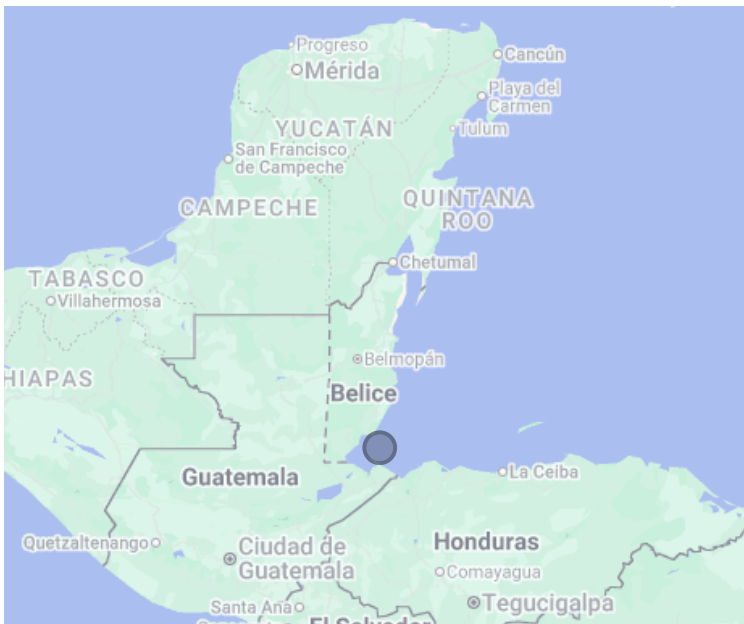
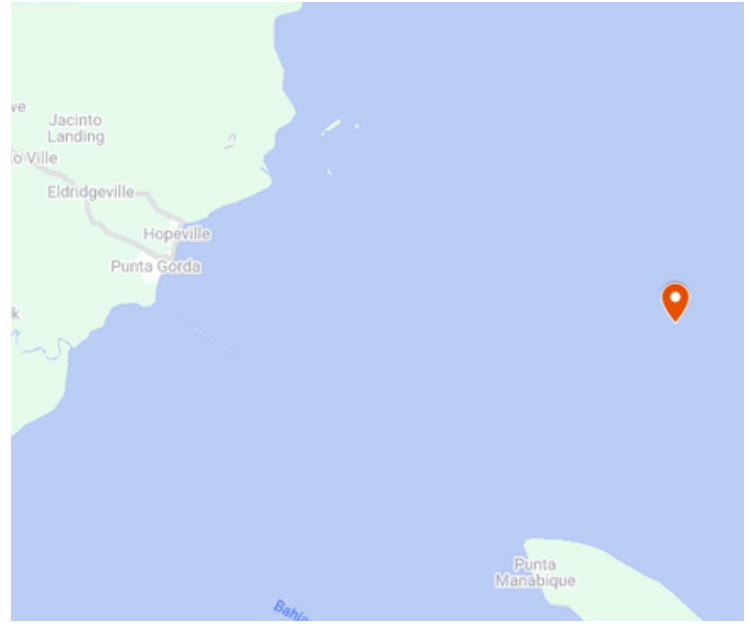


Enhancing Protection and Conservation of Commercial Species, Coral Reefs, and Fish Spawning Aggregation Sites in Sapodilla Cayes Marine Reserve, Belize.



Location of the Sapodilla Cayes Marine Reserve



Sapodilla Cayes Marine Reserve

Map Data © 2025 Google

COUNTRY

Belize

COASTAL MARINE PROTECTED AREA (CMPA)

Sapodilla Cayes Marine Reserve (SCMR)

CO MANAGER

Toledo Institute for Development and Environment (TIDE)

DURATION

May 2024 – May 2027

PROJECT SUMMARY

TIDE will implement the management plan strategies to protect and conserve biodiversity of commercial species and ecosystems of the CMPA, focusing on fish spawning aggregations (FSA), including the new Cayman Crown area.

This project will involve key groups from Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras, and will benefit the fishing communities that depend on this area.

Activities will be carried out to address illegal transboundary fishing in no-take zones and FSAs, using innovative surveillance technology, as well as the declaration and protection of new FSA sites and the study of key commercial species.

Infrastructure will be rehabilitated to ensure the proper functioning of the CMPA. In addition, staff will be trained in methods to address stony coral tissue loss disease (SCTLD) and mitigate its spread.

Fishers will be supported to develop alternative livelihoods and alliances with organizations from Guatemala and Honduras will be strengthened.

REACH

Protected area
130,156
hectares



Number of
beneficiaries
265



Photo: Andrés Aldana

KEY TOPICS AND ACTIVITIES

CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

- Integrate innovative technology to streamline surveillance in SCMR, and develop and implement a control and surveillance plan.
- Train SCMR staff in monitoring protocols and fishing regulations to improve research and monitoring of marine ecosystems and commercial species in the protected area.
- Rehabilitate infrastructure and communication channels for the proper management of SCMR, and install boundary and anchor buoys in the protected area.
- Develop and implement a response plan for hard coral tissue loss disease in SCMR.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of SCMR management.

SUSTAINABLE USE WITH LOCAL PARTICIPATION

- Support income diversification initiatives in Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras.
- Prepare a report analyzing key stakeholders for the SCMR.
- Develop a systematic threat assessment for the SCMR.
- Modify the SCMR legal instrument to designate new fish aggregation areas and no-fishing zones.

STRENGTHENING AMONG KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND GOVERNANCE

- Conduct knowledge exchange visits between conservation partners in Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras.
- Organize meetings of members of the Tri-National Alliance for the Gulf of Honduras.
- Revise the Cooperation Agreement between TIDE, FUNDAECO, and Healthy Reefs for Healthy People to include Cuerpos de Conservación Omoa, a partner in Honduras.
- Organize trinational forums for fishermen in Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras.



The project "Protection of Maritime Resources in Central America III (Phase III)" represents a joint and ongoing effort to strengthen the effective management of marine and coastal protected areas of the Mesoamerican Reef System. With the financial support of the German Cooperation through KfW, and the active participation of local managers and implementers, this regional effort strengthens the protection of key ecosystems and the benefits they provide to communities. Learn more: