**BL-L1020**

**Project Data Sheets**

**Sustainable Tourism Project II - BL-L1020**

**Project Data Sheets**

# Product 1.1 Archaeological Sites Enhanced: *Nim Li Punit*

1. **Objective:** To increase visitation at Nim Li Punit Archaeological Reserve by reprogramming the site layout and design and upgrading visitor facilities. The overall goal is to enhance visitor experience and increase the capacity of the site infrastructure to manage visitor flow in a way which will optimize visitor satisfaction and time spent on-site, translating to added economic benefits for local community members and stakeholders.
2. **Location:** The archaeological site of Nim Li Punit extends over 121 acres within the village of Indian Creek, Toledo District and lies at the top of a ridge in the foothills of the Maya Mountains. Members of the community reside within the park boundaries in a designated area between the roadside and the power lines. Nim Li Punit is located 25 miles north of Punta Gorda, with the site core situated one mile uphill from the Southern highway.
3. **Beneficiaries**

* Foreign and Local Visitors to Site.
* Tour guides and tour operators from southern Belize including those operating from Placencia, Hopkins, and Toledo.
* Local artisans and the Women’s Group of Indian Creek
* Indirectly, other local tourism stakeholders including accommodation, transportation, and food and beverage providers
* NICH and IA
* Community Members

1. **Technical and economic justification:** Toledo has traditionally been considered an “off the beaten track” type of destination for Belize’s main US market, being a four hour drive from the international airport in Belize City. For the past two years Toledo has received the lowest number of visitor arrivals, totaling 10, 526 or 3.3% of the total market share in 2014, with an average annual growth since 2006 of 1.1% (Market study 2014). Coming on-stream in 2016 there are however two major new developments which will have considerable impact on Toledo’s tourism product: the paving of the San Antonio road which will create a new land border entry point with Guatemala to the west, and the completion and operations of a new cruise port at Harvest Caye, 2 miles south of Big Creek port, Stann Creek. The new border connection at Jalacte has potential to open a new market of Guatemalan visitors as well as to increase the opportunity for multi-destination packages incorporating Toledo. Even without the border connection, paving of San Antonio road through the interior has opened up the Maya villages and attractions en-route to tourism development from visitors in the beach destinations of Placencia and Hopkins. Located adjacent to the southern Highway and only 1 ½ from the Placencia cutoff and half an hour from Punta Gorda Nim Li Punit is accessible and can easily be combined with Toledo Adventure Trail attractions.

The NSTMP gives Cultural Tourism high priority as the main tourism product for Toledo, focusing on both living culture and cultural heritage sites. Insufficient basic services and infrastructure support services adapted to visitation capacity, such as road accessibility, public toilets, waste management, safety standards and emergency response are identified as major gaps in the cultural tourism product.

Nim Li Punit is one of only two sites in Toledo officially declared as an archaeological site. In 2014 visitation was almost 7, 000 visitors an increase of 50% over the past 5 years, although visitation seems to be on a downward trend with a decrease by 5% in 2013. Excavations are ongoing and earlier this year its profile was boosted with a major find of 26 ceramic pots and several jade pieces. One, a jade pectoral, is argued by some archaeologists to be the most decorative jade piece discovered in all Mesoamerica, and has been described as one of the most important discoveries in Belize since the Jade Head. Recent investments in craft market infrastructure and craft training was made in 2014, in addition to trail development within the core of the site itself. However, there is an urgent need for the site layout and facilities to be reprogrammed to appropriately manage increasing visitation and to meet current safety and quality standards. The site has several challenges that need to be addressed: the topography and small acreage of level land has meant structures and parking are clustered in the immediate vicinity of the ancient monuments; access to water and power is insufficient to meet a rising demand; and the current facilities at the site, including the restrooms were constructed over 17 years ago.

1. **Description:** Preliminary list of activities and investments to be undertaken

* Feasibility and technical studies for site planning – looking at future demand, topography, water, electrical requirements, visitor center, restrooms, trails and road access and parking.
* Site Redevelopment and Management Plan to include expansion of site core for visitation, parking and access, restroom facilities, visitor information center, local artisan zone and cultural activities, and inclusion of recent jade and ceramic discovery in the visitor experience.
* Construction works of priority areas under Site Redevelopment and Management Plan, including updating of visitor center exhibit, restroom facilities, parking, trails, and other visitor facilities etc.
* Management and Monitoring of Investments.

1. **Products and indicators**

Output: archaeological sites enhanced Baseline 0; Target 1

Outcome: Number of visitors at site Baseline 9653 (2014); Target: annually increase of 5% (note that visitation dropped 5% from 2013-2014)

1. **Estimated cost and source of financing**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Estimated cost USD** | **Source** |
| Feasibility and technical studies and site redevelopment and management plan | 25,000 |  |
| Visitor Center update | 25,000 |
| Prioritized works | 175, 000 |
| Supervision | 10, 000 |
| Operation and maintenance (annual) |  |
| **Total** | **235,000** |

1. **Management model**

Site will be managed by NICH in accordance to management plan recommendations developed in conjunction with the Site Redevelopment Plan.

1. **Responsible institutions**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Lead institution** | **Participating institution** |
| Feasibility and technical studies and site redevelopment plan | MTCCA | NICH |
| Visitor center upgrade | NICH |  |
| Construction works | MTCCA/NICH |  |
| Supervision | MTCCA |  |
| Operations, management, maintenance | NICH |  |

1. **Calendar of execution**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **2016** | | **2017** | | **2018** | | **2019** | |
| **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** |
| Feasibility and technical studies and site redevelopment plan | **X** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Visitor center upgrade | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Construction works |  | **X** | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |  |
| Supervision |  | **X** | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |  |

1. **Studies needed for execution**

Feasibility study

1. **Procedure/environmental studies or others**

Environmental Clearance

1. **Positive and negative environmental and social impacts**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Impacts** | **Positives** | **Negatives** |
| **Social** | * Employment opportunities to implement monitoring and visitor management recommendations * Increased economic benefit to tourism stakeholders and local communities * Increased revenue to management agencies * Increased appreciate of national and cultural heritage by locals and visitors alike. | * Disturbance to local lifestyle and privacy of on-site residents during construction   -Potential for increased disturbance and cultural impact through increased visitation -can be mitigated through scheduling and tourist education |
| **Environmental** | * Preservation of cultural heritage * Improved sanitation facilities * Reduced Erosion through improved access trails | * Noise pollution during construction * Air pollution/Dust during construction * Earth moving * Erosion * Clearance of vegetation |

1. **Priority and relation to other initiatives:** Aligned with NSTMP. Priority investment of NICH within annual work plan. BTB has also invested in the creation of a nearby Toledo Adventure Trail linking small scale cultural tourism attractions.

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# Product 1.1 Archaeological Sites Enhanced: *Hokeb Ha, Rio Frio and Las Cuevas Cave Systems*

1. **Objective:** Investments at three cave systems, currently being utilized by the public, in order to improve access and visitor safety at the sites, enhance visitor experience through interpretation, added amenities and improved aesthetics and improved visitor management and monitoring. Ultimately, the Belize cultural tourism product offering will be diversified and the visitor, locals and tourism industry will have a greater appreciation of the value and spiritual significance of these archaeological sites.

Investments at Rio Frio Caves will serve to:

1. Improve visitor safety to a large walk-in cave and alternative nearby cave areas, enhancing accessibility to all age groups and fitness levels.
2. Improve visitor experience through planned parking and visitor management measures, facilities, enhanced aesthetics, and accessibility;
3. Add value to the MPR and Caracol tour itineraries providing interpretation of the significance of the areas geology and subterranean archaeological sites.

Investments at Las Cuevas will serve to:

1. Improve visitor safety and accessibility to the cave and link the subterranean site of Las Cuevas with the temple structure above it through improved trails, signage and interpretation.
2. Create an alternative destination in the Chiquibul, to the traditional sites within the Mountain Pine Ridge, thus relieving pressure and potential overcrowding.
3. Initiating the development of tourism products within the Chiquibul to enhance the areas primacy, as well as to complement the biodiversity management efforts of the Chiquibul, and creating synergies with other existent and potentially existent cultural tourism products in the complex.

Investments at Hokeb Ha will serve to:

1. Provide a gateway to the site which will allow for fulltime presence to facilitate the control and monitoring of access to the cave site, and the provision of appropriate dissemination of safety information;
2. Improve access conditions, especially during wet weather conditions, through the creation of an appropriate access trail away from the river’s edge with an added rainforest dimension to the tour;
3. Enhance visitor facilities for an improved visitor experience to include onsite interpretation, signage, restrooms and changing facilities.
4. **Location:** Three sites have been selected for investment: Rio Frio Cave within the Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve, Cayo ; Las Cuevas located within the Chiquibul National Park in western Belize and Hokeb Ha (also known as Blue Creek Cave) adjacent to the Maya community of Blue Creek in Toledo
5. **Beneficiaries**
   * Day visitors to the MPR Forest reserve and Hokeb Ha
   * NICH, FD and co-management agency for Las Cuevas Research Station
   * Local communities adjacent to the sites (Blue Creek in Toledo; San Antonio, Cristo Rey, Georgeville and San Ignacio/Santa Elena in Cayo , Agencies
   * Tourism industry stakeholders specifically the Tour Operators and Tour guides operating in the Cayo and Toledo District
6. **Technical and economic justification:** The geological make-up of Belize has created a “karst landscape” of vast caverns, extensive cave systems and sinkholes. These subterranean sites played a significant role in the life of the Maya, and evidence of ritual practices have been found in most cave systems. As such NICH and the Institute of Archaeology has jurisdiction over all activities carried out within caves in Belize.

THE NSTMP has recognized the importance of the cave systems to the diversification of the cultural tourism product and calls for the development of a National Caving Trail, that highlights key cave sites throughout the country. However, caves are fragile ecosystems; are often located within private lands hence exacerbating accessibility constraints; have undergone limited archaeological excavation; and present numerous challenges in terms of safety and visitor management.

The Rio Frio cave in the MPR is one of the more easily accessible caverns and is well established as a tourist attraction visited by independent travellers and as part of tour itineraries for over 25 years. It is a high profile site for the MPR and 18% of all visitors to Cayo visited Rio Frio in May 2015 (Exit Survey) which suggests visitation levels of around 4,000 visitors a year. The cave site can be accessed by foot or by vehicle from the central area of Douglas D’Silva which is programmed for establishment as a logistics and information center for the MPR, therefore Rio Frio will undoubtedly experience increased visitation. Current infrastructure at the site includes an unsuitable concrete trail with chain barriers that is contributing to erosion along the access path and negatively impacting the cave formations inside the cavern. The alluvial soil at the gateway of the site is not conducive to heavy traffic and there is no signage nor information to assist with visitor management.

In contrast, Las Cuevas is a low-profile and undeveloped site deep in the Chiquibul National Park within the area of the Las Cuevas Research Station. Archaeological excavation continues at the site, which is unique due to the construction of a Maya temple structure immediately above the subterranean cavern. Accessed by a steep natural trail, there are presently no infrastructural developments at the site, and the cave continues to be a source of water for the research station. Educational and research groups based at the station are the primary visitors to the cave entrance area, with the potential for further expansion to other visitor markets as the area of the Chiquibul National Park opens up to tourism.

Tourist arrivals in southern Belize continue to grow with increases of 15%, 12% and 3% respectively for the destinations of Placencia, Stann Creek and Toledo for 2014. Hokeb Ha in the Toledo District is currently being marketed by tour operators, tour guides and accommodations not only throughout Toledo but also by the southern Belize tourist destinations. Tours of this wet cave system involve swimming and trekking after entering the cave close to the Maya village of Blue Creek, and conditions can be challenging, impacted by changing water flow and levels. However, the cave has not officially been declared an archaeological site, and as such individuals visiting the cave system do so at their own risk. There are currently no controls, safeguards or monitoring of visitation and tour practices, and no fee collection system in place. Although investment in vending structures was made by the MTBCAAS project under the MTCCA in 2014 in an effort to enhance the economic benefit to the community of Blue Creek, other visitor infrastructure is limited. Access is currently restricted to the 66ft public reserve along the stretch of the river which presents challenges due to unsafe conditions. For the future NICH plans to legally formalize the site as an Archaeological Reserve and provide fulltime staffing and management of the cave.

1. **Description**

**Investments at Rio Frio Caves** will include:

* + - Site Management Plan (visitor and heritage management guidelines)
    - Technical investigation of topography, drainage and erosion patterns to design appropriate interventions for:
* Improvements to parking area
* Improved access trail and trail system – which will involve the removal of the existing concrete trails and chain railings and the development of a new environmentally sensitive access trail into the cave mouth including visitor safety measures in line with the National Standards for Safety at Archaeological Sites
  + - Works to include:
* Site clearing and demolition of existing trail
* Compacting and surface rehabilitation/enhancement of parking area
* Construction of new access Trail to main cave, and supporting trail system to the wider Rio Frio Cave System.
  + - Design and installation of onsite interpretation and signage. Note: signage will serve to direct visitors to use all bathroom facilities at the Logistics and Information center in Douglas D’Silva

**Investments at Las Cuevas** will include:

* + - Site Management and Development plan
    - Technical investigation of topography, drainage and erosion patterns to design appropriate interventions for access trail including visitor safety measures in line with the National Standards for Safety at Archaeological Sites
    - Works to construct environmentally sensitive access trail
    - Design and installation of signage and interpretation.

**Investments at Hokeb Ha** will include:

* + - Site Management and Development Plan
    - Technical investigation of topography, drainage and erosion patterns to design appropriate interventions for access trail including visitor safety measures in line with the National Standards for Safety at Archaeological Sites
    - Site concept plan for gateway area, and architectural and engineering designs for bathroom and changing facilities and guard house.
    - Construction works to include:
* gateway facilities (parking, bathroom, guard room and changing facilities)
* New rainforest trail developed to access the site
* Design and installation of safety signage and other physical safety control measures, and interpretative signage.
* Onsite emergency medical and cave rescue equipment

1. **Products and indicators**

Output: cave systems enhanced and improved for visitation built: Baseline 0; Target 3

Outcome indicators : number of visitors to the cave sites Baseline unknown; Target:

Satisfaction levels of visitors to the caves. Baseline unknown; Target:

1. **Estimated cost and source of financing**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Estimated cost** | **Source** |
| Visitor management guidelines for the sites, site design concept layouts, trail design and interpretative planning. | 25,000 Hokeb Ha  12, 500 Rio Frio  6,250 Las Cuevas | IDB |
| Construction activities | 185, 000 Hokeb Ha  90, 000 Rio Frio  45, 000Las Cuevas |
| Construction supervision | 10,000 Hokeb Ha  5, 000 Rio Frio  2,500 Las Cuevas |
| Interpretation and safety signage and first aid/cave rescue equipment at Hokeb Ha | 15,000 Hokeb Ha  10,000 Rio Frio  5, 000 Las Cuevas |
| **Total** | **235,000 Hokeb Ha**  **117, 500 Rio Frio**  **58,750 Las Cuevas** |

1. **Management model**

Options for management model for Rio Frio incorporated within study and management of logistics center.

Hokeb Ha will be fully staffed by IA. Management Guidelines and policy to be developed prior to construction. Potential for partnership with private sector (adjacent lodge) will be explored.

Co-management with FD- or entity responsible for managing Research Station (currently FCD)

1. **Responsible institutions**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Lead institution** | **Participating institution** |
| Technical studies, Management guidelines, site and trail design concepts and drawings | MTCCA | NICH, MFFSD, FCD |
| Construction activities | MTCCA | NICH, MFFSD, FCD |
| Construction supervision | MTCCA | NICH, MFFSD. FCD |
| Management and Maintenance | NICH | FCD, MFFSD, MTCCA |

1. **Calendar of execution**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **2016** | | **2017** | | **2018** | | **2019** | | **2020** | |
| **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** |
| Technical studies, Management guidelines, site and trail design concepts and drawings |  |  | **X** |  | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |  |
| Construction activities |  |  |  | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |  |  |
| Construction supervision |  |  |  | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |  |  |

1. **Studies needed for execution:** Survey of trail area and designation as a public right of way- responsibility of IA
2. **Procedure/environmental studies or others:** Environmental clearance from DoE
3. **Positive and negative environmental and social impacts**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Impacts** | **Positives** | **Negatives** |
| **Social** | * Increased Safety * Employment opportunities * Increased economic benefit to tourism stakeholders and local communities * Increased revenue to management agencies * Increased appreciate of national and cultural heritage by locals and visitors alike. | * Potential for negative cultural impacts in Blue Creek if visitor is not educated and behaviour managed responsibly * Traffic congestion in village of Blue Creek * No communities in immediate vicinity of Las Cuevas and Rio Frio so minimal negative impacts |
| **Environmental** | * Preservation of cultural heritage * Reduced impact on nearby water sources * Reduced Erosion | * Water quality during construction from sedimentation * Erosion during construction * Clearance of vegetation and altering habitat * Potential for damage to fragile cave ecosystem if LAC are not monitored and impacts mitigated. |

1. **Priority and relation to other initiatives:** Priority to develop Caving Trail for Belize. Priority for NICH and Institute of Archaeology to diversify archaeological sites open to tourism in order to reduce pressures across the destinations, and also to increase management presence at cave sites currently being utilized for tourism. Priority for BTB and NICH to increase safety standards at Archaeological Sites in line with recently passed regulations.

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# Product 1.1 Archaeological Sites Enhanced: *Corozal Sites*

1. **Objective**: To improve visitor experience and opportunity for local economic benefit by elevating the status of the Corozal sites; creating a sense of place and connections with Corozal Bay and the heritage of the area; and improving visitor infrastructure and facilities.

