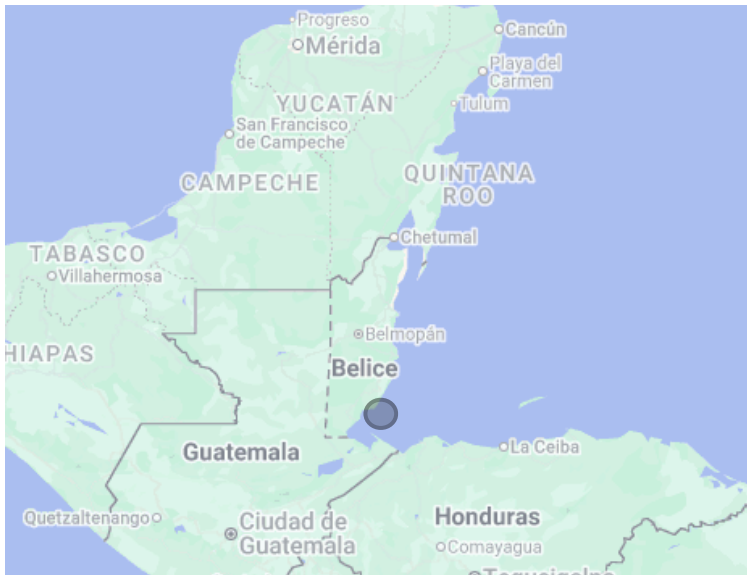
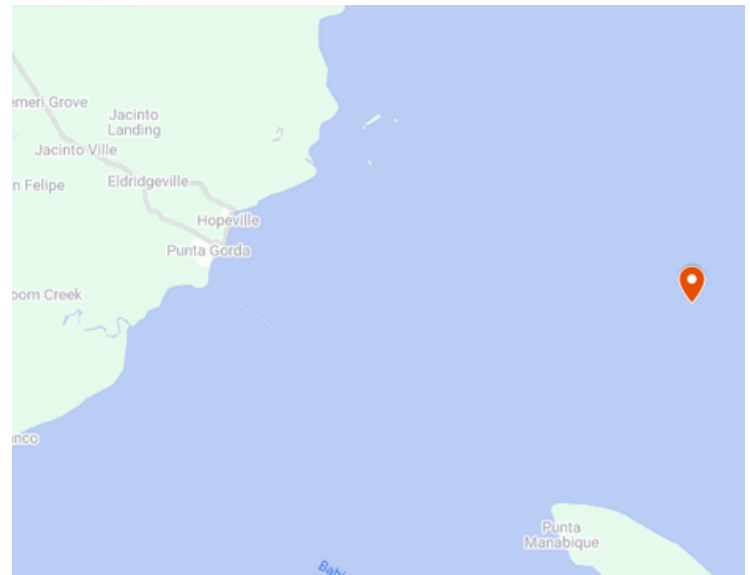


PROTECTION OF MARITIME RESOURCES IN CENTRAL AMERICA III (PHASE III)

The Phase III project represents a joint effort to strengthen the effective management of coastal and marine protected areas of the Mesoamerican Reef System. With financial contribution from the German Cooperation through the KfW, and the active participation of managers and co-managers of the CMPAs, this regional initiative enhances the protection of strategic ecosystems and contributes to sustaining the benefits they provide to local communities.



Location of Sapodilla Cayes Marine Reserve



Sapodilla Cayes Marine Reserve, Belize

Map Data © 2026 Google

ENHANCING PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF COMMERCIAL SPECIES, CORAL REEFS, AND FISH SPAWNING AGGREGATION SITES IN SAPODILLA CAYES MARINE RESERVE, BELIZE

Country	Belize
Coastal Marine Protected Area (CMPA)	Sapodilla Cayes Marine Reserve (SCMR)
Comanager	Toledo Institute for Development and Environment (TIDE)
Duration	May 2024 – May 2027
Reach	130,156 hectares of protected area and 265 beneficiaries



Photo: Edwin Cabrera

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.

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 trilateral forums for fishermen in Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras.



Photo: TIDE

Visit the QR code to learn more:

