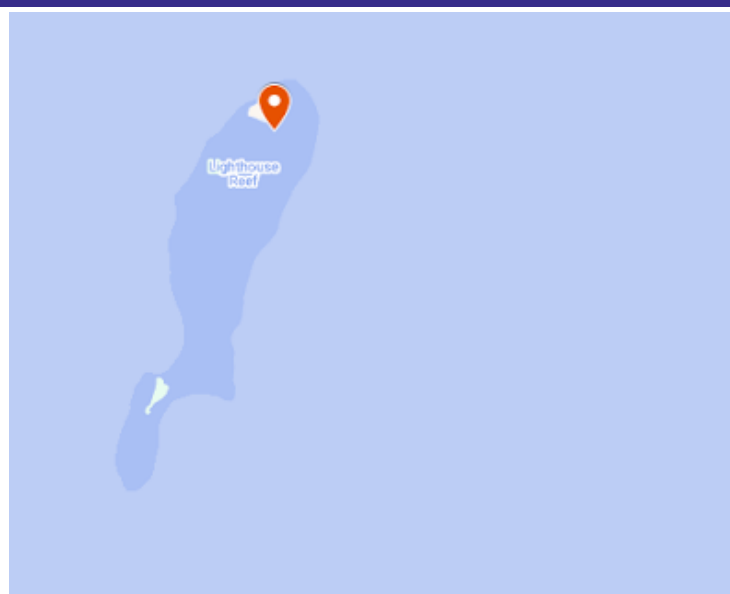


Enhancing biodiversity protection zones within and around Half Moon Caye and Blue Hole Natural Monuments for improved management effectiveness



Location



Map Data © 2025 Google

COUNTRY

Belize

COASTAL MARINE PROTECTED AREAS (CMPA)

- Half Moon Caye Natural Monument (HMCNM),
- Blue Hole Natural Monument (BHNM) and
- Fish Spawning Aggregation (FSA) sites: Sanbore, Northern Two Caye, Half Moon Caye Wall y South Point

CO MANAGER

Belize Audubon Society (BAS)

DURATION

August 2025 - June 2028

PROJECT SUMMARY:

The project aims to improve management effectiveness in the HMCNM and BHNM areas through the introduction of innovative surveillance technologies, strengthening of surveillance personnel capacities, and the pilot implementation of HMCNM as a landing site to monitor commercial fishing across the Lighthouse Reef Atoll. To support evidence-based management, the capacities of research staff will be strengthened, new studies on coral reefs and fish spawning aggregation sites will be conducted, and specialized equipment will be installed to enhance monitoring and decision-making.

The project recognizes key stakeholders as essential partners for its success. Therefore, their participation will be promoted through community initiatives that improve local well-being, align incentives toward pro-environmental behavior, and raise awareness of existing regulations.

The project will contribute to advancing conservation goals, support sustainable use, and foster resilience in the face of challenges posed by climate change and other environmental pressures, enabling informed decision-making for adaptive management in both areas.

REACH

Protected area
5,446.90
hectares



Number of
beneficiaries
230



Photo: Tony Rath

KEY TOPICS AND ACTIVITIES

CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

- Integrate innovative technology (radar, drone, mobile water-based weather station) and tools to improve enforcement, surveillance, monitoring and research.
- Carry out a knowledge, attitude, and practice survey with users to improve management effectiveness of both HMCNM and BHNM.
- Install demarcation and mooring buoys within HMCNM & BHNM.
- Capacity building for staff on enforcement of fisheries regulations and monitoring protocols.
- Evaluate management effectiveness for both CMPAs.

SUSTAINABLE USE WITH LOCAL PARTICIPATION

- Pilot Half Moon Caye as a fisheries catch landing site.
- Develop and adopt sustainable tourism best practices guidelines for recreational activities.
- Pilot a fisher apprenticeship program.
- Pilot a marine pollution drop-off and incentive program.

STRENGTHENING AMONG KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND GOVERNANCE

- Support knowledge exchange opportunities for staff (Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute's annual conference).
- Support two alternative livelihoods initiatives with fishing communities.
- Strengthen Chunox Fisherman Association



Photo: Tony Rath



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:

www.marfund.org