**Site Specific Objectives:**

Investments at Santa Rita site will serve to:

1. Improve visitor experience by creating a sense of place for the temple through landscaping, interpretation, facilitation of visitor flows, infrastructure and facilities
2. Elevate the status of Santa Rita as an important Maya site and the birth place of the Mestizo Culture, central to the history of Corozal , and include as an anchor attraction as part of a Historical Town Trail;
3. Increase the capacity of the site to maximize economic return through events (including Weddings) and improved fee collection

Investments at Cerros will serve to:

1. Improve visitor experience through improved interpretation, and implementation of environmentally friendly, culturally representative pest control measures;
2. Create opportunity for linkage and connectivity with cultural attractions in Corozal Town (including Santa Rita) while promoting use of the Bay.
3. **Location:** Santa Rita is an in-town site at the northern entrance of Corozal Town, located 25 minutes walking distance from the Central Park, downtown area and the nearby House of Culture. Located in the primarily residential town neighbourhood of Santa Rita, the official site covers only 3 1/2 acres and is bordered by private residential parcels to the west, north and north east, an area of public green space (Santa Rita Park to the south east) and an industrial area to the west. It is the highest elevation within the town at 30ft above sea level.

Cerro Maya overlooks Corozal Bay 2 ½ miles north of the village of Copper Bank. The site covers 43 acres directly on the waterfront, with some of the structures along the north coast being subject to some coastal erosion. The site can be accessed by a 20 min boat ride across the Corozal Bay from Corozal Town or an hour via unpaved road and ferry crossing.

1. **Beneficiaries:**

* Day visitors (foreign and local) visiting the Archaeological Sites of Cerros and Santa Rita.
* The Institute of Archaeology, NICH and BTIA Corozal chapter (An MOU is in place between NICH and the Corozal BTIA, permitting them to utilize and promote Santa Rita as a site to host weddings)
* Tour operators and tour guides operating within the Corozal District and the wider tourism industry, local cultural groups and artisans and food and beverage providers within the district and the wider community of Corozal.

1. **Technical and economic justification:** Corozal District’s tourism visitation represents only 4.1% of the total market share, but following a severe decline in business during the global economic crisis of 2008, tourism numbers have been growing slowly over the past two years. Across the border, (9 miles to the north), is Chetumal, capital of the Mexican State of Quintana Roo with a population of 150, 000 and excellent road connectivity with the tourism mecca of Cancun and the Riviera Maya.

Ancient Maya presence is evident throughout the area with Santa Rita and Cerros being the officially declared Archaeological Reserves within the District open and accessible to the public. Both Santa Rita and Cerros, although important archaeological centers and well established public sites for many years, are currently not experiencing significant tourism visitation, with 955 visitors recorded at Santa Rita in 2014 and Cerros attracting a slightly lower number (810 visitors). However the exit survey of May 2015 indicated an interest of more than 2/3 of those overnight tourists to the area.

Excavation and consolidation work at the sites is not extensive, and the designated site area of Santa Rita in particular is small, nonetheless the sites are considered to be key attractions important to the development of the cultural tourism product of Corozal, and the overall Towns policy objective to “advance and promote a local tourist industry with the objective of creating more jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities for residents.”

Both Santa Rita and Cerros have the potential for inclusion within cultural tour itineraries and a town heritage trail, particulary given the close proximity to the House of Culture and the downtown historical attractions of Corozal Town. Santa Rita has the potential to support day itineraries to the anchor site and major Ceremonial center of Lamanai in Orange Walk accessible by either road or river from Corozal as an alternative to the current air/road/river itineraries being sold to the San Pedro tourism market.

The concept to use Santa Rita as a site for Cultural weddings is also being explored by the BTIA Corozal Chapter, aiming to develop a niche cultural product focused on Santa Rita’s rich cultural history as the birthplace of Mestizo culture. The annual “Maya Wedding” event, telling the story of the marriage of a Spanish Conquistador to the daughter of Chactemal Maya Chief Nachan complements this product and is currently Belize’s only historical reenactment at a Maya site.

This use of Santa Rita as a stage for weddings and historical reenactment has the support and endorsement of NICH, and the wider Corozal community. However, as noted in the market study, currently Santa Rita does not have the “framework to host ceremonies or gatherings (such as weddings) efficiently and sustainably”, there are no bathroom facilities, and the site has no clear boundary fence which places considerable limitations on visitor management, monitoring, privacy and security, particularly given its in-town location.

1. **Description**

Investments at Santa Rita Site to include:

* Management Plan (incl. events management guidelines, parking considerations etc) for Santa Rita
* Entrance Gate and Boundary works/fence using natural fencing(barrier plants and rocks) to isolate the site within its own environment, enabling a controlled entrance and privacy
* Restroom, picnic area and guards quarter
* Interpretative welcome panel

Investments at Cerros will include:

* Site guide interpretative manual
* Upgrade to existing restroom
* revamp visitor center interpretation and welcome signage on dock
* Natural Pest control (which can be included within site interpretation programming)

1. **Products and indicators**

Output: Archaeological sites of Corozal enhanced Baseline 0; Target 2

Outcome indicators: Increase in Number of visitors at Cerros and Santa Rita: Baseline Cerros 2014: 810 visitors; Santa Rita 2014: 955 visitors Target: (% increase)

Increase in number of special events and weddings held at Santa Rita. Baseline TBD target

1. **Estimated cost and source of financing**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Estimated cost** | **Source** |
| Management plans, environmental clearance, concept and architectural drawings | 18,750 | IDB |
| Building construction Santa Rita  Restroom, picnic and guard facilities-  Interpretation panel  Entry gate and boundary works | 55,000  5,000  40,000 |
| Building Construction Cerros  Restroom upgrade  Visitor Center and signage and guide manual | 20,000  30, 000 |
| Supervision | 7,500 |
| Operation and maintenance (annual) |  |
| **Total** | **176, 250** |

1. **Management model:** Management will continue to fall under NICH, IA. Management plan for Santa Rita will examine special events management giving full consideration to any existing arrangements with private sector entities such as Corozal BTIA.
2. **Responsible institutions**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Lead institution** | **Participating institution** |
| Management Plan and Architectural concepts | MTCCA | NICH |
| Construction | NICH | MTCCA |
| Supervision | MTCCA | DOE, CTC |
| Operations and Maintenance | NICH | MTCCA |

1. **Calendar of execution**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **2016** | | **2017** | | **2018** | | **2019** | | **2020** |
| **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** |  |
| Management Plan and Architectural concepts | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Construction at Santa Rita |  | **X** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Construction at Cerros |  |  |  |  |  |  | **X** |  |  |
| Supervision |  | **X** |  |  |  |  | **X** |  |  |

1. **Studies needed for execution:** Concept site plan for Santa Rita; Environmental clearance- particularly as it relates to solid waste management, land clearance and the restroom facilities.
2. **Procedure/environmental studies or others:** Environmental clearance
3. **Positive and negative environmental and social impacts**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Impacts** | **Positives** | **Negatives** |
| **Social** | * Improved management of cultural heritage * Increased economic benefit * Increased cultural and civic pride | * Potential damage to cultural patrimony– require mitigation policy for cultural finds during construction |
| **Environmental** | * Improved aesthetics (Santa Rita) * Improved sanitation | * Minor changes to habitat and disturbance to wildlife * Clearance of vegetation |

1. **Priority and relation to other initiatives**

Cultural tourism development is priority of NSTMP. NICH cultural policy and Corozal Municipal Development Plan promote tourism development for economic benefit. The Institute of Archaeology is currently excavating a site close to Libertad, Corozal in preparation for future site declaration and tourism activity thus creating a network of Archaeological sites in Corozal.

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# Product 1.1 Archaeological Sites Enhanced: *Caracol*

1. **Objective:** Invest in onsite activities and facilities to improve visitor experience, increase safety and visitor management, and add tourism value to the iconic site of Caracol. As a result, maximizing its potential as the signature Maya Cultural Heritage site for Belize and a major anchor site in the west of the Country, on a par with major sites of the Mundo Maya region (Tikal, Chichen Itza, Copan etc.)
2. **Location:**  Caracol was declared an archaeological reserve under the Laws of Belize, through SI #19 1995. The boundaries are extensive, covering 25,000 acre in the Western Region of Belize. Caracol is a park within a park, laying within the Chiquibul National Park: an area of high biodiversity and unique geology, housing the most extensive cave system in the western hemisphere. Adjacent to the Chiquibul Forest Reserve, the Caracol Archaeological Reserve and the wider Chiquibul area are accessed through the Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve, a main leisure and recreational destination in the Cayo District of Belize.
3. **Beneficiaries:**

* The overnight visitors housed at the 3 lodges within the MPRFR totaling 48 rooms. (approx. 3100 in 2014)
* Day visitors (foreign and local) visiting Caracol (total 10, 787 in 2014)
* The Institute of Archaeology and NICH
* The Forest Dept. legally responsible for managing the MPRFR, Chiquibul Forest Reserve, co-management agency of the Chiquibul National Park (Friends of Conservation and Development)
* BDF and National security responsible for maintaining the safety and security in the area, and safeguarding the Belizean border.
* Tour operators and tour guides operating within the Cayo District, the Cayo accommodation and hospitality sector and related industry stakeholders.
* Local communities along the Santa Elena to Caracol touring Corridor ( San Ignacio, Santa Elena, San Antonio, Cristo del Rey, Seven Hills, Georgeville),
* The wider Cayo District, and the country of Belize (indirect spin-off)

1. **Technical and economic justification:** The NSTMP identified Caracol as one of the 4 “unique tourism assets” of international significance for the country, along with the neighbouring Chiquibul Cavern system, the Great Blue Hole and the Belize Barrier Reef. This typology of asset is considered to have a very high level of attractiveness and is a unique example of its type in the world. Unique assets function as one of the primary motives for visitor’s trips and it was recommended that the tourism policy of Belize should concentrate its efforts to promote these assets to increase international recognition as a tourism destination and to generate positive social, economic and environmental impacts within the country.

Visits to Caracol have increased by 22% since 2010. With improved accessibility and investment Caracol has the potential to become the signature site for Belize, and a major anchor site in the West of the country. It’s historical status as a powerful polity and rival to Tikal; archaeological interest; grandiose stature; and unique natural setting deep in the Maya Mountains, positions Caracol as a major competitor to Tikal in Guatemala, as well as presenting the opportunity for dual destination itineraries featuring these major sites in the Maya World.

Current visitation to the site is directly contributing to foreign exchange earnings through entrance fees, and supporting over 339 tour guides and 38 tour operators in the Cayo area alone. IA plans to develop the site and its amenities to a competitive standard to attract increased visitation to Caracol, in addition to improving the existing visitor experience and to add value to the visit through investment in additional onsite activities and amenities. It is the ultimate goal that Caracol will be established as Belize’s premier site with consideration for UNESCO mixed World Heritage designation, and that it continues to contribute to its local and international obligations within the Mundo Maya initiative.

Current constraints to be addressed include a lack of basic infrastructure, in particular access to adequate water and power; insufficient onsite amenities such as restrooms and picnic areas; an outdated visitor and educational center; incomplete exhibition structure; and insufficient and inadequate signage and trail systems. Additional excavation and consolidation efforts are ongoing to expand the central core of the site but reprogramming of the central recreational area is needed to improve visitor management, aesthetics and functionality.

Security issues are already being addressed through investment in a new conservation post and additional human resources and strategic interventions through the Min. of National Security.

1. **Description:** Preliminary list of activities and investments to be undertaken include:

* Design and feasibility study with a focus on:
* Assessment of future water and energy demand and options for alternative energy (solar) and water supply. Water supply is of particular concern within the area as to date ground water exploration has resulted in very little return, and current rainwater collection and storage is limited. The study will be directed to consider access and supply possibilities from a natural spring located 9 miles from the site core or other alternatives.
* Communication options
* Topography and drainage
  + Potential environmental impacts and mitigation measures observing habitat clearance, erosion, waste management and visitor impacts and or any other directive of the Dept. of Environment towards the environmental clearance process.
* Visitor Management Plan for the site, including willingness to pay survey, site development plan, zones and phases for future development, levels of visitation and carrying capacity recommendations, baseline visitor satisfaction survey, and Monitoring and quality control system
* Interpretation plan for the site focusing on the visitor center and exhibition area interior exhibit design and interpretative/museography content to include developing a Specialized Tour Guide Training specific to Caracol
* Architectural Site Concept Plan, designs and engineering to include:
  + Additional restroom facilities including provision for persons with diverse abilities
  + Remodel recreational/public plaza area including structural provision for low key concession space for refreshments and/or retail
  + Completion of Interpretative exhibition area for artifacts, larger monuments, stellae and altars
  + onsite interpretation and signage for core area
  + Expansion and improvement of trail system including signage
  + Relocate and consolidate Parking
  + Research building providing secure facility for storage of new finds for further investigation
  + Landscaping maximizing use of natural options for visitor management and to direct flow.
  + Trails and signage

Concepts to maximize green design and technologies

* Construction activities
  + Land clearing to expand and open the core of the site to provide more open space for visibility and security
  + Building construction (remodeling or new) of structures, trails etc.
  + Design build and installation of interpretative interiors Interior exhibits and interpretation/information
  + Installation of selected water system and treatment
  + Installation of power systems and communication systems
  + Landscaping and signage installation

1. **Products and indicators**

Output: Visitor facilities improved at Caracol Baseline 0 Target 1

Outcome: Number of total visitors to Caracol increase Baseline 2014: 7731 (foreign visitors) 333 (local visitors) Target: 5% increase by year 2 following completion

*Note visitation decreased by 4% from 2013 to 2014, and given possible visitor disruption during construction activities obvious increases may not be seen until year two following completion.*

1. **Estimated cost and source of financing**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Estimated cost (USD)** | **Source** |
| Technical studies- water source and alternative energy, environmental assessment , architectural designs etc. | 130,000 | IDB |
| Interpretation planning | 10,000 |
| Visitor management Plan and site development plan, and willingness to pay survey | 35,000 |
| Interpretative exhibition center structure | 150,000 |
| Construction of additional restroom facilities | 200,000 |
| Trail system and signage | 125,000 |
| Land-clearing, landscaping and parking | 125,000 |
| Remodeling of recreational plaza area | 250, 000 |
| Interior exhibits and interpretation | 150,000 |
| Research building and artifact security | 150,000 |
| Power system and communications | 140,000 |
| Water system | 110, 000 |
| Supervision | 70,000 |
| Operation and maintenance (annual) |  |
| **Total** | **1.645 million** |

1. **Management model:** Visitor Management Plan will detail management responsibilities, fee structure, and management options for concessions where applicable.
2. **Responsible institutions**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Lead institution** | **Participating institution** |
|  |  |  |
| Technical studies- water source and alternative energy, environmental assessment , architectural designs etc. | MTCCA | NICH |
| Interpretation planning | MTCCA | NICH, Dr. Diane and Arlene Chase |
| Visitor management Plan inc. willingness to pay | MTCCA | NICH |
| Interpretative exhibition center structure | MTCCA | NICH |
| Construction of additional restroom facilities | MTCCA | NICH |
| Trail system and signage | NICH | MTCCA |
| Land-clearing, landscaping and parking | NICH | MTCCA |
| Remodeling of recreational plaza area | MTCCA | NICH |
| Interior exhibits and interpretation | MTCCA | NICH |
| Research building and artifact security | MTCCA | NICH |
| Power system and communications | NICH | MTCCA |
| Water system | NICH | MTCCA |
| Supervision | MTCCA | NICH, DOE |
| Operation and maintenance (annual) | NICH | MTCCA |

1. **Calendar of execution**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **2016** | | **2017** | | **2018** | | **2019** | | **2020** | |
| **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** |
| Technical Studies |  |  |  | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Construction |  |  |  |  |  | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |  |
| Supervision |  |  |  |  |  | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

1. **Studies needed for execution**

Management Plan

Feasibility Study- water, power, topography and drainage

Architectural and engineering design

Willingness to pay survey

Baseline visitor satisfaction survey

1. **Procedure/environmental studies or others**

Environmental Clearance

1. **Positive and negative environmental and social impacts**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Impacts** | **Positives** | **Negatives** |
| **Social** | * Education and awareness-cultural heritage and natural resource * economic benefit through possible concessions and increased visitation to neighbouring communities * economic benefits to entire tourism industry through international exposure but particularly to the Cayo tour operators, and accommodation sectors * economic benefit trickle down to support management initiatives within MPR and Chiquibul * increased safety and security * increased services (water, power) for BDF and security personnel in the area | * No communities in the vicinity so very minor impacts related only to disruption and inconvenience to visitors during construction * Minor traffic increase and potential conflict with logging concessionaires and other users during construction * Potential risk to cultural heritage onsite, if mitigation is not in place during construction |
| **Environmental** | * Improved management of the reserve * Improved sanitation * Improved drainage * Improved waste management * increased education of users * Increase in value of cultural capital | * forest fire risk during construction * Erosion (temporary during construction) * Minor clearance of vegetation (temporary impact during construction) * Minor disturbance to wildlife |

1. **Priority and relation to other initiatives:** Priority within the NSTMP and for NICH aligned with the new Cultural Policy. Should serve to strengthen Belize’s application for UNESCO heritage for Caracol and neighbouring Chiquibul Caverns. Supports Belize’s regional commitments under Mundo Maya.

