

The German Financial Cooperation contributes € 5 million to the Mesoamerican Reef Fund



Dear Friend,

We are happy to share great news with you!

As you know, the Mesoamerican Reef Fund (MAR Fund) is dedicated to promoting and implementing transnational solutions for the preservation and sustainable use of the natural resources of the whole Mesoamerican Reef eco-region. Our first priority has been to attract significant new funding to the area to support the vital work of preserving the Reef and promoting wise and sustainable use of its marine resources.

For this reason, we are pleased to tell you that this past December 2010, KfW, the German Development Bank, awarded the MAR Fund 5 million Euros (equivalent to approximately \$6,900,000 dollars) to advance our Protected Areas initiative. KfW conducted a long and rigorous

assessment of the initiative's quality and impact and agreed that it was critical and meritorious. It is very satisfactory to say that KfW found the MAR Fund to be a worthy concept and partner to ensure an ecologically and economically thriving Mesoamerican Reef System.

We hope this grant will be the first in a series of donations from KfW and other international funders that we will bring to the region.

This grant is the culmination of years of work, shared values and dedication. We thank you for coming on this journey with us.

Why are MPA's Important?

The marine protected areas (MPAs) of the Mesoamerican Reef eco-region are a vital part of broader global system designed to conserve the marine heritage and life-support system of the world, and to ensure that where living marine resources are used, they are used in an ecologically sustainable manner. The world urgently needs to sustain and continue to expand this comprehensive system of MPAs to conserve biodiversity and to help rebuild the productivity of the oceans. MPAs can help achieve the three main objectives of living resource conservation as defined in

the World Conservation Strategy (IUCN, 1980):

- To maintain essential ecological processes and life support systems;
- To preserve genetic diversity; and
- To ensure the sustainable utilization of marine species and ecosystems.

KfW, the German Development Bank, dedicated to improving the quality of life and the environment in the developing world, has committed an initial 5 million Euros to support the conservation of Marine Protected Areas of the Mesoamerican Reef eco-region.

MAR Fund, a four country conservation consortia devoted to inspiring innovative, transnational solutions to critical Mesoamerican reef issues, will be the recipient and distributor of the funds.

As German Cooperation, this project will allow us to support and learn about marine resources, goods and services. We have high expectations about the results and are optimistic about obtaining important impacts in management and conservation of priority protected areas in the Mesoamerican Reef. We have come to know the MAR Fund in this process, and believe this will be a long and successful working relation.

Stefan Rischar, Project Manager, KfW

"MAR-Fund is a good example of an institution that combines regional planning with local execution and benefits from the ongoing cooperation between the four governments. Its four founding members are National Environmental Funds (NEFs), also known as Trust Funds, committed to conservation as transparent, state of the art, implementing agencies that guarantee the effective application of financial and technical resources on site."

Lorenzo Rosenzweig, Chairman of MAR-Fund

"The Summit Foundation applauds KfW's substantial investment which will help ensure that the Mesoamerican Reef supports vibrant economies and provides abundant marine resources for generations to come."

Carlos Saavedra, Executive Director of The Summit Foundation

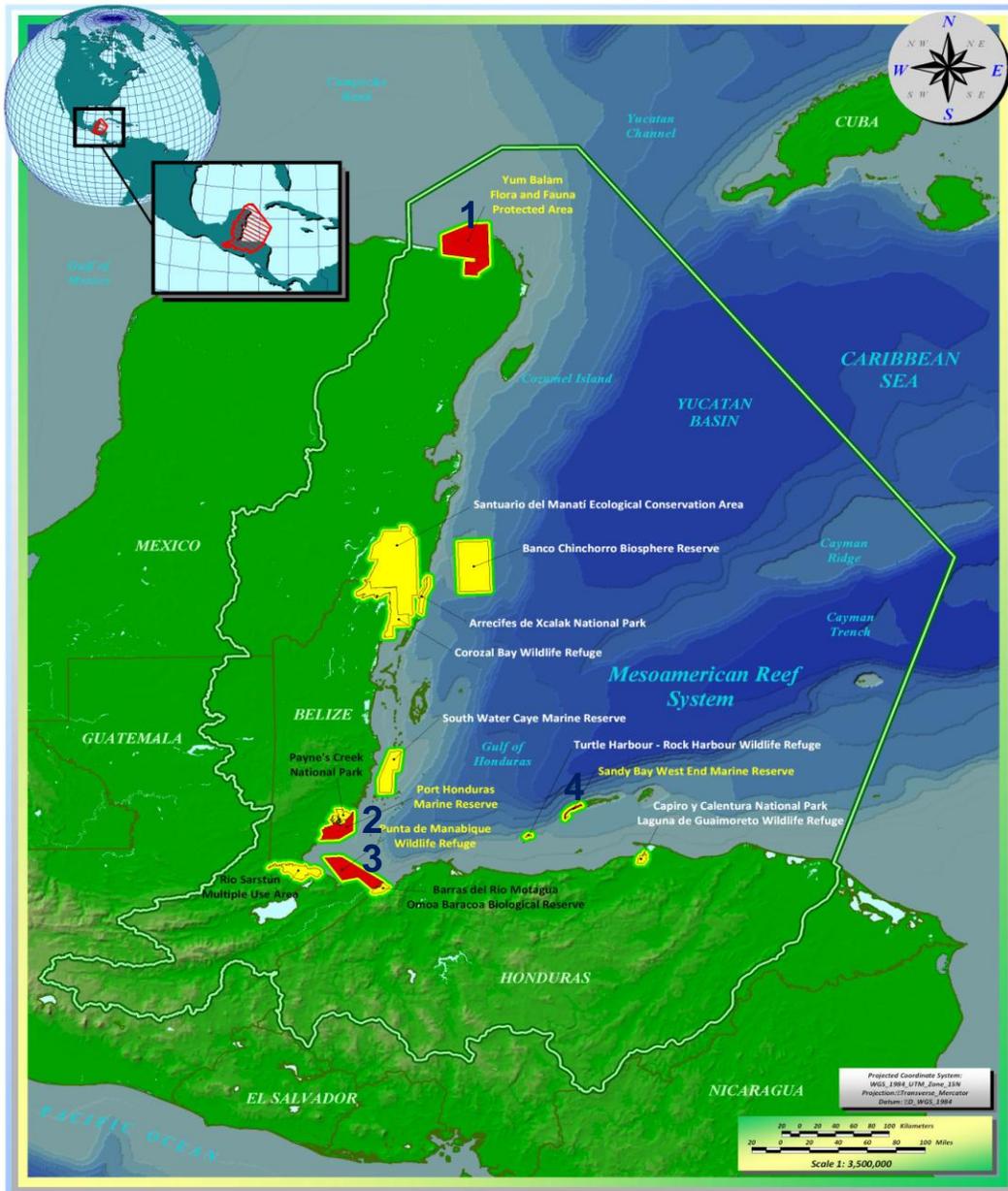
Fourteen coastal and marine protected areas have been flagged as high priorities for preservation and protection within the Mesoamerican Reef ecosystem. The 5 Million Euro donation from KfW, the German Development Bank, will be used to sustain and protect some of the most important and fragile MPA's in the Mesoamerican Reef network.

The preservation and sustainable use of these ecosystems is a vital element of the broader MAR Fund strategy to sustain an ecologically and economically thriving Mesoamerican Reef ecosystem.

The MPA's to be supported by this KfW donation are the following:

1. Yum Balam Flora and Fauna Protection Area, Mexico
2. Port Honduras Marine Reserve, Belize
3. Punta de Manabique Wildlife Refuge, Guatemala
4. Sandy Bay West End Marine Reserve, Honduras

Figure 1. Priority coastal and marine protected areas





The German Financial Cooperation awards the MAR Fund €5 Million for the MAR

The Mesoamerican Reef Ecoregion stretches across 1000 km of coastline from the Yum Balam Flora and Fauna Protection Area on the tip of the Yucatan Peninsula to the Bay Islands of Honduras, crossing four international boundaries. As an interconnected barrier reef system, it represents one of the most important economic and ecological assets in the Atlantic Ocean.

