



## **Terms of reference Communications officer**

### **1. Background**

The Mesoamerican Reef Fund (MAR Fund) is a regional, private environmental fund with the objective of supporting the protection of the Mesoamerican Reef (MAR) ecoregion, shared by Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras. Its mission is to drive regional funding and partnerships for the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of the MAR.

The MAR Fund Board of Directors comprises pre-existing environmental funds from the region, the Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD), distinguished conservation experts from each participating country, and international collaborators and donors.

Registered in the United States as a tax-exempt charitable organization, MAR Fund, despite its legal establishment outside the MAR, is committed to providing sustainable funding for conservation in the ecoregion. Since August 2014, a MAR Fund chapter has been registered in Guatemala City, serving as the coordinating office, with dedicated staff members in each country of the region.

MAR Fund operates as a regional planning and coordination mechanism that prioritizes projects and distributes funding. In its 19 years, it has raised US\$38.8 million in project funding and \$14.3 million in sinking funds, and manages an endowment of US\$31.7 million as of September 2023. MAR Fund has provided funding to partners in the region through different channels, such as small grants and large, multiannual projects. MAR Fund grantees include community organizations, NGOs, governmental organizations, academia, and individuals.

MAR Fund has also supported the establishment and operation of regional networks, such as the Connectivity Network, the Reef Restoration Network, the Sustainable Fisheries Network, and the Fish Spawning Aggregations Network. It is also part of the Healthy Reefs Initiative, an international effort that measures and tracks the health of coral reefs in the region, and the MAR Leadership Program, a capacity-building initiative that strengthens leadership skills of young conservationists in the four MAR countries and scales impact through support of their strategic projects.

The Fund carries out its mission through five programs, as follows:

1. Saving our protected areas: a legacy of caring. Establishment and protection of an interconnected network of priority coastal and marine protected areas in the region.

2. Fishing for the future: sustainable fisheries for a thriving reef. Community participation in co-management of their fisheries, establishment of fish replenishment zones and monitoring and protection of fish spawning aggregations.
3. Climate change: the need is now. Supporting adaptation to climate change and its impacts on the reef.
4. Belize marine fund: enhancing marine conservation in Belize with the participation of local stakeholders, for wider regional benefit.
5. Clean water for the reef: improving sewage and solid waste management for a healthier ecoregion and its people.

A cross-cutting initiative was launched in 2023, MAR+Invest, which is a business development and financing mechanism that supports conservation, protection and restoration of coral reefs and associated ecosystems through the development and financing of commercially viable projects that deliver on coral reef positive outcomes.

More information about the MAR Fund can be found at <https://marfund.org>

The Communications Officer will play a key role in enhancing the visibility of the organization regionally and internationally. The primary focus will be on developing and implementing a communication strategy and comprehensive project communication plans, maintaining positive media relations, and ensuring consistency in messaging across various platforms.

## **2. Position overview**

The Communications Officer will be responsible for developing and implementing communication strategies to promote the MAR Fund's objectives, activities, and achievements. The role requires a strong focus on creating compelling content, managing digital platforms, engaging stakeholders, and maintaining a positive public image.

## **3. Key responsibilities**

### **a. Strategy Development**

- Develop and implement a yearly comprehensive and creative communication strategy aligned with MAR Fund's goals.
- Identify target audiences and tailor communication approaches to effectively reach and engage them.
- Ensure consistency in messaging across various communication channels.
- Coordinate the implementation of the different specific project communication plans or donor communication requirements

### **b. Media Relations**

- Cultivate and maintain positive relationships with media outlets.
- Prepare and distribute press releases, media kits, and other materials.
- Facilitate interviews and media interactions for organizational representatives.

**c. Content Creation**

- Develop compelling content for various platforms, including press releases, articles, and social media posts.
- Coordinate the creation of multimedia content, such as videos and infographics.
- Develop and distribute the corporate newsletter.
- Coordinate development of project updates.
- Coordinate MAR Fund Webinars.
- Assist in the development of the annual report.
- Outsourcing and follow-up of consultants (designers, videographers, or others) as needed.
- Ensure compliance with MAR Fund's Graphic Identity and Brand Manual in all communication documents.