**Sustainable Tourism Project II - BL-L1020**

**Project Data Sheets**

# Product 1.2 Cultural Attractions Restored and Enhanced: *Welcome Plaza, Punta Gorda*

1. **Objective:** The goal is to develop a central area of civic space setting the stage for positive interaction between residents and visitors, with retail opportunities for local cultural food, artisan presence, a House of Culture, and tourism related services within a welcoming environment. This investment in a plaza, will focus on expressing the culture, history and natural assets of Toledo, serving as a logistics hub, with direct pedestrian connection to a new House of Culture, visitor information center, the New Market investments, the Park and the waterfront. It will also showcase the diversity of cultural experiences and area attractions; and revitalize streets and buildings, in an effort to retain visitors longer and increase economic benefit to the town and the residents of Toledo.
2. **Location:** The Welcome Plaza will be within the central area of Punta Gorda Town (PG) strategically located on Front Street to provide connectivity from the downtown area with the sea, and adjacent to the main transportation hubs of the bus station and marine Port of Entry on Front Street as a gateway point for visitors. Exact coordinates and area to be determined through land tenure verification check and in consultation with municipality.
3. **Beneficiaries**

* Local municipal government and NICH
* Residents of PG and wider Toledo District
* Day visitors (foreign and domestic) to PG
* Overnight (foreign and domestic) visitors in Toledo
* Local tourism businesses including hotels, food and beverage establishments, excursion sector and cultural sector (artisans, musicians etc.)
* Indirect beneficiaries include other communities promoted within the district and through opportunities provided to participate in economic and/or cultural activity within the plaza.
* Managers of Natural and Cultural Attractions in the District.

1. **Technical and economic justification:** Toledo has traditionally been considered an “off the beaten track” type of destination for Belize’s main US market, being a four hour drive from the international airport in Belize City. For the past two years Toledo has received the lowest number of visitor arrivals, totaling 10, 526 or 3.3% of the total market share in 2014, with an average annual growth since 2006 of 1.1% (Market study 2014). Coming on-stream in 2016 there are however two major new developments which may impact considerably on Toledo’s status as an emerging destination: the paving of the San Antonio road which will create a new land border entry point with Guatemala to the west, and the completion and operations of a new cruise port at Harvest Caye, 2 miles south of Big Creek port, Stann Creek.

The NSTMP recommends the bulk of new tourism development within Punta Gorda Town, creating new community tourism attractions in the rural and areas, enhancing access to the natural protected areas, and giving cultural tourism major consideration as a main product for Southern Belize. The NSTMP calls for organization and improvement of public space in PG Town to improve urban functions and enhance tourism facilities. This is also in keeping with the vision of the Municipal Development Plan for the Town which views tourism as a means to economic development, stating plans for an in-town Museum of Culture (House of Culture) and programs to celebrate the diverse cultures in PG. Although Maya ethnicities dominate the cultural landscape of Toledo (primarily Kekchi and Mopan), Toledo’s historical development has contributed to a mix of ethnicities: East Indian, Creole and Garifuna, particularly evident in PG Town. Although there has been some borrowing of culture among groups in Belize, in Toledo villages exhibit distinct cultural elements and a strong cultural identity that can enhance visitor experience, cultural understanding and appreciation.

Despite this cultural focus Toledo is one of the few Districts which does not have a “House of Culture” (HOC). Located around the country HOCs are dynamic, creative community centers established under NICH, which nurture activities meant to inspire and uplift through culture. The HOCs are places for residents and students to come together to learn, teach and pursue cultural activities, but they also play an important role in tourism by promoting living cultures and events, and hosting exhibits, interactive displays and demonstrations. Toledo has experienced great success with cultural festivals held throughout the year, such as the annual Chocolate Fest which repeatedly exceeds visitor targets, Battle of the Drums, Fish Fest and Maya Day.

The Municipal Development Plan notes the need to improve the welcome point of Town. Currently over 7,500 tourists arrive at the Punta Gorda seaport, however as the bus station is located literally across the street from the port of arrival intervention is needed to ensure that Punta Gorda does not become a transit town. Tourist information, promotion and maps was ranked as third for improvement in an exit survey carried out in May 2015. Enhanced welcome facilities, a vibrant and lively civic space with cultural interaction and food, and visitor information services by strengthening the linkage of this area with the BTIA Toledo Tourism Center have a role to play to capture this market segment. This area currently houses a host of small local food services, which with improved organization and infrastructure could also serve to add a colourful cultural culinary experience to the welcome, an aspect which is enjoyed by 90% of visitors to the district (Exit Survey 2014).

1. **Description.** Preliminary list of activities and investments to be undertaken include:

* Land tenure validation check to identify scope of public owned lands and identify potential conflicts and solutions
* Feasibility in particular giving close attention to:
* Topography and drainage and recommendations for green solutions
* Best siting of a House of Culture- repurposing of existing building or new construction, and the functional spaces needed for revenue generation i.e.: conference and meeting rental space
* Possible rehabilitation of the old jail cells within the concept of tourism and heritage preservation
* Pedestrian linkages
* Assess support needed for visitor information services given the presence, role and function of the BTIA Toledo Tourism Office
* Improvement of traffic flows and assessment of parking in the area;
* Demand for water and power.
* preferential waste water treatment solution of restroom facility (aerobic vs septic)
* Environmental study and impact mitigation and as required by DoE
* Management options and potential revenue generation
* Architectural Concept Plan , designs and engineering to include :
  + Restroom facilities including provision for persons with diverse abilities
  + House of Culture to include exhibition space and conference/meeting rental area
  + Visitor information services
  + Concession space for cultural food and tourism related services
  + Hard and soft landscaping options to create the feel of a central plaza

Concepts to maximize green design and technologies

* Construction works
* rehabilitation of streets, drainage etc.
* restroom facilities
* Concession space
* House of Culture including design of interior spaces
* Installation of signage
* Hardscape and landscaping and installation of street furniture
* Lighting

1. **Products and indicators**

Output: Welcome Plaza and House of Culture designed and built: Baseline 0; Target 1

Outcome indicators: Number of visitors at House of Culture Baseline 0; Target: 1000

1. **Estimated cost and source of financing**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Estimated cost** | **Source** |
| Feasibility study, environmental clearance, architectural designs and management options | 175,000 | IDB |
| Building construction | 1,300,000 |
| Supervision | 65,000 |
| Operation and maintenance (annual) |  |

1. **Management model:** Options for management models will be evaluated during the feasibility study. House of Culture will be managed by NICH.
2. **Responsible institutions**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Lead institution** | **Participating institution** |
| Feasibility study | MTCCA | PGTC, LTC, NICH |
| Construction | MTCCA | PGTC, NICH, LTC |
| Supervision | MTCCA | PGTC, NICH |
| Operation and maintenance | NICH, PGTC | MTCCA |

1. **Calendar of execution**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **2016** | | **2017** | | **2018** | | **2019** | | **2020** |
| **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** |  |
| Feasibility study |  |  | **x** | **X** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Construction |  |  |  | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |  |  |
| Supervision |  |  |  | **x** | **x** | **x** | **x** |  |  |

1. **Studies needed for execution**

* Land tenure verification
* Feasibility
* Environmental Study as recommended by DoE, however given the nature of the development as urban regeneration likely level of study is an Environmental Compliance Plan.

1. **Procedure/environmental studies or others**

* LBA approval of architectural drawings
* Environmental compliance

1. **Positive and negative environmental and social impacts**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Impacts** | **Positives** | **Negatives** |
| **Social** | * Direct economic benefit to PG Town increased length of stay and increased in town activities and spending * Economic benefit to communities, sites and attractions in the District through increased visitation and length of stay * improved functional urban space for local residents * Increased civic pride * Increased understanding and appreciation of local culture and heritage by locals and visitors * Strengthen the visibility of the BTIA | * Potential traffic interruption during construction * Increased traffic through town * User and resident conflicts- i.e. Parking |
| **Environmental** | * Improved drainage * Improved waste management and sanitation * Improved aesthetics through upliftment to buildings and streets * Increased plant coverage for shade | * Water quality risk through sedimentation during construction * Noise pollution during construction |

1. **Priority and relation to other initiatives:** Aligned with Municipal development plan. BMA is exploring options of expansion of the marine entry/exit dock. Aligned with Cultural policy, NSTMP, and Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy for Belize. TIDE tours has developed a Cultural trail from the center of PG Town, 5 miles, to Forest Home.

**Sustainable Tourism Project II - BL-L1020**

**Project Data Sheets**

# Product 1.2 Cultural Attractions Restored and Enhanced: *Culture and Heritage Plaza, Corozal Town*

1. **Objective:** The overall goal is to revitalize the heritage and waterfront value of downtown Corozal Town and catalyze new tourism opportunity through the creation of a bayside cultural heritage plaza which links the historic heart of Corozal with the Old Market (House of Culture); consolidates visitor and heritage information services with water based access to the town; promotes a cultural heritage walk, and creates an improved area of recreational open space for cultural events and leisure.
2. **Location:** Waterfront area including the main municipal pier and the House of Culture having pedestrian linkage to Central Park and Fort Barlee. Exact coordinates and area to be determined through land tenure verification check and in consultation with municipality.
3. **Beneficiaries**

* Local municipal government
* NICH and HOC
* Residents of Corozal Town
* Day visitors (foreign and domestic) to Corozal Town
* Overnight visitors to Corozal Town
* Local tourism businesses including town hotels, food and beverage establishments, excursion sector and cultural sector (artisans, musicians etc)
* Indirect beneficiaries include Sarteneja and other coastal communities such as Copper Bank, Consejo etc. through the promotion of Bay activities and improvements to Bay access and tour departure point.

1. **Technical and economic justification:** Corozal District’s tourism visitation represents only 4.1% of the total market share, but following a severe decline in business during the global economic crisis of 2008, tourism numbers have been growing slowly over the past two years. Across the border, (9 miles to the north), is Chetumal, capital of the Mexican State of Quintana Roo with a population of 150, 000 and excellent road connectivity with the tourism mecca of Cancun and the Riviera Maya.

The Corozal district offers a dichotomy of tourism experiences, with a Free Trade Zone and casinos along the border area, and a rural setting of agriculture, forested areas, rivers, lagoons, seascape and village life in the remainder of the district. Cultural traditions of the Mestizo, Maya and East Indian heritage are featured through festivals, handicrafts and especially cuisine. The Corozal Bay Wildlife Sanctuary is also a unique natural asset shared by Corozal Town and the coastal communities of Consejo and Sarteneja and home to the West Indian manatee. The Corozal Local Tourism Council has opted to focus its vision for development on the growth of the cultural and nature based tourism products, developing and promoting the rich cultural diversity, capturing the opportunities presented by the unique attributes of the Corozal Bay and responsibly managing its natural forest areas through tourism visitation and conservation.

Corozal Town is the main tourism center and transportation hub featuring over 2/3s of the room-stock within its immediate vicinity. The importance of Corozal Bay to the development of tourism and the economy is recognized within the Municipal Development Plan which highlights a Bay-Front improvement scheme of recreational open space the entire length of the town. Connected to the Bay-Front improvement scheme, the Municipal plan also envisages down-town improvements to focus on the historical heritage of the town to boost the town’s tourism product and economic development. The development of a Culture and Heritage Plaza on a section of the waterfront that connects historical downtown and links the Bay with a tourist pier, is thus in keeping with the Town’s vision. This investment may very well catalyze further urban improvements (public and private) as was the case in Belize City following the rehabilitation of Memorial Park under STP1.

The Corozal community has successfully planned and implemented cultural initiatives to boost tourism, with direct experience of its associated economic benefits. The “Maya Wedding” at Santa Rita, championed as a community initiative, is Belize’s only historical reenactment at a Maya site. “Art in the Park” is a family orientated monthly event featuring artisans, cultural entertainment and cuisine that currently attracts over 15000 visitors annually, and has been sustainable for the past 6 years. The House of Culture itself, and restoration of the Old Market building, was also a community project and now not only attracts over 5000 visitors annually but has taken on the role of Tourist Information Center in the absence of any formal operation.

A lack of visitor information was one of the key elements identified for improvement in Corozal, (Exit Survey and Market Study 2015), in addition to enhancement of the waterfront and adjacent areas to showcase the Corozal Bay. It is also the goal of the NSTMP that information distribution channels such as tourist visitor centers to be offered in destinations and strategic areas. Consolidation and enhancement of the existing public space adjacent to the House of Culture and Municipal Pier to include basic visitor information services will create a welcoming environment and serve to inform visitors of the activities and attractions available, in town, around the Bay and inland.

Sea connectivity was also highlighted by the NSTMP as lacking throughout the country and an important consideration to increase accessibility to coastal destinations. Improvement and enhancement of the existing Municipal Pier will support the growth of this area as a strategic tourism hub, increasing the flow and spread of visitors and acting as a launch pad to the attractions of the Bay, as well as creating improved linkage with the tourist generating areas of San Pedro.

1. **Description.** Preliminary list of activities and investments to be undertaken include**:**

* Land tenure validation check to identify scope of public owned lands and identify potential conflicts and solutions (i.e., relocation of public sporting facilities).
* Feasibility in particular giving close attention to:
* TVC whether available public space, need and budget can accommodate either Tourist Information Center- tasked to welcome, inform and support tourists by providing information on the destination or a Tourism Welcome Center undertaking additional marketing and or management tasks and with an interactive exhibit related to the specific destination it is located
* Topography and drainage
* Possible designation of streets as pedestrian zones (permanent or temporal-based);
* Engineering inspection for structural integrity of municipal pier structure and sea wall and need for expansion or identification of possible alternate pier locations for tourism activities;
* Improvement of traffic flows and parking in the whole of the area;
* Demand for water and power and recommendations for energy efficient, green solutions.
* Assessment of preferential waste water treatment solution (aerobic vs septic)
* Environmental study and impact mitigation and as required by DoE
* Management options and potential revenue generation
* Architectural Concept Plan, designs and engineering to include:
  + Recreational/leisure space of Heritage Plaza area including drainage, lighting, street furniture etc.
  + Restroom facilities including provision for persons with diverse abilities
  + Visitor Center of typology recommended
  + Administration area for HOC
  + Low key Concession space for refreshments/ticket sales
  + Marine gateway enhancement
  + Parking/drop off space
  + Landscaping and other waterfront enhancements
  + Enhancement of connectivity, signage and attraction of other historical features within the area (Fort Barlee, Central Park etc.)

Concepts to maximize green design and technologies

* Construction works and interior finishing to include
* rehabilitation of streets
* restroom and visitor center
* Other spaces
* Design and build-out of interactive exhibit if Tourist Welcome Center Option is selected over basic TVC
* Installation of signage and landscaping

1. **Products and indicators**

Output: Cultural attractions restored and enhanced: Baseline 0; Target 1

Outcome indicators: Number of visitors at visitor center: Baseline 0; Target: (5,500 visitors by year 2)

1. **Estimated cost and source of financing**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Estimated cost** | **Source** |
| Feasibility study, architectural designs and management options | 93,750 | IDB |
| Building construction | 750, 000 |
| Supervision | 37,500 |
| Operation and maintenance (annual) |  |
| **Total** | **881,250 USD** |

1. **Management model**

Options for management models and revenue generation will be evaluated during the feasibility

1. **Responsible institutions**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Lead institution** | **Participating institution** |
| Feasibility study designs and management options | MTCCA | CLTC, CTC, NICH |
| Construction | MTCCA | LBA, CLTC, CTC, NICH |
| Supervision | MTCCA | CTC, NICH |
| Operation and maintenance | CTC, NICH |  |

1. **Calendar of execution**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **2016** | | **2017** | | **2018** | | **2019** | |
| **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** |
| Feasibility study, designs and management options |  | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Construction |  |  | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |  |  |
| Supervision |  |  | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |  |  |

1. **Studies needed for execution**

* Land tenure verification
* Feasibility
* Environmental Study as recommended by DoE, however given the nature of the development as urban regeneration likely level of study is an Environmental Compliance Plan.

1. **Procedure/environmental studies or others**

* LBA approval of architectural drawings
* Environmental compliance

1. **Positive and negative environmental and social impacts**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Impacts** | **Positives** | **Negatives** |
| **Social** | * Direct economic benefit to Corozal Town through possible concessions and increased in town activities * Economic benefit to communities, sites and attractions in the District through increased visitation and length of stay * improved leisure and recreational space for residents * improved marine access * Increased civic pride * Increased appreciation and understanding of heritage value of Corozal and support of heritage preservation initiatives. | * Potential traffic interruption during construction * Increased traffic through town * User and resident conflicts- ie. Parking * Displacement of existing activities/use (basketball) |
| **Environmental** | * Improved drainage * Improved waste management and respect for environment along the Bay through education initiatives * Improved sanitation through provision of public restroom facilities | * Water quality risk through increased boat traffic * Increased threat to manatee through increased boat traffic * sedimentation during construction |

1. **Priority and relation to other initiatives:** Aligned with the Municipal Development Plan and NSTMP and complements Heritage Town Trail initiative being undertaken through BTB destination planning and NICH.

**Sustainable Tourism Project II - BL-L1020**

**Project Data Sheets**

# Product 1.3 Natural Attractions Improved and Developed: *Information and Logistics Center, MPR*

1. **Objective:** The aim is to develop a central location of tourism services and facilities that will function as an information/education center, rest-stop, and gateway to the Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve, the adjacent protected areas of Chiquibul and the connecting area of Caracol Archaeological site. The center will also serve as an emergency and logistical center providing visitors with basic first Aid, communications and assistance in cases requiring a rapid response. Given the opportune location of the site, the natural assets and aesthetics, and the extent of available public space, the concept should assist in catalyzing the potential for more substantial PPP tourism related investment at the site.
2. **Location:** Investments will be focused on Douglas D’Silva Camp within the Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve. Formerly known as Augustine this area served as the Western Division Headquarters for the Forest Department and home to Forest Officers and their families from the mid-20th century. It remains public land. Douglas D’Silva is the principal settlement in an area of approximately 126,825 acres of pine and broadleaf forests managed by the Forest Dept. with BDF and Police presence. Located at the gateway to the Chiquibul Road which is the sole access road to the Caracol Archaeological Site, it also lies in close proximity to many of the natural assets and attractions within the MPRFR including Rio Frio Cave, Rio on Pools, Pinol Sands, and Orchid Cascade Falls. A non-operational airstrip lies to the East of the central area.
3. **Beneficiaries:**

* The overnight visitors housed at the 3 lodges within the MPRFR totaling 48 rooms. (approx. 3100 in 2014)
* Day visitors (foreign and local) visiting the MPR, Caracol and Chiquibul Complex
* The Forest Dept. legally responsible for managing the MPRFR, Chiquibul Forest Reserve, co-management agency of the Chiquibul National Park, and NICH responsible for the Caracol Archaeological reserve.
* BDF and National security responsible for maintaining the safety and security in the area, and safeguarding the Belizean border.
* Tour operators and tour guides operating within the Cayo District.

1. **Technical and economic justification**: The Cayo district is the most popular inland destination in Belize, attracting over 70, 288 overnight visitors in 2014, or 22% of the total market share. The NSTMP identifies the Cayo district as one of the richest regions in terms of tourism attractors due to its high biodiversity and unique natural assets, and recognizes Western Belize as a priority for tourism investment due to the “high potential to impact positively on the local economy”, and a mid-high potential to reduce local seasonality. Nature based and cultural tourism are recommended within the NSTMP as the two priority products for the Western Region, with integral development of the nature based tourism product through infrastructure investment in ecotourism and adventure centers. Potentially these centers can be located within protected areas and linked to nature based attractions, trails and themed routes.

Masterplanning was carried out for the MPR area as far back as 2004 and again, specifically for Augustine in 2008. Within each of these plans Douglas D’Silva/Augustine was identified as the potential hub and activity center. It is located central to the numerous existing and potential visitor attractions of the MPR, some within walking distance, and strategically positioned along the main access road to the Chiquibul and Caracol. The Chiquibul Caverns system and archaeological reserve of Caracol have both been identified within the NSTMP as being unique attractions with an international marketing pull factor. The government is currently exploring the possibility to apply for IUCN World Heritage Designation of these two sites. It is envisaged that Caracol and Chiquibul will become the anchor attractions along a touring corridor complemented with other attraction visits within the Mountain Pine Ridge. Further rehabilitation of the air strip at D’Silva could open up the area to even greater demand, providing connectivity with the main coastal tourism destinations in Belize such as Ambergris Caye and Placencia, as well as regional linkage with other countries of the Maya realm.

There is currently a renewed interest and commitment from the Government of Belize to consider development options for the area, including ongoing investment through the Forest Dept. to upgrade existing structures at D’Silva. A working group (established in 2015 with the support of IDB (TC Number BL-T1054) is currently developing a tourism destination development plan for the entire area of the Mountain Pine Ridge Chiquibul, and Caracol. This mechanism is serving to better coordinate activities of all managing agencies and authorities as well as identifying investment priorities; Douglas D’Silva has been identified as one such priority areas for investment.

Currently the area of Douglas D’Silva is the meeting point for departures to the site of Caracol, currently scheduled as accompanied convoys once a day, as a security measure. Douglas D’Silva is in need of a facelift, and there are limited amenities available at this meeting point to support the visitor, other than rudimentary bathroom facilities. In fact currently there are no visitor support services throughout the MPR.

Douglas D’Silva can serve as the key welcome and reception area, interpretation center, leisure/picnic area, and a staging area and gateway to the attractions of the MPR, Chiquibul and Caracol. It can offer partnerships for local microenterprise through retail and food and beverage outlets, and potentially accommodation facilities in the future. It also presents a key opportunity for further consolidation and coordination of the management agencies and authorities in the area, to assist in critical monitoring, conservation and protection efforts, and will serve as a key communication and emergency point for the four protected areas. Development of Douglas D’Silva would be a launchpad to further tourism development into the Chiquibul National Park and cavern system as a long term development plan for the country’s tourism sector.

1. **Description.** Preliminary list of activities and investments to be undertaken include:

* Design and feasibility study for the information and logistics center to include:
  + assessment of water and energy demand and options for alternative energy (solar or rehabilitation of existing “run of the river system”) and options for water supply
  + potential to repurpose existing buildings for reuse.
  + Communication options to power cellphone and internet coverage, utilizing tower at Tapir Camp
  + Management options guidelines
* Limited Level environmental study including waste management plan
* Interpretation plan for the educational visitor center featuring the authentic stories of the area and highlighting ecological value, heritage value, and international importance: i.e. Themes include 1) Chiquibul’s biodiversity, 2) the past and present heritage of MPR connected with logging and forest extraction, and 3) Caracol’s power in the Maya world and Maya in the area of MPR (cave systems)
* Architectural Concept Plan, designs and engineering to include:
  + Restroom facilities including provision for persons with diverse abilities
  + Low key Concession space for refreshments and/or retail/ provisioning
  + Ticketing/monitoring/control point for further entrance into the Chiquibul
  + Communication and emergency response post. (medical, forest fire, flooding, security)
  + Information/education center

Concepts to maximize green design and technologies

* Construction of the information and logistics center
  + Land clearing (minimal- underbrush)
  + Building construction (remodeling or new)
  + Design build and installation of interpretative interiors
  + Landscaping

1. **Products and indicators**

Output: Information and Logistics Center built: Baseline 0; Target 1

Outcome: Number of total visitors to MPR increased: Baseline 47, 168 (2014); Target: 5% annually

Number of non-resident visitors to MPR increased; Baseline 15606 (2014) Target: 5% annually[[1]](#endnote-1)

1. **Estimated cost and source of financing**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Estimated cost** | **Source** |
| Feasibility study, LLES, designs and architectural drawings and management guidelines | 62,500 |  |
| Building construction | 430,000 |
| Interpretation and signage | 70,000 |
| Construction Supervision | 21,500 |
| **Total** | **584,000** |

1. **Management model:** Options for management models will be evaluated during the feasibility study to include potential for PPPs
2. **Responsible institutions**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Lead institution** | **Participating institution** |
| Feasibility study, LLES, designs, architectural drawings and management guidelines | MTCCA | MFFSD, MESTU, BDF, BTL |
| Building construction | MTCCA | MFFSD, |
| Interpretation and signage | MTCCA | MFFSD, FCD, NICH |
| Construction Supervision | MTCCA | MFFSD |

1. **Calendar of execution**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **2016** | | **2017** | | **2018** | | **2019** | | **2020** |
| **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** |  |
| Feasibility study |  | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Construction |  |  |  | **X** | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |
| Interpretation and signage |  |  | **X** |  |  | **X** |  |  |  |
| Supervision |  |  |  | **X** | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |

1. **Studies needed for execution**

* Feasibility study in particular to determine alternative options for water supply and power supply to Douglas D’Silva (solar or hydro- run of the river system).
* Limited Level Environmental Study
* Note a willingness to pay study has been carried out by FD

1. **Procedure/environmental studies or others:** Environmental clearance through Limited Level Environmental Study
2. **Positive and negative environmental and social impacts**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Impacts** | **Positives** | **Negatives** |
| **Social** | * Education and awareness- heritage and environmental * economic benefit through possible concessions and increased visitation to neighbouring communities * economic benefit trickle down to support management initiatives within MPR, Chiquibul and Caracol * increased leisure and recreational activities, and connection with nature for local Belizeans | * No communities in the vicinity so very minor impacts related only to disruption and inconvenience to visitors during construction * Minor traffic increase and potential conflict with logging concessionaires and other users during construction |
| **Environmental** | * Improved management of the reserve * Improved sanitation * Improved drainage * Improved waste management and respect for environment within MPR due to increased education of users * Increase in value of the natural capital | * Water quality risk through sedimentation during construction * forest fire risk during construction * Erosion of roads (temporary during construction) * Minor clearance of vegetation (temporary impact during construction) * Minor disturbance to wildlife |

1. **Priority and relation to other initiatives:** Priority within the NSTMP and within the Forest Dept. work plans. Also aligned with the National Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy and Horizon 2030. Linkage with Key Biodiversity Areas project.

**Sustainable Tourism Project II - BL-L1020**

**Project Data Sheets**

# Product 1.3 Natural Attractions Improved and Developed: *Restoration and rehabilitation of facilities and trails (Natural attractions-MPR-Chiquibul)*

1. **Objective:** The overall goal is to improve visitor experience, accessibility and safety at select natural sites of tourism potential within the Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve, while simultaneously providing for improved management and increased controlled visitation. Ultimately, a greater use and appreciation of the value of these natural resources can contribute directly to revenue generation towards continued sustainable management of the protected area and responsible visitor behavior within the reserve.
2. **Location:** Investments will focus on sites located in the Mountain Pine Ridge and identified within the 2004 Visitor Use Plan as having high potential for tourism and day recreation. These may be sites which are currently developed, visited and included on tour itineraries within the reserve or new sites. Viewpoints and trail systems will be considered in addition to specific areas of natural attraction. A minimum of 2 investments will be selected for consideration during the concept planning phase, through consultation with the MPR/Chiquibul/Caracol Local Working Group. Selection will be based on multi-criteria evaluation focused on the priorities of the Management Agencies (MFFSD, Forestry Department) and the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Civil Aviation.
3. **Beneficiaries**

* The overnight visitors housed at the 3 lodges within the MPRFR totaling 48 rooms. (approx. 3100 in 2014)
* Day visitors (foreign and local) visiting the MPR, Caracol and Chiquibul Complex
* The Forest Dept. legally responsible for managing the MPRFR, Chiquibul Forest Reserve, co-management agency of the Chiquibul National Park, and NICH responsible for the Caracol Archaeological reserve.
* Tour operators and tour guides operating within the Cayo District.
* Local communities to include San Antonio, Cristo Rey, Barton Creek and San Ignacio/Santa Elena
* The wider Cayo District residents and tourism industry (indirectly)

1. **Technical and economic justification:** The Cayo district is the most popular inland destination in Belize attracting over 70, 288 overnight visitors in 2014, or 22% of the total market share. The NSTMP identifies the Cayo district as one of the richest regions in terms of tourism attractors due to its high biodiversity and unique natural assets, and recognizes Western Belize as a priority for tourism investment due to the “high potential to impact positively on the local economy”, and a mid-high potential to reduce local seasonality. Nature based tourism, including ecotourism and adventure tourism, is the main tourism product identified for Western Belize. The vision of the NSTMP for nature based tourism and specifically for Western Belize is to enhance the diversity of natural assets through the development of recreational ecotourism and adventure sites, caving and nature trail systems and ecotourism and adventure routes. Ultimately the aim is to structure, design and develop sites into an integrated system of infrastructure and facilities, developing the entire value chain.

The Mountain Pine Ridge has been identified as an area with immense potential for this type of integral development of the nature based attractions and has the additional benefit of linkages with the high diversity of cultural attractions present. The Mountain Pine Ridge offers a diversity of tourism experiences that combine aspects of culture (the Ancient Maya, living culture in the buffer Yucatec Maya and Mennonite communities, the mahogany and chicle heritage), with nature based experiences (birding, swimming, hiking etc.) and various levels of hard and soft adventure activities for a range of fitness levels and interests. In 2014 the MPR attracted over 46,000 visitors, of which 15, 600 were foreign tourists (only 22 % of all visitors to the Cayo District). The remaining 31, 562 were locals who visit primarily for recreation and leisure purpose as day visitors. As the main market segments of visitors to the Cayo area are the cultural, eco and adventure tourists there is considerable potential to increase visitation to the area.

The market study for STP2 highlighted the potential for the MPR to become Belize’s premier adventure destination; however it also highlights the bottlenecks of the MPR in that it lacks visitor facilities at the sites and has many natural attractions which cannot be safely visited for much of the year. Some of the sites currently open to public visitation are also experiencing tourism impact such as excessive erosion on trails and in parking areas and marked trails pose risks to visitor safety. Other sites such as Orchid Falls are ecologically sensitive and require proper planning and management to support sustainable visitation. As recommended within the NSTMP Sub-program for Infrastructure and Accessibility of Nature-based tourism, it is essential that the nature sites within the area are assessed and developed, to ensure that each site offers a competitive product with sufficient support services and amenities for appropriate usage levels and promotes sustainable visitor management. The possible exploration and opening of new sites and trails within the area will also assist in spreading visitation to avoid degradation of both the visitor experience and the impacts if carrying capacities at sites are met.

1. **Description.** Preliminary list of activities and investments to be undertaken include:

* Prioritization of sites/trails for investment undertaken through the Local Working Group
* Concept plans for the site to include interventions such as:
  + Trail enhancements including improved safety and access at sites and consideration for diverse abilities.
  + Changing room facilities, restrooms, picnic/BBQ and other visitor facilities.
  + Signage and interpretation
  + Viewpoints and observation decks
  + parking

Concepts should incorporate best practice, green design and green technologies.

* Limited Level Environmental Study (LLES) in particular to look at water quality, erosion, and waste management (solid, liquid, sewage) , levels of usage for each site and options for management and operations (operations/concession guidelines) to ensure sustainability of the infrastructure investments and appropriate visitor behaviour
* Architectural and engineering design and drawings taking a “green” and adaptive approach to design and technology
* Construction activities
  + Land clearing (minimal- underbrush)
  + Building construction
  + Installation of site and trail signage and interpretation
  + Landscaping

1. **Products and indicators**

Output: trails and attraction sites within the MPR enhanced: Baseline 0; Target 2

Outcome: Number of total visitors (residents and non-residents) to MPR increased: Baseline 47, 168 (2014); Target: 5% increase annually

Number of non-Belize residents to MPR increased; Baseline 15606 (2014) Target: 5% increase annually[[2]](#footnote-1)

1. **Estimated cost and source of financing**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Estimated cost** | **Source** |
| Concept plans, Environmental assessment, architectural and engineering design and management guidelines | 62, 500 |  |
| Building construction interpretation and signage | 500, 000 |
| Construction Supervision | 25,000 |
| **Total** |  |

1. **Management model:** Options for management will be evaluated during the design stage as part of the environmental assessment for sustainability, including clear guidelines for operations and recommendations for concessions at each specific site.
2. **Responsible institutions**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Lead institution** | **Participating institution** |
|  |  |  |
| Concept plans, Environmental assessment, architectural and engineering design and management guidelines | MTCCA | MFFSD |
| Building construction and Interpretation and signage | MTCCA | MFFSD |
| Construction Supervision | MTCCA | MFFSD |
| Operation and maintenance (annual) | MFFSD/other | MTCCA |

1. **Calendar of execution**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **2016** | | **2017** | | **2018** | | **2019** | | **2020** |
| **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Concept plans, Environmental assessment, architectural and engineering design |  |  |  | **X** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Building construction |  |  |  |  | **X** | **x** | **x** |  |  |
| Interpretation and signage |  |  |  |  |  |  | **X** |  |  |
| Construction Supervision |  |  |  |  | **X** | **x** | **X** |  |  |

1. **Studies needed for execution**

* Limited Level Environmental Study to include section on management and operations/concession guidelines.

1. **Procedure/environmental studies or others**

* Environmental Clearance through Limited Level Environmental Study prior to construction approval.

1. **Positive and negative environmental and social impacts**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Impacts** | **Positives** | **Negatives** |
| **Social** | * Education and awareness- heritage and environmental * economic benefit through possible concessions and increased visitation to neighbouring communities * economic benefit trickle down to support management initiatives within MPR, Chiquibul and Caracol * increased leisure and recreational activities, and connection with nature for local Belizeans | * No communities in the vicinity so very minor impacts related only to disruption and inconvenience to visitors during construction * Minor traffic increase and potential conflict with logging concessionaires and other users during construction |
| **Environmental** | * Improved management of the reserve * Improved drainage and measures to address erosion * Improved waste management and respect for environment within MPR due to increased education of users * Increase in value of the natural capital | * Water quality risk through sedimentation during construction and increased visitor usage * Erosion of roads (temporary during construction) * Minor clearance of vegetation (temporary impact during construction) * Minor disturbance to wildlife |

1. **Priority and relation to other initiatives:** High priority of the NSTMP and the Forest Dept. plans. Alignment with the Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy and Horizon 2030.

**Sustainable Tourism Project II - BL-L1020**

**Project Data Sheets**

# Product 1.3 Natural Attractions Improved and Developed: *PA Investments – terrestrial and marine linkage*

1. **Objective:** The overall goal is to increase the tourism value of select protected areas that form terrestrial and marine linkages, through small-scale infrastructural investment which will contribute to an increase in controlled visitation, an increase in revenue generation and ultimately support management capacity towards the conservation of biodiversity.
2. **Location:** Public protected areas within the ridge to reef Maya Mountain Marine Corridor of Toledo (specifically Payne’s Creek National Park, Deep River Forest Reserve, Port Honduras Marine Reserve) and contiguous marine/terrestrial PAs in northern Belize (Corozal Bay Wildlife Sanctuary and Bacalar Chico Marine and Forest Reserves, and Caye Caulker Forest and Marine Reserve).

Note: exact location and infrastructural projects to be invested will be selected **through** a request for project concepts notes according to set eligibility criteria, application guidelines and criteria for selection. A minimum of 2 small scale infrastructure project concepts will be selected for further development and funding within the target areas to a maximum value of 100,000USD.

