

PROPOSAL FORMAT/RE-GRANTING PROJECTS

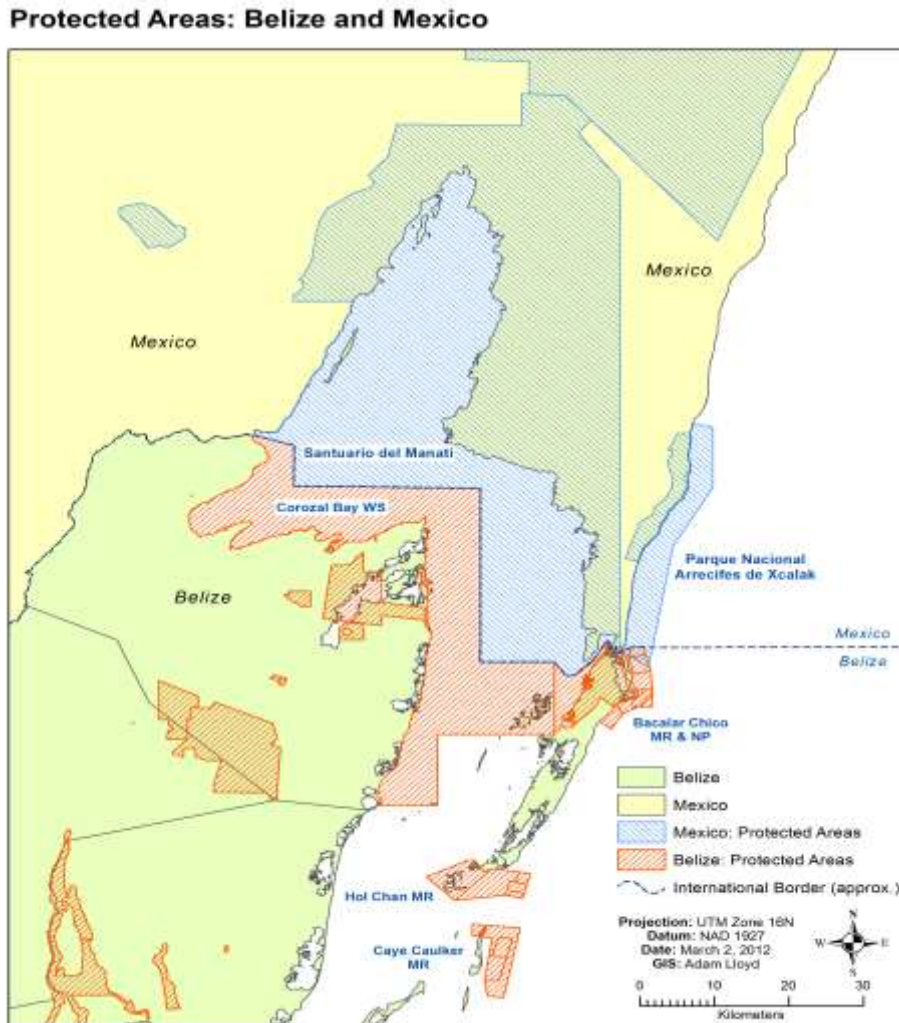
PART I: PROJECT SUMMARY

1. Project name (15 words maximum)

Strengthening SACD management and institutional capacity for long term sustainability

2. Project location (Specify as much as possible: Protected Area, Municipality, town, Village, City) Include a map of the area where the project will be developed.

Corozal Bay Wildlife Sanctuary (CBWS), Sarteneja Village, Corozal Town, Belize C.A.



3. Beneficiary target group (Please specify as much as possible: name(s) of organization(s), number of members, age and gender distribution, main economic occupation, etc.)

This project strengthens Sarteneja Alliance for Conservation and Development (SACD) in its ability to effectively manage Corozal Bay Wildlife Sanctuary, and contribute towards site-level and larger seascape conservation measures, for the benefit of all users of the resources. More specifically, the continuity of resource management to ensure a sustainable resource use, primarily benefitting the 19 traditional fisher families (not organized) that use the MPA, to improve fisheries sustainability, and income and support for their families. These families are the only target group that could be quantified to a near proximity- 19 families of 5 members between the husband, wife and children.