**d. Digital Media and Social Networking**

- Manage and update MAR Fund's website and social media platforms.
- Monitor online conversations and respond to inquiries.
- Propose and develop and implement social media campaigns to enhance engagement and awareness.

**d. Internal Communication**

- Develop and implement internal communication strategies to keep staff and specific project partner organizations informed.
- Stay engaged in projects and with the MAR Fund team to identify communication needs and suggest communication materials and / or actions.

**e. Event Management**

- Collaborate in the organization of events (e.g. workshops) to plan for press conferences and awareness campaigns.
- Ensure effective communication before, during, and after events.

**f. Collaboration and Partnerships**

- Collaborate with external partners, NGOs, and government agencies on joint communication initiatives.
- Identify opportunities for cross-promotion and mutual support.

**g. Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Monitor the impact of communication activities and adjust strategies as needed.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of communication campaigns and report on key performance indicators

**h. Safeguards**

- Monitor the compliance of the MAR Fund environmental and social safeguards related to communication.

#### **4. Oversight**

The Communications Officer will report directly to the Assistant to the Executive Director.

#### **5. Duration of contract**

The position is potentially part-time. The contract will be for a 12-month period, subject to renewal, with a trial period of three months. During the last month of the contractual period, a contract review will be conducted by the supervisor, who will provide guidance on the decision regarding the offer of a subsequent contract. Any new contract will specify the upcoming projects and responsibilities for the following period.

For individuals residing in Guatemala, the hiring will be conducted on an indefinite basis, in accordance with terms regulated by Guatemalan law.

#### **6. Place of work**

The position may be based in any of the Mesoamerican Reef countries. The communication officer will work from her/his place of residence.

#### **7. Compensation**

Fees will be determined according to the candidate's experience. Payments will be disbursed on a monthly basis, and the consultant or employee is required to submit an invoice for each payment, inclusive of taxes.

Travel expenses associated with essential activities related to MAR Fund business will be reimbursed.

#### **8. Qualifications and attributes**

- a) Resourcefulness, adaptability, creativity, innovation, and ability to work proactively.
- b) Excellent verbal, writing and editing skills for various formats, such as press releases, speeches, articles, and other digital communication materials in English and Spanish.
- c) Educational background in Communications, Public Relations, or a related field.
- b) Proven experience in a communications role, preferably in a non-profit or similar sector. Minimum 3 years of writing and editorial experience.
- c) Proficiency in using communication tools and technology, including but not limited to email, content management systems, social media platforms, and graphic design and video editing software.
- d) Proficient in digital media, social media platforms, and digital content creation.
- e) Knowledge and experience in dealing with media outlets, reporters, and journalists.
- f) Excellent organizational skills, attention to detail, and ability to multitask and meet deadlines.
- g) Action-oriented; able to act and react as necessary, even if limited information is available.

- h) Demonstrated capacity to resolve internal and external challenges and identify and respond to opportunities.
- i) Ability to represent MAR Fund with professionalism, discretion, and diplomacy
- j) Knowledge of the Mesoamerican Reef region.
- k) Team player with excellent interpersonal skills, including a good sense of humor, self-awareness, and openness to feedback.
- l) Experience as a facilitator/moderator of virtual events preferable.
- m) Availability to travel within the MAR region and beyond if needed.

## 9. Application process

Qualified individuals should submit the following documents to [recursoshumanos@marfund.org](mailto:recursoshumanos@marfund.org) by January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024.

1. Curriculum Vitae
2. One-page essay (maximum) indicating the reason she/he is interested in this position and why they are the best person for the job, in English and Spanish.
3. Portfolio showcasing relevant work.
4. Three references, at least two of them from existing or former direct supervisors.

**Note:** The terms of reference are subject to revision based on the evolving needs of MAR Fund. The successful candidate will be expected to adapt to changing circumstances and contribute to the growth and success of MAR Fund's communication efforts.