1. **Beneficiaries**

* Management agencies of the PAs
* Local and foreign visitors to the PAs
* Tour guides and Tour operators within the target areas
* Buffer communities of the PAs through opportunities to link microenterprise with tour itineraries to the PAs and increased protection of resources which have an important role in climate change adaptation

1. **Technical and economic justification:** Tourism in Belize is dependent on the health and diversity of the natural resource base and a Market Study carried out in preparation for STP2 confirmed the attraction of the PAs as an activity and motivation for overnight visitors as well as highlighting the importance of marine tourism in the areas of Corozal, Toledo and Caye Caulker. The marine protected areas of these target areas form critical linkages with coastal forested and terrestrial protected areas, which, with effective management in place, will serve to preserve ecosystem functions that increase the ability of these habitats to resist and recover from the impacts of climate change. This increased climate resilience will in turn contribute to public health, safety and economic welfare.

In Toledo, Payne’s Creek National Park, Deep River Forest Reserve and Port Honduras Marine Reserve lie within the MMMC, which form some of the most pristine habitat of Southern Belize. The Port of Honduras Marine Reserve encompasses inshore patch and fringing coral reefs, seagrass beds and 138 mangrove cayes, and supports incredible biodiversity and important fisheries, protecting numerous species threatened with extinction. Payne’s Creek, consisting of mangrove broadleaf and savanna habitats protects all of Belize’s five cat species and more than half of Belize’s birds including 20 vulnerable species[[3]](#footnote-2). It is important to note that the sport fishing market to the area of Punta Ycacos, is also a growing sector, and recent establishment of a restaurant and docking facilities at Punta Negra Village has highlighted the demand for such small-scale infrastructure and basic visitor conveniences within the area and its potential positive economic impact on low income people, within the buffer communities of PAs.

The Caye Caulker Forest and Marine Reserve to the north of the island, encompass five habitats– mangrove, littoral forests, lagoon marsh-lands, seagrass beds and coral reefs, with a wide range and diversity of species. The marine reserve boasts several reef types including spur and groove reefs, reef crest and patch reefs, with abundant marine life, several of international concern, thus provides excellent snorkeling and diving opportunities for visitors. The forest reserve contains both mangrove and littoral forest with 173 bird species including endemic species such as the Black Catbird, and species of conservation concern such as the American crocodile. The littoral forests of Caye Caulker are a highly endangered ecosystem type found only sandy cayes, which is fast disappearing due to coastal development.[[4]](#footnote-3) Caye Caulker Marine reserve attracts around 14,000 visitors (2014) which is small when compared to visitation at Hol Chan Marine Reserve ( over 60,000 in 2014). An exit survey carried out in May 2015 indicated that 52 % of overnight visitors in Caye Caulker had visited Hol Chan while only 21 % visited Caye Caulker Marine Reserve, despite Hol Chan’s location more than 20 minutes further by boat.

The Corozal Bay Wildlife Sanctuary is one of Belize’s largest marine protected areas (73,049 Ha) and critical for reef health in northern Belize. It contains the only known stromatolite formation in Belize, is an important habitat and sanctuary for the Antillean Manatee, an important sport fishing habitat; and supports traditional fishers from the northern communities. The Corozal Bay Wildlife Sanctuary is contiguous with Bacalar Chico Marine and Forest Reserve, Ambergris Caye and the northern barrier reef complex down to Caye Caulker. Corozal Town intends to develop its waterfront as a gateway to the bay and the natural attractions beyond for which three marine markets have been identified - sport fishing; marine sports such as kayaking and sailing, and the leisure ecotourism market including birders. However current protected area infrastructure to support these activities is limited.

Investment in small-scale basic infrastructure investments will increase visitation by diversifying activities and enhancing tourist experience; as well as supporting improved visitor management, and conservation measures. Managed effectively, investments will serve to promote the recreational economic importance of the protected areas within the communities and contribute to education and awareness with respect to the critical ecosystem services and values the protected areas represent.

1. **Description**

* Selection Committee established and application guidelines, eligibility criteria, and selection criteria developed
* Selection of minimum of 2 priority projects in target areas following request for Project Concept Proposals and application for award
* Development of architectural and engineering design and costing
* Environmental clearance and permitting where necessary
* Construction of infrastructural works to enhance tourism in PAs

1. **Products and indicators**

Output: natural attractions improved and developed for tourism Baseline 0 Target: 2 minimum

Outcome: number of visitors to the site Baseline TBD Target 5% increase.

1. **Estimated cost and source of financing**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Estimated cost** | **Source** |
| Application guidelines, eligibility and Selection criteria |  |  |
| Design, environmental clearance and permitting etc. | 31,250 | IDB |
| Construction works | 250, 000 |
| Supervision | 12, 500 |
|  |  |
| **Total** | **293,750** |

1. **Management model**: Management models to be elaborated within the Project Concept Proposal including revenue generating options for maintenance and will be included within the selection criteria. Up-to-date Management Plans or commitment to revise outdated management plans will be required to meet eligibility requirements.
2. **Responsible institutions**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Lead institution** | **Participating institution** |
|  |  |  |
| Application guidelines, eligibility and Selection criteria | MTCCA | PACT, NPAS, MFFSD, BTB |
| environmental clearance and permitting etc | PA Management entity | MTCCA, MFFSD |
| Design and Construction works | MTCCA | PA Management entity |
| Supervision | MTCCA | PA management entity, DoE |

1. **Calendar of execution**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **2016** | | **2017** | | **2018** | | **2019** | | **2020** | |
| **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** |
| Application guidelines, eligibility and Selection criteria |  |  |  |  |  | **X** |  |  |  |  |
| Design, environmental clearance and permitting etc |  |  |  |  |  |  | **X** |  |  |  |
| Construction works |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **X** | **X** |  |
| Supervision |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **X** | **X** |  |

1. **Studies needed for execution**

* Environmental studies as directed by DOE
* Baseline visitation numbers

1. **Procedure/environmental studies or others**

* Environmental Clearance

1. **Positive and negative environmental and social impacts**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Impacts** | **Positives** | **Negatives** |
| **Social** | * Increased appreciation of natural resource value and conservation * Economic benefit to local buffer communities and park management * Improved visitor management * Improved visitor satisfaction * Higher integration into local tourism value chain. | * Negative impacts on buffer communities through conflicting use of resources, cultural degradation etc. should be monitored but are expected to be minimal |
| **Environmental** | * Improved sanitation * Improved waste management * Improved monitoring and control of visitor impacts on flora and fauna * Improved access and supporting facilities for biodiversity management.   *Note: scope of positive benefits to environment will be included as a selection criteria* | * Habitat disturbance and alteration * Disturbance to flora and fauna |

1. **Priority and relation to other initiatives:** Priority of the NSTMP to improve the accessibility of the PAs to tourism.

**Sustainable Tourism Project II - BL-L1020**

**Project Data Sheets**

# Product 1.4 Basic infrastructure and key services (docks/landing sites/waterfronts/access roads): *Waterfront Enhancement Punta Gorda, Toledo and Corozal Town, Corozal District*

1. **Objective:** The overall goal is to create public waterfront spaces (mini-park/boardwalk) through rehabilitation, landscaping, and small infrastructure enhancements that will provide the destination the opportunity to utilize innovation and best practices to address issues such as climate change impacts and shoreline protection. At the same time, this investment will assist in reconnecting people with the waterfront and the heritage of the urbanscape, and encouraging waterside pedestrian walks and economic activities, all geared towards improving the visitor and local experiences. In addition, the investments proposed in this activity will be utilized to provide a physical and visual gateway for the tourism hubs, and also may support future phased waterfront development in both Punta Gorda and Corozal, as per the respective Municipal Development Plans.
2. **Location:** Public land on the waterfront of Corozal Bay and also Punta Gorda Town (+- 800ft waterfront) Exact locations to be determined based on an options analysis and land tenure verification. Criteria for selection may include:

* Opportunity for pedestrian linkage to other town investments;
* Strategic location as a gateway site;
* Lies within the area of oceanographic and coastal shoreline studies under the STP2 project;
* Value as a pilot area for potential ongoing investment and incorporation within a wider climate resilient shoreline boardwalk that offers protection to key infrastructure as well as tourism and recreation opportunity;
* Condition and stability of existing shoreline;
* Opportunity for private sector investment.

1. **Beneficiaries:**

* Local municipal governments
* Residents of Corozal Town, PG and surrounding areas
* Day visitors (foreign and domestic) to Corozal Town and PG
* Overnight visitors to Corozal Town and PG
* Local tourism businesses including town hotels, food and beverage establishments, excursion sector and cultural sector (artisans, musicians etc.) in the municipal areas

1. **Technical and economic justification:** Both Corozal Town and Punta Gorda Town are the capitals and administrative hub for their respective districts. The towns are also the main centers for tourism services such as banking, visitor information, produce markets and retail commerce, and have the largest concentrations of restaurants, bars and hotel accommodations, in the respective districts. Both towns have multiple transportation hubs with a main bus terminal, municipal aerodrome, and points of entry and marine access along the waterfront. The waterfront and bay areas in both cases are underutilized tourism asset with huge untapped potential. In their current undeveloped state the scenic views upon entrance to the town where the highway meets the waterfront produce a significant “wow factor”, which should be capitalized on, and integrated within the branding and development of the town’s tourism product. In both cases the water body is also an important natural resource. Both the Corozal Bay Wildlife Sanctuary and Port Honduras Marine Reserve provide critical ecosystem services to the fishing livelihoods of the surrounding communities as well as contributing to high biodiversity value and recreational opportunity within the region.

Corozal District’s tourism visitation (13, 243 visitors in 2014) represents only 4.1% of the total market share, but following a severe decline in business during the global economic crisis of 2008, tourism numbers have been growing slowly over the past two years. Across the border, (9 miles to the north), is Chetumal, capital of the Mexican State of Quintana Roo with a population of 150, 000 and excellent road connectivity with the tourism mecca of Cancun and the Riviera Maya. Toledo enjoys slightly less visitation at only 10, 526 however is likely to receive a boost in numbers given the recent completion of the paving of the San Antonio road connecting Belize with Guatemala.

As marine towns, both Municipalities have plans to develop climate resilient waterfronts and capitalize on the tourism opportunities which coastal protection measures can bring. The success of the IDB funded “Barbados Boardwalk” model, stands testament to the positive synergies which can happen between disaster risk prevention and the tourism sector, ultimately contributing to economic and social benefits for the destinations residents. Although on a smaller scale, similar opportunities are presented in the destinations of Corozal Town and Punta Gorda to catalyze private sector commercial opportunities, with an appreciation of the natural environments.

1. **Description:** Initial options analysis and feasibility to

* identify site location along the waterfront
* determine structural integrity of shoreline
* determine demand and levels of usage to guide capacity provisions of facilities and amenities (parking, restroom, seating, concession areas, lighting, etc.)
* Environmental studies including appropriate systems and siting for restroom facilities (anaerobic vs. septic etc.) and water quality monitoring to establish baselines
* Potential for recreational public dock
* Management and maintenance options, as well as options for revenue generation through lease space, concessions, events, public-private sector partnerships

Architectural designs and drawings to include:

* engineering solutions for boardwalk concepts and coastal protection (utilizing input of coastal oceanographic studies, coastal dynamic studies, and other recommendations)
* restrooms, hard-scaped areas with utility provision identified for “plug in” by private sector, lighting and landscaping, gateway signage, parking
* incorporation of green infrastructure
* Physical synergies of investments on waterfront with other ongoing investments in municipalities, under the STPII and other initiatives.

Infrastructural Investments to include:

* Minor Shoreline stabilization works where necessary and coastal protection measures
* landfill and redesign of space with basic infrastructure and pedestrian walkways/boardwalk
* gateway sign/monument
* restroom facilities
* utility provision and lighting
* private sector engagement areas (provision of base foundation and utilities for kiosks and concessions)
* landscaping
* parking area

1. **Products and indicators**

Output: waterfront areas at Town gateways enhanced Baseline 0; Target 2

Outcome Indicators: Increase in number of visitors utilizing the waterfront: Baseline TBD Target:

Improved aesthetics of waterfront

*(Destination baseline survey is necessary)*

Increase in Private Sector tourism businesses in and adjacent to investment area.

1. **Estimated cost and source of financing**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Estimated cost** | **Source** |
| Technical Studies, feasibility study | 143, 750 | IDB |
| Construction works for Corozal | 500, 000 |
| Construction works for Punta Gorda | 650, 000 |
| Supervision | 57,500 |
| Operation and maintenance (annual) |  |
| **Total** | **1,351,250** |

1. **Management model:** Options for management models will be evaluated during the feasibility study
2. **Responsible institutions**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Lead institution** | **Participating institution** |
| Technical Studies, feasibility study | MTCCA | LTC, Municipality, LBA MFFSD, SACD, TIDE |
| Construction works for Corozal | MTCCA | LTC, Municipality, LBA, MFFDS, SACD |
| Construction works for Punta Gorda | MTCCA | LTC, Municipality, LBA, TIDE, MFFSD |
| Supervision | MTCCA | LTC, Municipality, LBA, DOE |
| Maintenance and Management | Municipality | MTCCA |

1. **Calendar of execution**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **2016** | | **2017** | | **2018** | | **2019** | | **2020** | |
| **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** |
| Feasibility study |  |  |  | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Construction |  |  |  |  |  | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |
| Supervision |  |  |  |  |  | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |

1. **Studies needed for execution**

* Coastal Dynamics Baseline and Vulnerability risk assessment will inform engineering decisions
* Land tenure verification
* Feasibility- Site options analysis, demand, and environmental studies

1. **Procedure/environmental studies or others:** Environmental clearance (given it is ecosystem based waterfront development and an urban enhancement project consideration is likely to be for a Limited Level Study (minimum level of study)
2. **Positive and negative environmental and social impacts**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Impacts** | **Positives** | **Negatives** |
| **Social** | * Direct economic benefit through possible concessions and increased in town activities * Catalyst for investment * Increase land values * improved leisure and recreational space for residents * improved marine access * Increased civic pride * Increased appreciation and understanding of value of Coastal Areas and in particular Marine ecosystem services * Increase appreciation of the need to consider Climate Change Resilience as a part of ongoing and future development of coastal areas. | * Potential traffic interruption during construction * User and resident conflicts- i.e. Parking * Increase land values possibly leading to gentrification |
| **Environmental** | * Improved drainage * Improved waste management and respect for environment * Improved sanitation through provision of public restroom facilities * Increased “greening” * Improved aesthetics * Improved protection and adaptation to impacts of Climate Change. | * Water quality risk through sedimentation during construction * Water quality through bathing activities * Increased threat to manatee through increased boat traffic * Erosion |

1. **Priority and relation to other initiatives:** Climate resilient waterfront development and utilizing tourism as an economic driver are priorities within the Municipal Development Plans for the community. Aligned with NSTMP, National Climate Change Policy, National Climate Resilient Investment Plan, as well as the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan.

**Sustainable Tourism Project II - BL-L1020**

**Project Data Sheets**

# Product 1.4 Basic infrastructure and key services (docks/landing sites/waterfronts/access roads): *Coastal Dynamics Studies and Shoreline Stabilization*

1. **Objective:** The overall goal of the intervention is to create attractive climate resilient waterfronts for increased coastal tourism and recreational usage, which also contribute to enhanced coastal habitats, through the use of green infrastructure, and adaptation measures based on robust reliable scientific and technical data.

The immediate objectives include:

1. Identification of baseline information gaps (e.g., shoreline, coastal and oceanographic processes, hazards, risk) for the target areas of Toledo, Caye Caulker and Corozal and execution of baseline data collection activities to address these gaps;
2. Through technical studies, identify green infrastructure and/or nature and structural mix solutions for coastal infrastructure that will increase climate resilience, mitigate future erosion and promote beach restoration in the target areas;
3. Based on the recommendations of the studies execute shoreline stabilization measures along approximately 1-2 miles of vulnerable shoreline within the destinations of Caye Caulker and/or Corozal

1. **Location:** Technical Studies to be carried out along a minimum stretch of 1 mile coastline within the destinations of Corozal Town, Corozal District Belize; Punta Gorda Town, Toledo District and the island of Caye Caulker, Belize District, Belize. Actual site location will be determined through consultation with the Local Municipalities, Local Tourism Committees and stakeholders based on vulnerability factors and risk to climate change; strategic tourism potential and opportunity for local economic benefit.
2. **Beneficiaries:**

* Local residents of Caye Caulker, Punta Gorda Town, Corozal Town and outlying areas (estimated resident population 25,000)
* Overnight visitors to the destinations of Caye Caulker, Punta Gorda Town, and Corozal Town (107, 130 visitors in 2014)
* Day visitors to the destinations of Caye Caulker, Punta Gorda Town, and Corozal Town
* National authorities and planning agencies such as MED, Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute, Lands Information Center, local municipality for the purpose of policy and planning decision making.
* NEMO for vulnerability and disaster risk management.

1. **Technical and economic justification:** The InVEST Coastal Vulnerability model results indicate that currently, the Corozal and Belize Districts (which includes Caye Caulker) are the coastal areas of highest vulnerability to flooding and erosion from storms.