It will also enable SACD to be active in the Wildlife Sanctuary, identifying potential development activities in the area that may impact the water clarity and health of reefs in the Northern Belize Coastal Complex (NBCC), important for the men and women employed in the tourism industry (particularly tour guides, tour operators, hotels and restaurants) of Corozal (population size 12,334), Consejo (350), Sarteneja (population size 1,834), Chunox (population size 1,378), Copper Bank (population size 471), and San Pedro (population size 18,440) – census 2015 and mid-year 2017 estimates.

4. Summary of project (100 words maximum)

This project seeks to ensure that SACD has the structure and capacity to continue to grow as a co-manager organization - building on its current foundation and successes, to ensure strengthened organizational and stakeholder engagement and improved financial sustainability for the effective management of Corozal Bay Wildlife Sanctuary (CBWS); a critical component of the Northern Belize Coastal Complex (NBCC) seascape. The protected area, is currently transitioning into implementation of the national Managed Access programme and the integration of replenishment-zones, with the need for SACD to maintain and increase stakeholder engagement and stewardship, build stakeholder capacity, and increase surveillance and enforcement.

5. Applicant organization/contact information

Name of organization applying

Sarteneja Alliance for Conservation and Development (SACD)

Summarize your organization`s mission (maximum 75 words)

The Sarteneja Alliance for Conservation and Development (SACD) is a community-orientated, non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life of stakeholder communities through strengthening mechanisms for collaboration, support and community engagement; and through the promotion of the sustainable use of the Corozal Bay wildlife.

6. Duration of project

3 years

7. Project continuity

- a) Is this proposal a continuity of a previous project granted by MAR Fund and/or Oak Foundation? YES
- b) What was the previous amount granted? USD\$150,000.00 (Three years)
- c) Briefly indicate the specific achievements/results obtained to date with the previous support (*Add rows as necessary*)
 1. Three communities have been exposed to climate change as a topic, with introductory workshops on climate change predictions for north east Belize, and impacts on the fishery and livelihoods (property etc.), Surveys have been conducted to assess knowledge on the topic (100 in Chunox, 100 in Copper Bank and 150 in Sarteneja). School presentations on resilience through ecosystems services (mangroves as a key component towards building resilience) and open days for communities to get together and schools to portray skits, dramas and songs related to climate change issues and the importance of ecosystems.
 2. Three communities (Sarteneja, Chunox and Copper Bank) have a living Community Climate Change Adaptation Plan that highlights the community views towards adaptation mechanisms, with SACD taking the lead with ensuring that the communities take ownership of the plan to be implemented.
 3. Users are being engaged through the active functioning of the Corozal Bay Advisory Committee (CBAC) composed of representatives from the fishing, tourism, conservation, and development sectors, and local community government from the five stakeholder communities (Consejo, Corozal, Chunox, Copper Bank and Sarteneja). SACD, Fisheries Department and Forest Department also are members of this advisory committee. This committee is the leading stakeholder group with direct input into the management decisions and regulations of the protected area.
 4. CBAC is represented on the SACD board – nominated by the general membership of the CBAC to contribute CBAC's perspectives and recommendations into SACD's decision-making for CBWS.
 5. Legislation now exist for CBWS to move into a Category 2 Wildlife Sanctuary to allow for traditional extractive use under a sustainable use plan.
 6. Re designation and realignment of the area is currently under way with identified replenishment zones currently proposed and awaiting review and finalization.
 7. Surveillance and enforcement presence was increased by 196% above the (56 patrols) 2015 baseline during 2016, with 131(79%) of the 166 patrols in 2016 being joint patrols with the Belize Coast Guard, Fisheries Officers and Forest Officers during year 2016.
 8. Increased understanding of fish movements in CBWS, informed by two years of data sets of fish catch data, one full year of climatic data from the weather station and 5 years of water quality (physical parameters) data.
 9. Completed Conservation Action Plan for the Northern Belize Coastal Complex (NBCC), with ongoing improved collaboration and communication at seascape level.
 10. A draft MOU developed and in review process for a Transboundary Working Group (Mexico/Belize) – SACD, Belize Fisheries Department, Belize Forest