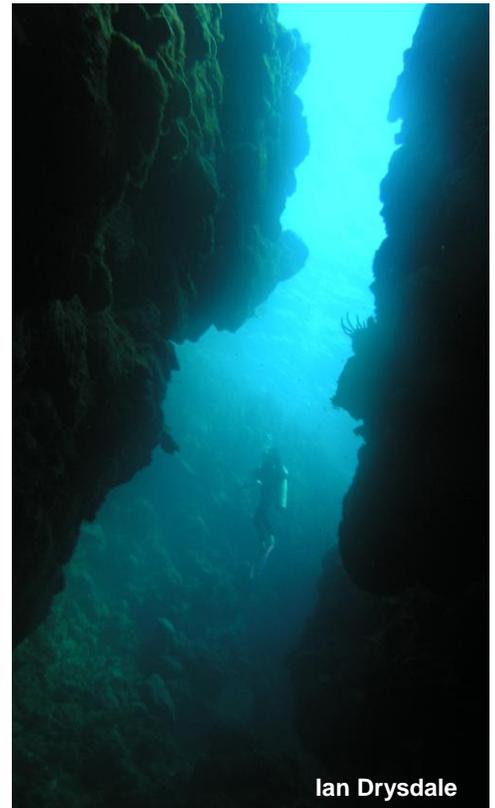
The Mesoamerican Reef Fund (MAR Fund) is dedicated to coordinating, funding, and implementing multinational reef conservation strategies that "put the reef first" and promote a thriving ecological and economic ecoregion across national country boundaries.

In recognition of the MAR Fund's mission and leadership role in preserving the Mesoamerican Reef Ecosystem, the German Development Bank -KfW- has awarded the MAR Fund 5 million Euros (approximately \$6,900,000) to support a network of priority coastal and marine protected areas.

The Mesoamerican Reef's MPA Initiative includes an initial network of 14 priority coastal and marine protected areas representing some of the foundational ecological centers of the Mesoamerican Reef Ecosystem. Together, they create a backbone of biological resources central to the health of the whole system. The KfW grant will help sustain this network, initially targeting four key protected areas and exploring opportunities to support 5 additional *high priority* areas in the future, to ensure the health, biodiversity, and sustainable use of the Mesoamerican Reef System.



Peter Rockstroh



Ian Drysdale

The Belize Barrier Reef System is critical to the growth and development of our Country. This system brings global significance to the wider Meso-American Barrier Reef system, since it comprises a UNESCO world heritage site-The Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System-World Heritage Site. The Belizean people are very proud of this natural heritage and welcome the support of the German Development Bank and the German Government. We also applaud the efforts of the MAR Fund in facilitating this much needed funding for the benefit of the region.

Sharon Ramclam, Vice President MAR Fund

The funding from this project that will go to Punta de Manabique Wildlife Refuge will support the implementation of the new Management Plan in three important components: fisheries co-management and restoration with local fishermen; scientific research for adequate decision making, and strengthening of local presence through patrolling. These resources will also favor closer coordination between the National Council for Protected Areas and FUNDARY, as co-administrators of an area that is subject to great pressures and threats, but of very important value in terms of the environmental services it provides and its great ecological and biological richness as a strategic enclave for the Mesoamerican Reef.

Yvonne Ramirez, Treasurer MAR Fund

The coral reefs of the Mesoamerican Reef System constitute one of the most important marine resources of the Honduran Caribbean. Its protection and conservation are an urgent need to ensure the survival of its biodiversity and source of livelihoods for future generations. The support of the German Government, through the project with KfW, with a regional focus is a valuable contribution towards the goals of conservation and development in this important Mesoamerican Reef Ecoregion.

Carlos Vigil, Secretary MAR Fund