Caye Caulker, with a resident population of 1,765 persons (2010 National Census), is the second most popular region for tourism visitation in Belize. Attracting 83,000 visitors in 2014 (BTB), tourism is central to the islands economy. The tourism vision for Caye Caulker within the NSTMP is a destination that “offers low key charm and attractive beaches” and the exit survey carried out in May 2014 indicated that 93% of overnight visitors to the island swim, sunbathe and relax on the beach. However, this primary asset is currently under threat from the impacts associated with ongoing development, associated mangrove clearance and climate change, and indications are that erosion of the beach area on the reef side of the island is ongoing. Caye Caulker falls within the Central Belize Planning Region for which one of the key objectives is “Maintaining and protecting on-going and future conservation, recreational and tourism areas and uses”. This Planning region has also been identified as an area where Climate Change will produce the highest potential impact to the tourism industry, and an area that may be prioritized for future research into the potential for climate-compatible tourism development.[[5]](#footnote-4)

Corozal is the lowest point of northern Belize consisting of agricultural land, significant areas of mangrove and wetland in the east, as well as pockets of broadleaf forest. Corozal Town, administrative hub for the district is home to the over 10, 000 residents and is situated on a flat coastal swamp plain with elevation varying from 0 ft. above sea level in Corozal South end to 8 ft. above sea level at Finca Solana in the North and Rising to 30 ft. at Santa Rita. While there are no definitive beaches on the coast line of Corozal Town, there is great opportunity for water based recreation within Corozal Bay. The Bay area, designated as a wildlife sanctuary for the protection of Belize’s population of West Indian manatee, is viewed by the community as a unique tourism asset for the area central to the tourism product. The municipal development plan states a clear policy intention to “create an attractive waterfront—a “seaside development zone….” with specific proposals to advance this policy, including consideration of a boardwalk, beach and improved coastal infrastructure. This is based on the overall recommendations of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan for the 3km zone of coastal influence to include the promotion of shoreline stabilization as a buffer from extreme weather events through “soft” interventions such as mangrove protection, the replanting of native plants, slope creation, the creation of parks and open space recreational facilities, or the constructing armaments using natural features such as logs and digging trenches. Given the increasing issues with erosion and degradation of the coastline (at the South End in particular) the plan proposes to ensure that Corozal will be resilient and protected from the impacts of future hurricanes, tropical depressions, flooding and rising sea levels.

Punta Gorda in the Toledo district, with a population of 5,500 people, (census 2010) is also a marine town with over 2 miles of waterfront shown to be at risk to flooding from erosion and storms under the CZMAI InVest study. (Clarke et al 2014). The only paved access into the town hugs the coastline and although creating a stunning gateway it is extremely vulnerable to climatic factors and sea level rise. The Municipal Development Plan for Punta Gorda has a similar vision as Corozal to build on the waterfront asset for tourism purpose to serve “as a barrier to protect the Town from storm surges and as an ocean promenade or boardwalk”.

Shoreline stabilization is an immediate need for these coastal communities, however data necessary for long term coastal resilience planning and adaption is very limited, and there is no such data freely available to the pertinent planning agencies to support soft and green engineering solutions. Conducting coastal shoreline studies, oceanographic studies etc. for these specific destinations will provide the foundation towards informed decisions and be the first step necessary towards recommendations for green infrastructure that will increase the coastal resiliency of these destinations and both enhance, and protect the tourism product. Active participation of the local coastal planning agencies within data collection and analysis as a component of these interventions will serve as key capacity building for these agencies.

1. **Description.** Preliminary list of activities and investments to be undertaken:

-Gap analysis of existing data for the target areas, to be undertaken though liaison with CZMAI, NCO, LIC, MFFSD and other agencies involved in the planning and conservation of the marine and coastal environment

-shoreline coastal studies, sedimentation studies, beach profiling, oceanographic field studies etc. over a period of at least one year to complete data gaps

-modeling of scenarios especially in light of climate change and vulnerability

- Feasibility of options (including environmental compliance) to determine final designs and recommendations for green solutions to shoreline stabilization in at least one of the target areas of Corozal Town or Caye Caulker for an area of specific vulnerable coastline.

-Shoreline stabilization measures relevant to the tourism and recreation economy of the destinations.

1. **Products and indicators**

Output:

Coastal Dynamic studies Baseline 0; Target 3

Shorelines stabilized Baseline 0 Target 1-2

Outcome:

Agencies capacity for planning strengthened (Municipal Government, NEMO, CZMAI, LIC)

Increased visitation and recreational usage of the waterfront

Increased resilience to climate risk

Indicator:

Minimum 1 mile of shoreline stabilized in Caye Caulker and/or Corozal

Increased recreational usage of the waterfront by residents and visitors

Erosion rate decreased

Increase in mangrove coverage

1. **Estimated cost and source of financing**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Estimated cost (USD)** | **Source** |
| Gap Analysis Technical studies and data collection | 900,000 |  |
| Construction of green infrastructure | 1000, 000 |
| Supervision, monitoring and evaluation | 50,000 |
| **Total** | **1, 950,000** |

1. **Management model:** Options for management to be considered within the feasibility including options for Local Municipality partnership with waterfront landowners.
2. **Responsible institutions**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Lead institution** | **Participating institution** |
| Gap Analysis Technical studies and data collection, feasibility and designs | MTCCA/consultancy firm | MFFSD/MNR/ Local municipality/MOWT |
| Construction of green infrastructure | MTCCA/consultancy firm | MFFSD/MNR/Local municipality/MOWT |
| Supervision, monitoring and evaluation | MTCCA/consultancy firm/ | MFFSD/MNR/Local municipality/MOWT |

1. **Calendar of execution**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **2016** | | **2017** | | **2018** | | **2019** | | **2020** | |
| **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** |
| Gap Analysis Technical studies and data collection, feasibility and designs |  |  | **x** | **x** | **X** | **x** |  |  |  |  |
| Construction of green infrastructure |  |  |  |  |  |  | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |
| Supervision, monitoring and evaluation |  |  |  |  |  |  | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |

1. **Studies needed for execution:**  Baseline studies of indicators
2. **Procedure/environmental studies or others:** Environmental Clearance, permitting from MNR.
3. **Positive and negative environmental and social impacts**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Impacts** | **Positives** | **Negatives** |
| **Social** | -Enhanced opportunity for leisure and recreation  -Increased protection of town infrastructure from climatic factors  -Increased awareness of green solutions  -Increased capacity of CZMAI and planning agencies through participation within data analysis | * Temporary displacement from area/disruption during interventions |
| **Environmental** | * Increase in water quality through increase in mangrove and associated ecosystem services * Reduced erosion of coastline/beaches * Reduced flooding * Increased management consideration of environmental factors/policies/strategies | * Sedimentation and decrease in water quality during intervention phase * Temporary altering of marine habitats |

|  |
| --- |
| 1. **Priority and relation to other initiatives:** The overall strategy of the National Climate Change Policy, strategy and action plan for the tourism sector is “assessing coastal tourism areas in Belize that are vulnerable to Climate Change and providing support to coastal planners and policy makers in selecting appropriate policies and adaptation strategies that meet climate adaptation, developmental and environmental goals”. Aligned with strategies of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan. The priorities for Corozal Town and PG include development of the waterfront for tourism as highlighted within the Municipal Plans. The Smart Islands initiative for Caye Caulker includes adaptation strategies. Mangrove restoration programs being implemented in the communities by conservation NGOs and environmental groups such as FOCUS, Ocean Academy, and TIDE. |

**Sustainable Tourism Project II - BL-L1020**

**Project Data Sheets**

# Product 1.5: Tourist Signage

1. **Objective:** to enhance visitor welcome, and orientation within Corozal, Toledo, Mountain Pine Ridge and Caye Caulker, improving awareness of tourism attractions, services, and experiences, and assisting wayfinding through the provision of signage and supporting collateral material. Ultimately the visitor will benefit from increased satisfaction and security, and community tourism providers will benefit from an increased awareness and promotion of tourism sites and experiences resulting in increased visitation
2. **Location:** Target destinations of Caye Caulker, Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve, Corozal District and Toledo District with a focus on gateway welcome signage at entry/exit points ; community level signage in key tourism centers such as Corozal Town, and Punta Gorda Town; and directional signage for tourism attractions. A tourism attractions map will be produced as supporting collateral material.
3. **Beneficiaries**

* Local municipal government
* Residents
* Day visitors (foreign and domestic)
* Overnight visitors
* Local tourism businesses including town hotels, food and beverage establishments and excursion sector.

1. **Technical and economic justification:** The NSTMP states “insufficient and inappropriate signage along the routes” as a challenge to tourism connectivity, and at a destination level the exit survey undertaken in May 2014 showed Road and Tourist Signage ranked within the top two areas needing improvement by visitors to all four target areas of Corozal (top priority) Toledo (top priority, Mountain Pine Ridge (top priority), and Caye Caulker (2nd rank after environmental quality of the beach). Increasingly efforts are being made to include signage as a necessary component of the new infrastructure works and upgraded road systems currently ongoing throughout the country and within individual municipalities. Priority is however, given to highway signage and in particular warning and instructional signage and directional signs to the main urban centers. For the most part in-town way-finding signage and tourism attractions related signage is lacking. This is particularly true for the emerging tourism destinations.

Corozal Town and Punta Gorda Town are both border towns, and increasingly faced with the reality of becoming “transit towns” with visitors arriving and passing through to more established tourism destinations. Signage has a key role to play in these areas to both lure and “capture” the visitor at the border/entry points. The new Jalacte road from Guatemala, while opening up Toledo to a potential new market, may not fully captured by Punta Gorda Town unless visitors can be “directed” there. Caye Caulker while only a small island, because of its pedestrian focus would benefit from orientation to the key tourism points such as transportation hubs, attractions and emergency services etc. The Mountain Pine Ridge, being a forest reserve, is a unique situation, as the area is traversed with active and non-active unmarked logging roads over an area of 126, 000+ acres, which presents a huge concern for the safety of independent visitors choosing to travel without a guide. The limited signage that exists has deteriorated significantly due to short term life of the materials used. Strong tourism signage and maps would contribute greatly to the visitor experience and enable protected areas managers to control and manage visitation more effectively.

Existing Signage in MPR

Belize has undertaken a rebranding of an umbrella brand as per the NSTMP sub-program for Tourism Positioning Management. The next phase will be to define product and destination brands. Unique entrance or gateway signs can assist in making visitors feel more welcome to an area, and contribute greatly to marketing and promotion as a “photo opportunity”, as has been the case with Punta Gorda’s Welcome “Belize Dollar Coin” and Belize City’s BELIZE seaside monument. There is an opportunity within the other destinations for similar custom entrance signs to build an image and create a sense of place, thus reinforcing a ‘brand’ that is unique to the community/area.

In summary an effective signage program, driven with the input of the Local Tourism Committees within the target areas will improve access to the towns, attractions, venues, and services; enhance the experience of visitors as it will enable them to arrive at their destination safely, find the services they need or want, and leave with a positive perception of the community and boost visitation and spending by creating an opportunity to facilitate linkage with products and services, and positive experiences.

1. **Description:** In order to develop an attractions map and determine locations for priority signage a phased approach will need to be undertaken to include:
2. GIS Mapping of tourism attractions in the target areas to include an assessment of available data and data gaps (current spatial data with respect to Tourism Attractions and Services is limited. BTB collects hotel spatial data, and Lands Information Center has some data with respect to Border points, Ports, aerodromes, protected areas and archaeological sites)
3. Tourism Sign Needs Assessment and Location Study for each area. In close consultation with the Ministry of Works which follows international signage protocol, and Local Tourism Committees/ Working Group, identify and prioritize the Types of signage needed and identify a suitable location. Types of signage to be considered would include

* Gateway and welcome signage at key entrance/exit points
* Directional signage for main tourism services (transportation hubs, visitor information center etc.)
* Directional and information signage for attractions (cultural, natural etc.)
* Policy and safety signage (in particular for the MPR)

The assessment should make recommendations for content and materials in order to ensure sustainability and impact.

1. Map production (to complement tourism signage system) and production and installation of signage.
2. **Products and indicators**

Output: 5000 Tourist maps designed and printed for 3 areas Baseline 0; Target 5000 x 3 (note Caye Caulker has an existing map produced as a private sector initiative)

Output: Tourism Signage installed in Toledo, Corozal, Caye Caulker and MPR

Outcome: Increased visitor awareness of the tourism product and attractions in the target destination.

Baseline 0; Target: (XX% of total visitation)

1. **Estimated cost and source of financing**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Estimated cost** | **Source** |
| Mapping of tourism services and attractions | 25, 000 | IDB |
| Signage Needs Assessment and Location study | 30, 000 |
| Map Production and design | 45, 000 |
| Production and installation of signage | 300, 000 |
| **Total** | **400, 000** |

1. **Management model:** Options for maintenance and recommendations for management and coordination of a holistic tourism signage program will be evaluated during the Needs Assessment.
2. **Responsible institutions**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Lead institution** | **Participating institution** |
|  |  |  |
| Mapping of tourism services and attractions | MTCCA, BTB | LIC |
| Signage Needs Assessment and Location study | MTCCA, BTB | LTC/LWG, MOW, MFFSD, Local Municipalities |
| Map Production and design | MTCCA, BTB | LTC/LWG |
| Production and installation of signage | MTCCA, BTB | Local Municipalities, MOW |

1. **Calendar of execution**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **2016** | | **2017** | | **2018** | | **2019** | |
| **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Mapping of tourism services and attractions |  | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |  |  |
| Signage Needs Assessment and Location study |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Map Production and design |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Production and installation of signage |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

1. **Studies needed for execution**

* GIS mapping of attractions
* Signage Needs Assessment and Location study

1. **Procedure/environmental studies or others:** Consult with respective Ministry (Ministry of Works, and Municipality)
2. **Positive and negative environmental and social impacts**

The negative impacts are listed here for awareness to highlight the importance of appropriate consultation with authorities and to stress best practice within the sign location study. These potential negative impacts are easily mitigated.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Impacts** | **Positives** | **Negatives** |
| **Social** | * Economic benefit (indirect) * Improved Visitor management | * Traffic hazard (potential if not located and installed with consultation of authorities) |
| **Environmental** | * Restricting access to sensitive areas within the MPR will reduce erosion and other visitor related impacts | * Visual pollution (potential if poor design and cluttering of signage) |

1. **Priority and relation to other initiatives:** A number of signage programs are currently taking place, or planned in the short term which will complement and support this initiative as follows:

* BTB is working in collaboration with HoC in Corozal to develop a walking heritage Town Trail with related signage.
* TIDE has recently completed a Cultural trail featuring 5 families, spanning from PG Town proper to Forest Home.
* BTB in Caye Caulker is planning to install surveillance cameras for island hotspots to increase safety and security. They will also benefit from the “No Swimming Beyond this Point” safety signage within the next 6 months for which BPA approval has already been granted.
* BTIA in Caye Caulker has been considering a signage program - the BTIA could be a potential partner in the destination of Caye Caulker.
* BTB- Anti-littering program that includes some signage is scheduled to begin 2016

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**Project Data Sheets**

# Product 2.1: Guidelines for improving disaster and climate resilience in the tourism sector, emphasizing ecosystem-based adaptation and risk reduction, prepared and associated training conducted

# Product 2.2: Toledo District tourism risk management and adaptation plan completed

# Product 2.3: Corozal District vulnerability and risk assessment and incorporation in District destination plan

# Product 2.4: Crisis management plans and associated training completed

1. **Objective:** The broad objective is to mainstream disaster and climate resilience into local tourism planning emphasizing ecosystem-based adaptation and risk reduction, in order to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters and increase climate resilience in the tourist destinations. The specific objectives are to (i) increase availability of risk information and strengthen risk awareness and knowledge in the four districts, addressing existing and future vulnerabilities, (ii) build capacity at the local level to prepare, respond and recover from natural disasters and adapt to climate change. Given the incipient nature of risk management in the destinations, this will be achieved through the development and application of critical risk management and adaptation tools that promote ecosystems management that lays the foundation for a sustained path to vulnerability reduction and climate resilience, in support of sustainable tourism development[[6]](#footnote-5).
2. **Location:** The districts of Corozal and Toledo, the MPR-Chiquibul-Caracol protected area complex and the terrestrial and marine areas of Caye Caulker.
3. **Beneficiaries:** Town and village councils, Local Tourism Committees, local residents of all four destinations, tourist operators and accommodations. MTCCA. The activity is also designed to provide benefits on a national level, as the proposed guidance documents on improving disaster and climate resilience in the sector will be replicable and scalable.
4. **Technical and economic justification:** The tourism sector of Belize is vulnerable to natural disasters and the impacts of climate change. In the case of natural disasters for example, sector GDP growth rate declined following Hurricane Keith (2000). The cost of repairing damage to tourism infrastructure and the decline in incomes generated resulted in a negative impact on the balance of payments of US$57.6 million[[7]](#footnote-6). One of the main findings of the Climate Change Risk Profile for Belize is that economic investment and livelihoods, particularly those related to tourism[[8]](#footnote-7), in the coastal zone (where tourism development is concentrated) are at risk from sea level rise and storm surge impacts. Climate models suggest an increase in average atmospheric and sea surface temperature, reduced average rainfall and the potential for increased intensity of tropical storms[[9]](#footnote-8); which will also impact important sectors linked to tourism (agriculture, fisheries, etc.). According to the National Climate Resilience Investment Plan, Belize’s projected climate change impacts also include increased drought risk, increased flood risk (intense rainfall and storm surge), increased storm risk (more intense rains and winds) and higher sea-levels.[[10]](#footnote-9) Within the destinations, various levels of vulnerability and risk are apparent, as described below:

*Corozal.* Corozal District lies in Northern Belize and is vulnerable to tropical storms and hurricanes. In 1955, Hurricane Janet devastated Corozal town and more recently, Hurricane Dean (2007) resulted in some damage[[11]](#footnote-10). The District is very flood prone; flooding during high tide and during heavy rains is related to low-lying coastal plains and karstic terrain. Fires are an emerging threat, as the expansion of the agriculture frontier increases the District’s overall risk. Based on the most comprehensive assessment of local-level tourism sector climate vulnerabilities (within 10km from the coastline), impacts[[12]](#footnote-11) in Corozal are classified as medium. Climate change is expected to exacerbate existing hazards through increased temperatures, decreased rainfall and sea-level rise[[13]](#footnote-12). Five key communities viz. Corozal Town, Consejo Village, Sarteneja Village, Chunox Village and Copper Bank Village[[14]](#footnote-13), all of which have high existing or potential tourism potential, lie within 3km of mean high water mark and are highly exposed to sea level rise. Without the implementation of climate change adaptation and risk reduction measures, these characteristics will limit the competitiveness of the District’s tourism product. Appropriate management of the District’s environmental resources, particularly the extensive mangroves and the protected areas which cover almost 36% of the District, can increase resilience and reduce risk through important flood and erosion control functions. Yet, environmental degradation, especially deforestation for agriculture and land-based pollution, is degrading the District’s ecosystems[[15]](#footnote-14).