- Department, Blue Ventures, Wildtracks, Corozal Town Council, Corozal Community College, SEMA, ECOSUR, Amigos de Sian Kan.
11. Seascape level management strategies being incorporated in revision of all NBCC MPA management plans.
 12. Revised SACD Policies and Procedures Manual and Articles of Association (AoA)
 13. Restructured board as recommended in the revised AoA. New board members are now engaged and executive positions have been assigned by election process.
 14. Increased management effectiveness from 54% in 2010 to 68.97% in 2016 using the national management effectiveness tool.
 15. Capacity building for improved financial management systems and controls, upgrading to Quickbooks, with completed financial audits up to year ending 2015 with year 2016 in process.
 16. SACD office complex in progress with funding secured from MAR Fund (KfW project) – expected to be in full operations will be operational by mid-2017.

PART II: PROJECT DESCRIPTION

8. Introduction

The project addresses the requirement for SACD, as the co-manager of CBWS, to strengthen its capacity in areas of financial sustainability and institutional development as the bases to maintain stakeholder engagement and build stakeholder capacity for participation and improved community stewardship, specifically in the transitional period of the integration and implementation of both Managed Access and Replenishment Zones into CBWS management strategies, both further supporting seascape functionality and with the need for long term sustainability.

SACD itself is currently in a transition phase with several changes being implemented to strengthen the organization: Sectoral representation on the Board of Directors, based also on ensuring relevant skill sets and Establishment of the Corozal Bay Advisory Committee (CBAC) to ensure stakeholder views are adequately represented in decision-making and expansion of SACD staff to meet the increased workload.

With the finalization of the revised and updated policies and procedures for the organization, the revision of the organizational Articles, and the current development of a financial mobilization plan for business mechanisms, it is important to ensure that during this building phase, that as an institution, the current and new members, staff and CBAC members understand their roles and have the capacity to provide effective governance and input for the adaptive management of CBWS. It is important that, during a time when significant changes are being implemented, these activities be sustained and strengthened.

SACD, over the years, has maintained and built its relationships with its funding partners, seascape partners and transboundary partners. However, the organization continues to be 100% dependent on grant funding – challenging the long term sustainability and continuity of management activities in CBWS. SACD, has proven success in maintaining its management operations in CBWS and has also taken the lead in building system level communication and collaboration in the Northern Belize Coastal Complex (NBCC), with the

potential to expand on its current successes by providing the basic necessary trainings and capacity building opportunities to its team as a whole, to strengthen and diversify its funding sources to continue sustaining its programmatic work and its seascape natural resource management responsibilities and its priority threats.

9. Justification

SACD is in a transition period – in terms of its governance structure, its management framework and its move towards greater financial sustainability. It has restructured its Board for improved governance, and established the Corozal Bay Advisory Committee to ensure participation of local stakeholders and traditional users of the area. In collaboration with Fisheries Department, it is starting site-level implementation of the national Managed Access programme, to provide a framework for a long term sustainable fishery. It is also establishing new zoning of Replenishment Areas with implementation of new zoning regulations, to contribute towards the national and global 10% replenishment zone targets. It has taken the lead with the integration of seascape level strategies in the individual NBCC management plans. Successful implementation and sustainability of these strategies will require SACD to ensure it has the support of its funding partners to maintain and strengthen the organization through the transition period.

