a steady flow of financial resources to conservation initiatives in the Mesoamerican Reef region. Earnings from the endowment will be used to co-finance the MAR Fund’s annual operating costs, enabling the MAR Fund to spend more time fundraising for programmatic activities. Earnings will also co-finance the MAR Fund’s Small Grants and Community Fisheries Programs, contributing to continuous support for regional conservation initiatives from year to year.

Having a permanent, stable source of funding focused solely on the MAR region will be a great boon to conservation efforts, and the four-country structure of the MAR Fund puts it in a unique position to distribute funds effectively across the entire reef system, addressing regional priorities.