*Toledo.* The Toledo coastline has recently seen unprecedented rates of erosion, related to changes in sediment transport and erosion processes in the Monkey River Watershed[[16]](#footnote-15). While the impacts are currently concentrated near Monkey River, the lack of coastal accretion and rapid erosion signals the vulnerability of the southern coast to changes in the upper watershed. The low-lying areas of Punta Gorda are prone to frequent flood events, including in the Magoon and Indianville areas[[17]](#footnote-16). The District is also susceptible to fires; in 2011 the Aguacaliente Wildlife Sanctuary experienced extreme damage and Mango Creek, Swasey-Bladen and Deep River Forest Reserves experienced moderate damage due to forest fires[[18]](#footnote-17). Due to the District’s proximity to the tectonically active boundary between the North American plate and Caribbean plate, earthquakes are also an important hazard[[19]](#footnote-18). Climate change impacts in the District have been assessed as medium.[[20]](#footnote-19) Among the predicted effects are high to very high changes in precipitation, with significant implications for agriculture, ecosystem productivity and increased vulnerability to fire hazard; increasing seasonality of rainfall/inundation; saltwater intrusion; increased hurricane intensity; decreased productivity; species migration and a drying of the forest, decline in the humid end of the species and ecosystem spectrum[[21]](#footnote-20). In terms of coastal exposure, five (5) communities within 3km of mean high water (Barranco Village, Punta Ycacos Community, Punta Gorda Town, Cattle Landing, Punta Negra Village), other smaller coastal settlements and the outer cayes are at risk. Despite low cost of land and growing interest from developers, the mainland coastline is still largely undeveloped, including three protected areas in the coastal zone (Port Honduras Marine Reserve, Payne’s Creek National Park, Sarstoon-Temash National Park). In fact, stakeholders are advocating that the mangrove buffer remains intact.[[22]](#footnote-21) While this demonstrates awareness that the management of coastal ecosystems can reduce risk to sea-level rise and storms, the approach has not yet been implemented in comprehensive planning processes.

*Caye Caulker.* Caye Caulker is highly vulnerable to hurricanes and storms. Coastal erosion also presents a significant threat. The island is divided by a natural channel (the “Split”), a popular recreational site for tourists and locals, which has widened over time due to a 1961 hurricane, coastal erosion associated with subsequent storm events, dredging and mangrove removal. Caye Caulker Village, located on the southern portion of the island and where erosion is accelerating, is highly exposed. The presence of littoral forest, one of Belize’s most endangered ecosystems, affords potential risk reduction as the protection and conservation of these ecosystems safeguards the natural buffer that reduces coastal erosion, builds land and protects against storms[[23]](#footnote-22). Notwithstanding, recent assessments show continued deforestation in mangrove areas in the north and south of the island at rates that exceed the national average[[24]](#footnote-23). Fire is an emerging threat as the density of development is increasing. The fire management capacity of the island is largely untested[[25]](#footnote-24). Emergencies and hospitalization require treatment on the mainland. This demonstrates the critical importance of having emergency preparedness and response plans in place, including the need to manage evacuations[[26]](#footnote-25). Climate change impacts have been assessed as high.[[27]](#footnote-26) It is predicted that with 1 meter sea level rise Caye Caulker would lose 96% of its beach area and 100% under a 2 meter sea level rise scenario[[28]](#footnote-27).

*MPR-Chiquibul Complex*. An inland location, MPR-Chiquibul is mainly susceptible to hurricanes[[29]](#footnote-28) and forest fires[[30]](#footnote-29). Hurricane Richard, although only a Category 1 storm, caused extensive forest damage (163,000 hectares [ha]). The resulting accumulation of woody debris and a drier than average dry season created the enabling conditions for strong forest fires in the area (213,500 ha in wildfire; 61,200 ha in savanna fire[[31]](#footnote-30)). Areas affected by Hurricane Richard were nearly 80-90% burned, with extensive damage in MPR and minor damage in Chiquibul.[[32]](#footnote-31) An increase in the frequency of these conditions is consistent with climate change projections. This is particularly significant for the tourism sector, not only because of risk to infrastructure, but also because visitation peaks during the dry season, when the fire hazard is the highest[[33]](#footnote-32). Flash floods are common in the broad-leaf forest[[34]](#footnote-33) and the Chalillo dam, 48km upstream from San Ignacio and Santa Elena, spilled over in 2008[[35]](#footnote-34). The region is also considered to have medium to high seismicity[[36]](#footnote-35). The predicted effects of climate change include an overall significant reduction in rainfall and an increase in temperatures. It is important to note these impacts could be national in scope, as this area includes the headwaters of the main source of drinking water for most of Belize[[37]](#footnote-36). The presence of large blocks of intact forest (94% forested) and 100% coverage of protected areas represents an important tool in ecosystem-based risk reduction. For example, healthy riparian habitat can function as an important fire break[[38]](#footnote-37). Conversely, mismanagement of ecosystems (land conversion, damming) can change hydrological cycles, resulting in altered fire regimes and increased fire risk[[39]](#footnote-38). There is increasing environmental degradation, with over 9,000 ha of deforestation observed between 2010 and 2014[[40]](#footnote-39). Overall, strategies for risk reduction in MPR-Chiquibul are limited in scope, particularly when considering the issue of ecosystems management. While, fire management has been integrated in protected area management plans (i.e. MPR Visitor Use Master Plan), the issue of climate change, hurricanes/storms and comprehensive disaster risk management is not addressed, even in the most recently developed management plan[[41]](#footnote-40).

Overall, degradation of the physical integrity of critical forest, marine, coastal and freshwater environments, results in potential loss in the tourism product that would limit the competitiveness of the sector. Research elsewhere in the Caribbean suggests that extensive beach erosion and environmental degradation reduces tourist willingness to return.[[42]](#footnote-41) Overall the specific impacts on the coastal tourism sector (Corozal, Caye Caulker and Toledo) include loss of beaches and coastlines due to sea level rise (SLR),[[43]](#footnote-42) coral reef bleaching from increased sea surface temperatures and saline intrusion of aquifers. All four destinations are likely to experience less reservations and/or more displaced visitors due to adverse rainfall and weather conditions, leading to losses in revenue; increased incidence of heat stress and heat related illnesses in tourists and outdoor workers; increased infrastructural damage[[44]](#footnote-43) and deleterious impacts on other sectors on which the tourism industry depends (i.e., water;[[45]](#footnote-44) agriculture)[[46]](#footnote-45). There will also be the need for improved emergency preparedness due to floods,[[47]](#footnote-46) coastal inundation and extreme events[[48]](#footnote-47). These potential losses could be reduced with proactive action. Yet all four destinations have low adaptive capacity and are at an incipient stage of risk management. In general they lack a coordinated and comprehensive approach to the sustainable management of the risks posed by natural hazards and the impacts of climate change. The specific limitations relate to the following:

1. *The availability of risk information*. Detailed destination-specific information on the magnitude and extent of hazards/threats, exposed assets (population, infrastructure, property, ecosystems, services) vulnerability and risk in the context of climate variability and climate change is either not available or limited in geographic coverage. For example, comprehensive assessment of Corozal District’s disaster and climate vulnerabilities is limited to population centers (i.e. Corozal Town) and the District’s protected areas. Ecosystem services assessment have been completed to inform coastal zone management guidelines of the Northern, Central and Southern Coastal Regions of the country (that include Caye Caulker and the coastal regions of Corozal and Toledo), however these do not incorporate climate change scenarios and cover coastal areas only. High quality assessment at local scales that include climate change scenarios are required to raise risk awareness and increase knowledge, and inform local level tourism policy and plans as well the design and feasibility of physical investments (e.g. Corozal waterfront enhancement,) that are sited in vulnerable areas.
2. *Weak governance in adaptation and risk reduction.* Climate adaptation and risk reduction are not systematically incorporated in local tourism planning decisions. None of the destinations has a comprehensive tourism risk management plan, disaster risk management plan and/or climate change adaptation plan. The Punta Gorda and Corozal Town Municipal Plans reference climate change and disaster risk management and include a few prioritized activities for risk reduction. However they lack a systematic approach due to a lack of information, miss the opportunity to connect to larger (i.e., District-level) management issues (i.e. coastal erosion and Monkey River watershed) and do not provide tools for implementation on the individual level (i.e., hotel operators). The National Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Plan references that all tourism facilities should have disaster preparedness and evacuation plans and recommends very careful management of the cayes, which are particularly vulnerable to natural disasters. However, due to data limitations the National ICZM Plan does not fully incorporate climate change. An urgent need is for destination-level emergency preparedness and response plans for the sector that considers the needs of transient tourist populations, and associated capacity building and coordination with District Emergency Organizations. Limited capacity exists at the local (Local Tourism Committees [LTC]) and national[[49]](#footnote-48) (Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Civil Aviation [MTCCA]) levels to apply adaptation and risk management tools in tourism development. In this regard, there is also need for improved coordination among various existing institutional mechanisms at the local and regional level, e.g. LTCs, town councils, regional coastal advisory committees, District Emergency Committees) toward harmonization in climate risk management in the tourism sector.
3. *Scope and nature of climate change adaptation and risk reduction measures*. Physical and non-physical adaptation and risk reduction measures in place are often project-based and not implemented within a programmatic framework. Overall, there has been very limited implementation of ecosystem-based adaptation measures as a strategy for climate resilience. While several examples exist (Corozal, Punta Gorda)[[50]](#footnote-49) there appears to be insufficient recognition of the potential role of healthy, functioning natural ecosystems in risk reduction and resilience. Corozal for example has begun a process of mangrove restoration through the Corozal Mangrove Park Project. However, the restoration sites are not necessarily strategic or connected to broader issue of ecosystems management. This demonstrates the need for the definition of best practices and increased information that can be efficiently included at the beginning of any planning process. In general there is a need to develop and apply comprehensive guidelines for disaster and climate resilience that will, based on robust assessment of vulnerability and risk, outline best practice adaptation and risk reduction strategies and actions including the use of ecosystems management and their incorporation into local tourism development.

Therefore, the interventions proposed are designed to mainstream climate change adaptation and disaster risk management emphasizing natural capital and ecosystems in destination level tourism planning, investment and implementation. Given the low adaptive capacity and incipient nature of risk management in the destinations, this is optimally achieved through the use and implementation of best practice adaptation and risk management tools (vulnerability and risk assessments, risk management guidelines) as well as capacity building that would place the destinations on a sustained path to effective risk management as well as addressing high priority infrastructure investments (ecosystem-based shoreline stabilization). The proposed activities will allow Belize to engage and sustainably manage the natural capital and tourism assets in the destinations. Because the interventions are planned in emerging destinations, Belize has a unique opportunity to include these best practice approaches from the very beginning and ensure that these issues are routinely included in tourism planning, or other development plans.

1. **Description**

Preliminary list of activities and investments to be undertaken[[51]](#footnote-50):

* Design of comprehensive local guidelines for improving disaster and climate resilience guidelines[[52]](#footnote-51) in the sector (emphasizing ecosystems-based adaptation)
  + Literature review and identification of best practices, particularly as it relates to the emerging field of ecosystems management and the ecosystem services framework
  + Production of a step-by-step “how to” guide for developing a destination-specific, local level adaptation and risk management plan for tourism, including customization to the context of Belize (mapping scales, sources of information etc.) and with emphasis on ecosystem-based management
    - Assessment and Gap Analysis
      * Risk identification - local level hazard, exposure, vulnerability and risk assessments, incorporating climate change
      * Legislative and Institutional capacity assessment
      * Analysis of Gaps and Challenges
    - Actionable options for adaptation and risk management: risk identification, prevention and mitigation, financial risk management, crisis management (preparedness and response, business continuity), recovery
    - Implementation strategy (prioritization, coordination, budgeting etc.)
  + Presentation of draft guidelines to tourism stakeholders in 4 destinations (regional workshop)
  + Presentation of final guidelines / training for relevant stakeholders (i.e., LTCs, Town councils, MTCCA, NEMO)
  + Endorsement by MTCCA
* Full Implementation of local guidelines in Toledo District
* Stakeholder workshop (consensus building around scope, hazards/threats, prioritize key issues and prioritization; challenges)
  + Data Collection
    - Vulnerability and risk assessment
    - Legislative and Institutional capacity assessment
  + Public consultations
  + Production of draft Toledo District disaster and climate resilience plan for the tourism sector (based on the information collected above and the guide produced in the first activity)
  + Workshop to present draft plan to stakeholders for feedback
  + Preparation and presentation of final plan
  + Endorsement by Toledo LTC and MTCCA
* Limited implementation of local guidelines in Corozal
  + Vulnerability and risk assessment of tourism and related sectors, Corozal District
  + Incorporation of vulnerability and risk assessment into Corozal District destination plan
* Crisis management plans (emergency preparedness and response, business continuity) for the sector
  + Crisis management plan and associated training for Caye Caulker tourism stakeholders
    - Literature review: Review previous crisis management plans for tourism sector, national (NEMO) and regional (CDEMA) preparedness plans and guidelines
    - Inception workshop: Identify scope, key issues; define crisis management in context of local tourism environment
    - Stakeholder consultations
    - Preparation and presentation of draft plan
    - Preparation and presentation of final plan
    - Training in use and application of plan
    - Plan endorsement
  + Crisis management plan and associated training for MPR-Chiquibul
  + Crisis management plan and associated training for Toledo District
  + Crisis management plan and associated training for Corozal District

1. **Products and indicators**

Output: Number of guidelines for improving disaster and climate resilience in the tourism sector completed: Baseline 0; Target 1

Output: Number of disaster and climate resilience plans completed: Baseline: 0; Target: 1

Output: Number of vulnerability and risk assessments completed for Corozal: Baseline: 0; Target1

Output: Number of destination crisis management plans completed: Baseline: 0; Target: 4

Outcome: Number of destinations that incorporate ecosystem services valuation and disaster and climate-resilience into local tourism destination plans: Baseline 0; Target 4

Outcome: Number of LTCs trained in ecosystem-based adaptation and risk reduction: Baseline 0; Target 3

1. **Estimated cost and source of financing**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Estimated cost** | **Source** |
| Design of guidelines | 75,000 |  |
| Vulnerability and risk assessment (Toledo) | 200,000 |
| Institutional capacity assessment (Toledo) | 60,000 |
| Action plan and implementation strategy (Toledo) | 40,000 |
| Vulnerability and risk assessment (Corozal) | 200,000 |
| Crisis management plan (Corozal) | 50,000 |
| Crisis management plan (Caye Caulker) | 25,000 |
| Crisis management plan (MPR-Chiquibul) | 55,000 |
| Crisis management plan (Toledo) | 70,000 |
| **Total** | **775,000** |

1. **Management model:** Not applicable
2. **Responsible institutions**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Lead institution** | **Participating institution** |
| Technical studies and consultancies | MTCCA | LTC/LWG, NEMO, CZMAI |

1. **Calendar of execution**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **2016** | | **2017** | | **2018** | | **2019** | |
| **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** |
| Design of guidelines |  |  |  | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |
| Vulnerability and risk assessment (Toledo) |  |  |  | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |
| Institutional capacity assessment (Toledo) |  |  |  |  | **X** |  |  |  |
| Action plan and implementation strategy (Toledo) |  |  |  |  |  | **X** |  |  |
| Vulnerability and risk assessment (Corozal) |  |  |  |  | **X** | **X** |  |  |
| Crisis management plans |  |  |  |  | **X** | **X** | **X** |  |

1. **Studies needed for execution**

* See technical studies above

1. **Procedure/environmental studies or others**

* N/A

1. **Positive and negative environmental and social impacts**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Impacts** | **Positives** | **Negatives** |
| **Social** | * Improved socioeconomic resilience to climate change and disasters * Improved preparedness and response and business continuity |  |
| **Environmental** | * Improved climate and risk resilience of destinations * Improved data available for monitoring and decision-making |  |

1. **Priority and relation to other initiatives**

The expected outcome of the Program (STP II), based on the activities proposed above as well as those described in Components 1 and 3, is that disaster and climate resilience is mainstreamed in local tourism planning. These activities are consistent with Belize’s Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy, which considers climate resilience and the maintenance of ecosystem services key elements of the overall strategy. They are also directly aligned with the objectives of the National Climate Resilience Investment Plan (NCRIP) which emphasizes the integration of climate change adaptation and disaster risk management in national development and could contribute to the NCRIP’s expected outcomes as it relates to the tourism sector at the local level. The mainstreaming of risk management in local tourism planning is a lesson learnt from STP 1, as the National Sustainable Tourism Master Plan recognizes the importance of disaster and climate resilience, but does not incorporate the topic into planning recommendations. In addition, the National Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan references that all tourism facilities should have disaster preparedness and evacuation plans and recommends very careful management of the cayes, which are particularly vulnerable to natural disasters.