The major threats identified to a successful transition include:

- The need for increased capacity and understanding of the staff, Board and Advisory Committee of roles in governance and management,
- Limited in-house capacity for proposal development
- 100% reliance on grant funding, with critical need for diversification for financial sustainability
- Continues battle to secure staff continuity due to reduced funding, with the obligation to focus on multiple small grants to maintain the management operations, resulting in increased workloads for current staff and investment of major time for reporting.

Though, SACD is gradually building its capacity and has started taking initiative such as the development of the Financial Mobilization Document, due for completing in June 2017, to address and strengthen the organization management and financial capacity. Critically important to ensure that CBWS maintains a site management presence, and does its role of providing a functional ecological connectivity in the NBCC seascape – supporting the viability of fish nurseries and the livelihoods of people that depend on them.

10. Site characterization

Situated in the north east of Belize, CBWS was established in 1998 and encompasses approximately 72,000 hectares of the largest transboundary estuary in the region - the Corozal / Chetumal estuary. Corozal Bay Wildlife Sanctuary is a critical component of the Northern Belize Coastal Complex (NBCC) seascape, providing river-to-reef connectivity from the Rio Hondo, New River and the coastal lagoons that flow into the Corozal Bay Wildlife Sanctuary, to the reefs of Bacalar Chico (a component of Belize's World Heritage Site), Hol Chan and Caye Caulker Marine Reserves – a seascape that covers approximately 160,940 hectares of estuarine, and reef ecosystems along with large expanses of mangroves coastlines and shallow coastal lagoons.

As part of the management of area, conservation targets have been identified (commercial fish species, manatees, mangrove ecosystems, elasmobranchs, water quality, bird nesting sites, and stromatolites) following the CBWS management plan. These targets have further interlinked with the systems (seascape) approach in which each identified target is connected to the NBCC's seascape conservation targets. A full management presence has been established in the area with an active co-management agreement between SACD and the Belize Forest Department. Even though SACD is a very small organization, it has been able to grow in capacity and maintains an active presence, with established partnerships at local, national and transboundary levels.

Since the establishment of SACD, the greatest challenge has been the continued efforts to work with community stakeholders to address the non-extractive designation of the "Wildlife Sanctuary". Local, small-scale, artisanal fishing activities are ongoing, conducted by stakeholder communities for commercial and home purposes, but without a legal framework. However, the management plan permits an interim sustainable fishery (under an unofficial recognition of traditional rights-based use by the Belize Forest Department). Despite working to secure the rights of the traditional fishers, there is still conflict, misunderstanding and suspicion that needs to be overcome to fully engage the fishers.

The other major barrier has been the continued struggle to locate operational costs for the management of the Wildlife Sanctuary, an area that many funders are unwilling to support. To overcome the financial obstacles, SACD has started the development of a financial mobilization plan to strengthening funding diversification and assure long term sustainability.

The Sarteneja Alliance for Conservation and Development (SACD) is a community-based organization, located in Sarteneja, the largest fishing community impacting the Wildlife Sanctuary and the Meso-American Reef. It is recognized as the community-based non-governmental co-management partner for site-level management of Corozal Bay Wildlife Sanctuary through a five year co-management agreement with the Belize Forest Department, signed in 2012 – pending renewal in 2017. SACD was registered in 2008 and since then has succeeded in maintaining an active management presence in the area with activities following the CBWS management plan (2013-2018). It has established a working relationship with the local users, and strengthened this through the establishment of the newly formed Corozal Bay Advisory Committee (CBAC). To ensure CBAC is able to participate in management decision, the SACD Articles now provide for a representative from this body to sit on the SACD Board of Directors, to contribute CBAC's perspectives and recommendations into SACD's decision-making. This is gradually helping in addressing the generally negative perceptions of fishermen about conservation work.

11. Objectives.

General Objective

To strengthen SACD's management and institutional capacity to improve long term financial sustainability for the effective management of Corozal Bay Wildlife Sanctuary (CBWS) – contributing to the larger seascape.

Specific Objectives:

- Specific Objective 1: To strengthen SACD management capacity as the co-manager of Corozal Bay Wildlife Sanctuary with an increased management effectiveness score.

Activities:

- Revise and implement the SACD's Strategic Plan for period 2017 – 2020 with integrated monitoring and evaluation frameworks.
 - Design and implement effective monitoring and evaluation frameworks for the organization – for staff, Board and organizational and MPA plans (strategic, management and operational plans)
 - One capacity building visit for staff, board and CBAC members to another marine protected area co-management organization to improve understanding of roles in protected area management (replenishment zones and Manage access).
 - To facilitate the transition of SACD to an NGO, in full compliance with the Belize NGO Act. (The compliance require for annual filing of all relevant documentation to the Attorney General office to acquire an good standing certificate – a legal recognition of operating in legal standards)
- Specific Objective 2: To strengthen SACD's financial management and financial sustainability with improved cost effectiveness, diversification of income and continued transparency.

Activities:

- To implement one priority financial mechanism from the SACD Financial Mobilization Plan schedule for completion by the end of July 2017.
 - To establish and register a business structure for SACD, to support the organization operations.
 - Contract a Development Officer to assist with the development and implementation of funding diversification mechanisms (development of at least two large project proposals to cover the transition period).
 - To continue building capacity of SACD financial officer in NGO's accounting and integration of business management into the accounts management systems via the mentoring of a volunteer accountant provided by Accountants for International Development (AFiD)
 - To produce annual financial audits for each fiscal year (January to December).
- Specific Objective 3: To maintain the continuity of SACD's programmatic activities and staff during the three-year transition period.

Activities:

- To maintain the current # of full time staff of SACD to six (6) during the transition period with a full salary scale as an incentive to increase motivation and effectiveness.
- To maintain effective patrols at site level by targeting the replenishment zones currently being established.
- To strengthen coordinated system-level patrol with enforcement and protected areas partners.
- To maintain water quality physio-chemical monitoring
- To maintain the monitoring of manatees, fish larvae recruitment, fish catch and bird nesting sites.
- To provide equipment maintenance and licensing for critical operational equipment.

12. Project description

Objective 1: expected results

- Result 1: SACD is a strong, well-established organization with motivated and capable staff and Board members, effectively implementing its strategic, management and organizational plans.
 - Revised Strategic Plan with integrated monitoring and evaluation frameworks
 - Annual monitoring and evaluation of SACD Strategic plan and Management Plan
 - Staff, board members and CBAC demonstrate improved understanding of their roles in the governance and management of the protected area
 - NGO registration
- Result 1.2: The management effectiveness score is of 70%-or above – based on the Belize national management effectiveness tool.
 - Annual management effectiveness assessment, using the national framework

Objective 2, expected result

- Result 2: SACD has reduced the current 100% dependency in grant funding by a minimum of 10%, with increased financing from other sources.
 - One financial mechanism identified and under implementation
 - SACD has a legal structure in place for business development
 - Two large grants proposals developed and submitted
 - SACD has integrated financial systems in place to manage business oriented initiatives
 - Financial audit reports for 2017, 2018, and 2019

Objective 3, expected result

- Result 3: SACD has maintained critical operations and all staff during the three year transition period and has a structure in place to sustain its operations beyond the project timeframe
 - SACD maintains or increases staff by the end of the project
 - There is a trend of decrease dependency form this project during the project time-frame
 - Maintained 3 patrols per week at site level and established daily patrols in replenishment zones.
 - Increased system level patrols with the NBCC partners to 3 per month
 - Complete data sets for water quality, manatees, bird nesting sites and commercial fish species
 - SACD continues to have 2 operational patrol boats and 1 vehicle

13. Project Development Table

Attached

14. Monitoring and evaluation

SACD recognizes the importance of monitoring and evaluation of activities and outcomes in all its activities, and is strengthening this area as part of this project.

Monitoring and evaluation of the project itself will be led by the Executive Director, with the assistance of the project management team, composed of representatives from the SACD Board members and CBAC. Resources have been allocated for the development of the monitoring framework, based on project indicators. This includes the need for development and implementation of monthly evaluation and tracking systems of project activities for Staff, quarterly evaluation with the Board and annual evaluation workshops with the CBAC and the broader stakeholders. Evaluation will focus on project implementation, use of funds, and success of outputs.

Biological indicators:

1) This project is designed to support and strengthen SACD's ability to improve the conservation targets of CBWS, particularly the sustainability of the fishery in CBWS, and stakeholder benefits. The monitoring framework therefore includes biological indicators to demonstrate that management is effective. Three key indicators are identified: 1) Trends in the commercial fishery; 2) Trends in nursery functionality and 3) Trends in seagrass health.

Indicators:

- Average estimated total catch weight per year per trap (SACD Research and Monitoring Plan indicator)
- Average biomass per key commercial species of catch per year per beach trap (SACD Planning for a Sustainable Fishery indicator)

2) SACD is developing a baseline for assessing nursery functionality for the proposed replenishment zones being established under MCCAP. Using AGGRA/MBRS protocols adapted to include key commercial species of CBWS, the monitoring will be focused on quantifying the presence and number of individuals (adults and juveniles) in the replenishment zones, and the relevance / importance for commercial fish populations of CBWS and of the larger seascape.

Indicators:

- Extent of mangrove in replenishment areas
- Extent of sea grass in replenishment areas
- % juveniles per target commercial fish species per replenishment area
- Length frequency per target commercial fish species per replenishment area
- % reproductive adults per target commercial fish species per replenishment area

A yearly assessment report of the relationship between the CBAC and SACD, evaluating the level of participation and input of the CBAC in the management decisions of CBWS reflected by: the # of meeting held, the level and # of participants in the meetings, the # of recommendations provided to SACD at the end of each meeting for follow up, and the # of recommendations implemented by SACD.

The social indicators will also be measured by the # of activities the community researchers are involved during the implementation of this project and the # of infractions recorded in the replenishment zones - an indication of the level of community understanding and engagement during the implementation of the project.

The governance indicators tied to the project will be:

Indicator	Mechanism /
Revised Strategic Plan with integrated monitoring and evaluation frameworks	Document
Annual management effectiveness assessment, using the national framework	Document
Annual monitoring and evaluation of SACD Strategic plan and Management Plan	Document
Staff, board members and CBAC demonstrate improved understanding of their roles in the governance and management of the protected area	Pre and post questionnaire results Board evaluation report CBAC evaluation report
SACD is an NGO	Registration papers / certificate
One financial mechanism identified and implementation successfully started	Workplan and receipts demonstrating successful start of implementation
SACD has a legal structure in place for business development	Business registration documents
Development officer contracted	Signed contract Receipts for stipend
Two large grant proposals developed and submitted	Two completed project proposals Letters from grant bodies acknowledging receipt of proposals
Capacity building of SACD financial officer	AFiD report on capacity building of SACD financial officer
Integration of financial management of business into SACD financial management system	Review of Quickbooks system Report by SACD financial officer Audit report
Financial audit report for each year (2017, 2018 and 2019)	Financial audit report for each year (2017, 2018 and 2019)
Current staff of SACD remain committed, with potential to increase over the second year of the project	Staff evaluations Number of staff, names and position
Active patrolling to an average of 3 patrols per week at site level within CBWS and 3 per month at system level; well-coordinated with the NBCC partners	Patrol reports from SMART system
Data sets for current monitoring and research activities	Report and raw data from research coordinator
Implementation of scheduled and unscheduled boat and vehicle maintenance to support management activities	Receipts Maintenance report

15. Project Sustainability

This project provides the foundation and capacity for SACD to leverage funding from other sources in the short term, over a three year transition period. It is investing in financial mechanisms with the development and implementation of a Financial Mobilization Plan, to reduce the 100% dependency on grant funding. This will contribute to the overall programme sustainability of SACD and continuity of outcomes of this project.

Contracting of a development officer (an international skilled volunteer) will assist SACD with securing new funding streams and donor partners beyond this project. SACD, is also working with a volunteer from Accountants for International Development (AfID) to further strengthen financial management, and provide recommendations to ensure that SACD continues to build its capacity. The development process for the Financial Sustainability Plan is expected to recommend the establishment of structures and systems for business development and financial sustainability opportunities.

In addition, the project is also investing in strengthening SACD's management capacity by investing in capacity building opportunities for staff and board members to increase competence, motivation and commitment – the foundations to ensuring the long term sustainability and expansion of the organization and its operations.

SACD is also building and will continue to build its partnership through this project with the NBCC partners, reducing duplication of work and strengthen coordinated seascape management to reduce costs and enhance sustainability.

Additionally, through the project (MAR/KfW) medium funding, from year 2015 to year 2018/, has been secured to support equipment and infrastructure enhancement to sustain the continuity and long term outcomes of this project.

16. National and/or Regional relation/linkage

The project contributes to three key areas highlighted in the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, and revised National Protected Areas System Plan – effective management, system-level collaboration and financial sustainability. SACD is focused on ensuring that it continues to build its capacity to maintain and improve effective site level co-management of CBWS in the long term, contributing towards the National Protected Areas System Plan (NPASP).

The project contributes towards NPASP **Activity 4.1.2 Strengthen the management effectiveness of protected areas** that recommends that the effective management of protected areas at the site level is critical to securing the functionality objective across the system and ensuring proper integration within the wider landscapes and seascapes. SACD is leading implementation of a collaborative seascape Conservation Action Plan for the NBCC, in partnership with the protected area managers, Fisheries Department, Forest Department, Wildtracks and other key partners. This identifies and outlines a series of recommendations to strengthen system level objectives – including the collaborative implementation of Managed Access, and builds on existing partnerships.

17. Cooperation

SACD is built on a foundation of partnerships both nationally and internationally, to strengthen its ability to achieve its goals. The Corozal Bay Advisory Committee (CBAC) and the Northern Belize Coastal Complex (NBCC) task force are the two main networks that are supporting SACD in achieving its goals. The CBAC is a newly formed body composed of representation from community and traditional users that has been actively participating in the realignment and re-designation process of the Corozal Bay Wildlife Sanctuary, providing recommendations.

The NBCC network of protected areas strengthens communication and collaboration in the seascape, with strong linkages with Government entities (both the Fisheries Department and Forest Department), who are directly, involved in the development of site management as well as the seascape management approaches.

In addition, SACD has built strong partnerships with transboundary partners in Mexico in an effort to address trans-boundary issues and seascape management. These include Secretaría de Ecología y Medio Ambiente (SEMA) and El Colegio de la Frontera Sur (ECOSUR). ECOSUR also supports research and monitoring activities and have been mentors in the development of research protocols, trainings and provision of technical support for specific data analysis. This is to be strengthened through the signing of a transboundary conservation MoA.

SACD is also working with Wildtracks and Blue Ventures in specific areas of biodiversity research and monitoring, partially addressing the limitations of human resources needed to achieve the research and monitoring activities of CBWS. This has been strengthened by the establishment of the Community Researcher Programme, integrating community participation in the research and monitoring activities – further contributing in building stewardship at community level. Wildtracks has also been a long term mentor for the organization, assisting with development of organizational process and strategic planning.

Equally important, SACD continues to have a strong partnership with donor partners that support the organizational programmes and operations. Their support of multiple-year core operations has been critical in the growth of SACD. SACD has also secured funding from MAR Fund (KFW project), Summit, the Protected Areas Conservation Trust (PACT), the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), and seeks to continue working with OAK Foundation through this project. Each contribute to a percentage of SACD core operations and allow SACD to continue its operation.

Recently, SACD also established partnership with Accountants for International Development (AfID), who is supporting SACD to build its financial systems and processes.

18. Bibliography:

National Protected Areas System Plan (revised edition 2015).