**Sustainable Tourism Project II - BL-L1020**

**Project Data Sheets**

# Product 2.5: Protected area management programs and/or climate adaptations programs improved and implemented

1. **Objective:** The overall objective is to improve management and resiliency of protected areas (PAs) in order to create the enabling conditions for improved visitor experience and sustainable patterns of visitor use. The specific objective is to improve (i) monitoring programs in PAs; (ii) awareness and understanding of potential changes to ecosystem service values; and (iii) destination planning through spatially explicit land and sea use planning.
2. **Location:** Investments will focus on Toledo District, Caye Caulker (marine and terrestrial area) and at least one additional protected area in one of the four target destinations.
3. **Beneficiaries:** Beneficiaries will include local residents of TBD, Toledo and Caye Caulker; local tourism committees (LTCs) and local municipal governments. Tourists and tourism operators and accommodations are also expected to benefit (indirectly). The activity is also designed to provide benefits on a national level as the implementation of monitoring programs can support decision-making in the country’s overall environmental strategies. In addition, these activities are expected to provide benefits to the Government agencies and co-managers with direct responsibility for PA management.
4. **Technical and economic justification:** PAs and the tourism sector are inter-related. PAs are culture and nature-based tourist attractions and providers of critical ecosystem services to the tourism sector (i.e. water; coastal protection). Increasing the role of PAs in the tourism sector can both generate sustainable revenue streams for management and increase the perceived touristic value of species and habitats, contributing to greater levels of biodiversity protection. However, in the context of Belize, increasing visitor access to PAs will require meeting the expectations of the country’s largest tourist segment – visitors from the USA and Canada. This is significant because these visitors are accustomed to high levels of PA quality (both in terms of infrastructure/services[[53]](#footnote-52) and environmental management). Further, as the number of visitors increases, so too does their impact. This impact must be closely monitored and controlled to maintain the level of quality demanded by international tourists and met PA mandates for biodiversity conservation. In order to achieve this goal and increase PA contribution to the growth of the tourism sector, the following challenges must be addressed.

There is evidence that the present management of PAs in Belize is lacking and ill-equipped to handle substantial changes to patterns of visitor use. Based on a 2009 assessment of the status of Belize’s PAs[[54]](#footnote-53), only 44% had up to date management plans with 11 being considered “fully sufficient.” The average management score was 55% (operational plan implementation and program monitoring and evaluation scored lowest), citing “it also highlights a number of information gaps that aren’t yet being addressed – incorporation of traditional and scientific knowledge into management planning, information on tenures and claims and the social and economic context.” Due to a lack of sufficient and valid data, almost 50% of Belize’s PAs could not be assessed against biological indicators for the assessment. A more recent analysis concluded that underfunded and understaffed institutions lack capacity to conduct monitoring and enforcement and to assess biodiversity, limiting the reliability and use of ‘self-assessed’ data. Insufficient historical information limits understanding of current status, some indicators and threats[[55]](#footnote-54). Generally, Forest Reserves, National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries without a strong NGO co-management partner are least effective in management and monitoring. Marine reserves have better management and monitoring plans, due to support from the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef System Project[[56]](#footnote-55).

Within the destinations, this trend is apparent: PAs with co-managers and marine reserves have the most comprehensive management and monitoring programs, although implementation is limited. In the 2009 assessment, Caye Caulker’s Forest and Marine Reserve Integrated Management Plan was considered “fully sufficient.” However, the plan is now out of date[[57]](#footnote-56) and the following limitations were observed in the monitoring program: the need to expand to other fishery and benthic resources, limited scope and reef areas, inconsistent monitoring and incomplete baselines[[58]](#footnote-57). In Corozal, Grant Works Forest Reserve[[59]](#footnote-58), Honey Camp National Park and Freshwater Creek Forest Reserve received very low management planning scores in the 2009 assessment. Since then a co-management agreement has been reached with Corozal Sustainable Future Initiative for Freshwater Creek Forest Reserve (FCFR) and Honey Camp National Park and updating of the two management plans is underway[[60]](#footnote-59). In addition, FCFR is a target destination in the World Bank’s Management and Protection of Key Biodiversity Areas Project (KBA), which will provide support to improve monitoring and management. The Sarteneja Alliance for Conservation and Development co-manages the Corozal Bay Wildlife Sanctuary (CBWS). The CBWS has a draft management plan[[61]](#footnote-60), a monitoring program was developed in 2013, coastal mapping was recently completed[[62]](#footnote-61) and monitoring protocols and species-specific conservation plans have been developed. However, completion of several baselines was identified as pending priority[[63]](#footnote-62). CBWS is a target destination in the World Bank’s Marine Conservation and Climate Adaptation (MCCA) project, which will support strengthening monitoring and other management. In MPR-Chiquibul, Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve has a visitor use plan master plan from 2004, which provides zoning recommendations but no monitoring plan[[64]](#footnote-63). Chiquibul National Park (CNP) management plan is out of date and the monitoring plan highlights the lack of inventory information on species, geology, water quality, mapping and protocols[[65]](#footnote-64). Friends for Conservation and Development, the CNP co-manager, undertakes monitoring and research activities. However, the size of the park presents a daunting challenge and activities have been focused on specific species (i.e., scarlet macaw) and visiting university researcher goals[[66]](#footnote-65). The CNP is a target destination in the KBA project, which will support updating the management plan. As of 2009 Chiquibul Forest Reserve’s plan was considered “fully sufficient”.

Due to the large number of protected areas in Toledo, management and monitoring effectiveness are very diverse. Based on the 2009 assessment, Monkey Caye Forest Reserve (MCFR)[[67]](#footnote-66), Machaca Forest Reserve (MFR), Columbia River Forest Reserve (CRFR) and Maya Mountain Forest Reserve (MMFR) received very low management planning scores. Since then, CRFR conducted a rapid ecological assessment[[68]](#footnote-67) and developed a draft management plan; however it will expire this year[[69]](#footnote-68). The proposed monitoring program focuses on management actions, although a synthesis of research in the PA suggests the need for field verification of data, collection of biodiversity data (especially in caves and higher elevations), monitoring of hurricane damage and short term studies (timber, rare and endemic species, etc.)[[70]](#footnote-69) CRFR is included in the KBA project, which will support implementation of the management plan and expanded monitoring. MCFR and MFR still lack co-management partners, thus advances in management and monitoring are unlikely. MMFR is another target destination of the KBA project, which is likely to improve overall management and monitoring. A rapid ecological assessment was conducted for Aquacaliente Wildlife Sanctuary in 2006 and a draft management plan exists[[71]](#footnote-70). However, the co-management organization recently dissolved and the need for effective management was highlighted in the PA Rationalization Report. Swasey-Bladen Forest Reserve and Deep River Forest Reserve both have management plans through logging concessions and monitoring is focused on timber management[[72]](#footnote-71). Rio Blanco National Park is managed by a community-based organization (Rio Blanco Mayan Association) and only limited assessment of biodiversity has been undertaken[[73]](#footnote-72). Sarstoon Temash National Park (STNP), Bladen Nature Reserve (BNR), Golden Stream Corridor Preserve (GSCP) and Payne’s Creek National Park (PCNP) were considered ‘fully-sufficient’ in 2009, primarily due to the presence of co-managers. Sarstoon-Temash Institute of Indigenous Management has developed a management plan for STNP and conducted data gathering and monitoring when supported by specific project funds[[74]](#footnote-73). Ya’axché, the co-manager for BNR and GSCP, supports monitoring in collaboration with the National Biodiversity Monitoring Plan. Toledo Institute for Development and Environment (TIDE) co-manages PCNP, which has an out dated management plan[[75]](#footnote-74) and Port Honduras Marine Reserve, which has a management plan[[76]](#footnote-75), 2004 biological baseline and climate change adaptation plan[[77]](#footnote-76). Monitoring activities supported by TIDE are focused on the marine environment (key species and ecosystems) and some data is collected through a managed access fishery program[[78]](#footnote-77). Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary has a management plan and is co-managed by the Belize Audubon Society, which supports long-term research activities[[79]](#footnote-78). Thus, strengthening management and monitoring capacity is key challenge for an improved PA tourism product.

Valuation of ecosystem services is another tool that can improve PA management. Valuations have been applied in multiple contexts in Belize. However, they are typically limited in geographic scope and lack the necessary data to support robust economic methodologies. The fisheries of Hol Chan Marine were assessed to understand changes in biomass and commercial value in protected areas[[80]](#footnote-79). A valuation was conducted to estimate ecosystem services related to tourism and fisheries in Gladden Spit and Silk Cayes Marine Reserve[[81]](#footnote-80). A study was conducted to estimate the economic impact of sport fishing on the fishing guide and lodge segments[[82]](#footnote-81). In 2009, a project was completed which estimates tourism, fisheries and shoreline protection values for coral reefs and mangroves[[83]](#footnote-82). The Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute (CZMAI) partnered with the Natural Capital Project to apply the marine Integrated Valuation of Ecosystem Services and Trade-offs (InVEST) model in order to develop a National Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Plan[[84]](#footnote-83). Most recently, a study was conducted to examine the trade-offs between ecosystem services under different land use patterns in the Maya Mountain Massif[[85]](#footnote-84). In program preparation, an ecosystem assessment and mapping in each of the four destinations was commissioned. The main gaps identified in this process include the: need to collect primary data, inaccessibility of country level statistics (timber, water resources, fisheries), lack of destination specific disaggregated data and spatial data related to land-tenure, vulnerability, physical assets, water quality and anthropocentric impacts[[86]](#footnote-85). Thus, primary data collection to support ecosystem valuation represents a major contribution to sustainable tourism planning at the destination level.

Land use and marine spatial planning is an emerging issue in Belize and an important component of PA management and sustainable tourism destination planning. On a national level, a Land Use Policy and Integrated Planning Framework exist[[87]](#footnote-86). However, the policy has not been implemented and a National Land Use Plan has not been developed, which is considered one of the major obstacles to sustainable development[[88]](#footnote-87). Further, the policy is considered too general and lacks the specificity needed for sensitive areas such as cayes[[89]](#footnote-88). Building off the Land Use Policy, marine and coastal planning has expanded as part of the CZMAI’s initiative to develop a National ICZM Plan. Development of the plan utilized InVEST model to “examine the effects of human activities on the benefits people receive from coastal and marine ecosystems called ‘ecosystem services.’” Through an iterative and participatory process, a zoning scheme was developed to represent the most sustainable future for Belize’s coastal zone[[90]](#footnote-89). However the application of this tool for destination-specific tourism planning is limited because the plan is too broad in scope, lacks the specificity required and does not account for climate change impacts in the model.

The CZMAI process also involved developing destination specific guidelines for each of the coastal planning zones, which provides a foundation for tourism planning. However, the nine coastal planning zones do not correspond to destination specific boundaries and the proposed guidelines are too general. For example in Caye Caulker there is only one proposed zone for development (low density residential) and there is one proposed zone that encompasses all marine recreation. Furthermore, the guidelines highlight limitations associated with the need to map traditional fishing areas and the distribution of visitors[[91]](#footnote-90). Given Caye Caulker’s high level of vulnerability and accelerating rate of environmental degradation, the need to develop a finer-scale land and sea use plan is critical to sustainable tourism development. In fact, the community has highlighted the lack of a land use planning and zoning as a challenge for any development[[92]](#footnote-91). Currently, deforestation is estimated to be 2.6% per year from 2010-2014, significantly higher than the national average[[93]](#footnote-92) and 59% of Caye Caulker’s mangroves are considered at high risk from human impacts[[94]](#footnote-93). As development in Caye Caulker expanded in an unplanned manner, concerns about the sustainability of beach restoration activities and solid waste management and trash in the marine environment[[95]](#footnote-94) also emerged. In addition, based on the experience of Sustainable Tourism Program I, development of a Plan for Ambergris Caye, was considered very satisfactory[[96]](#footnote-95).

In order to address these challenges, three interventions are proposed. First, support to implementation and capacity building for environmental monitoring. Strengthening for a monitoring program will address environmental quality issues related to weak management by providing the data required for science-based decision making and adaptive management. It will also address the recommendation that this program should incorporate a monitoring component (coordinated with and complementary to existing national efforts) for biodiversity, ecosystem services and sustainable development such that a baseline can be established for key indicators and subsequent monitoring can be done to measure whether the implementation of STP II is truly resulting in biodiversity and ecosystem service gains[[97]](#footnote-96). In addition, it will allow protected area managers to monitor the impacts of tourism and address the recommendation that carrying capacity data needs to clearly inform destination and tourism product development[[98]](#footnote-97). Second, economic valuation of the ecosystem services in Toledo District. Assigning value to the ecosystem services supplied by Toledo’s ecosystems and protected areas can provide the economic justification for increased financial and political support for protected area management. It can also help to raise awareness in nearby communities in order to increase biodiversity protection. It is also of note that the ecosystem service valuation activity in Toledo will provide valuable inputs for the program’s ex-post economic impact evaluation plan, which focuses on the Toledo district. Data on the use of environmental resources will be collected through surveys with firms and households in the District. These data will be organized according to the new international standard for environmental-economic accounts[[99]](#footnote-98) and integrated into the Local Economy Wide Impact Evaluation Model[[100]](#footnote-99) to be developed for the Toledo District[[101]](#footnote-100). This model will enable analysis of the impact of changes in policy or other shocks on the interactions between households, the economy and the environment. These data on natural capital will also be used to inform the Livelihood Systems Analysis being implemented in the district[[102]](#footnote-101). Third, a land and sea use plan for Caye Caulker to address the current gaps in planning and the concerns raised by the local tourism committee. As such, the land and sea use plan is expected to create the enabling environment for sustainable tourism development. Through these interventions management capacity should increase in order to both meet the expectations of international tourists and ensure the sustainability of tourism activities in the medium to long term.

1. **Description:** Preliminary list of activities and investments to be undertaken:

* Prioritization of PA for strengthening and implementation of monitoring program
  + Prioritization of one PA to target[[103]](#footnote-102)
  + Assessment of monitoring gaps in the target PA management program as they relate to tourism activities and national biodiversity monitoring protocols
  + Consultations with scientific and academic community regarding the prioritization of indicators
  + Equipment and technical support for monitoring program
  + Capacity building in monitoring, research and surveillance for key personnel, including co-management partners
* Ecosystem service valuation of Toledo, to be developed in consultation with the ex-post economic impact evaluation
  + Prioritization of ecosystem services and natural resource accounts
  + Construction of robust economic methodology
  + Primary data collection
  + Results validation with key stakeholders
  + Dissemination of findings
* Caye Caulker land and sea use plan
  + Identification of preferred approach, based on both ecological principals for spatial planning[[104]](#footnote-103) and an ecosystem goods and services approach[[105]](#footnote-104)
  + Data collection, including but not limited to land tenure and ownership, tourism assets, coastal infrastructure mapping and human activities that were not detailed in the CZMAI process
  + Participatory mapping and planning process
  + Elaboration of specific development guidelines and tourism strategies that are consistent with the National ICZM Plan and National Sustainable Tourism Master Plan (NSTMP)
  + Validation of spatial plan

1. **Products and indicators**

Output: Technical studies to support improved environmental management of protected areas: Baseline 0; Target 3

Outcome: Destinations with improved environmental management of protected areas with high tourism values: Baseline 0; Target 3

1. **Estimated cost and source of financing**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Estimated cost** | **Source** |
| Environmental Monitoring Program consultancy | 30,000 |  |
| Monitoring equipment | 120,000 |
| Capacity building in monitoring and enforcement | 50,000 |
| Ecosystem services valuation of Toledo | 400,000 |
| Caye Caulker Land and Sea Use map | 200,000 |
| **Total** | **800,000** |

1. **Management model:** For any monitoring equipment purchases, there will need to be MOU with the co-management partner to guarantee maintenance and use.
2. **Responsible institutions**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Lead institution** | **Participating institution** |
| Technical studies and consultancies | MTCCA | MFFSD |

1. **Calendar of execution**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **2016** | | **2017** | | **2018** | | **2019** | | **2020** | |
| **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** |
| Selection and assessment of environmental monitoring program |  |  |  |  |  |  | **X** |  |  |  |
| Capacity building in monitoring |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **X** | **X** |  |
| Equipment purchased |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **X** | **X** |  |
| Toledo ES Valuation |  |  |  |  | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |  |
| Caye Caulker Land and Sea Plan | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |  |  |  |

1. **Studies needed for execution:** See technical studies above
2. **Procedure/environmental studies or others:** N/A
3. **Positive and negative environmental and social impacts**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Impacts** | **Positives** | **Negatives** |
| **Social** | * Increased tourism activity near protected areas * Heightened awareness of socioeconomic benefits of protected areas |  |
| **Environmental** | * Improved management for biodiversity protection * Improved data available for monitoring and decision-making |  |

1. **Priority and relation to other initiatives:** Alignment with NSTMP and the (revised) National Protected Areas Policy and Systems Plan (NPAPSP), which calls for long-term management and ensuring the sustenance of the provision of ecosystem goods and services (including resilience and adaptability to climate change, protection against natural disasters, and natural environmental features of touristic, recreational, cultural or spiritual value). The new PACT bill also requires establishing a system for monitoring and evaluation to determine if the NPAS is meeting its objectives, including reviewing and approving reports to be conducted at least every five years on the performance of the NPAS, including the financial scorecard and management effectiveness of the NPAS and reviewing management plans; conducting periodic protected areas management capacity assessments.

**Sustainable Tourism Project II - BL-L1020**

**Project Data Sheets**

# Product 3.1: Tourism information collection and analysis capacity improved - *Improve national tourism statistics and develop subnational destination data*

1. **Objective:**

To improve the national tourism data management system to adequately capture demand, expenditure and domestic tourism data for proactive decision-making, and facilitate local level sustainable destination planning, monitoring and management through data collection, capacity building and networking initiatives.

1. **Location:** Countrywide, with a destination focus on Toledo, Caye Caulker, and Corozal.
2. **Beneficiaries:**

MTCCA, BTB, SIB

Tourism stakeholders countrywide

Government of Belize policymakers and planners

Local Tourism Committees in Corozal, Toledo, Caye Caulker

Local Municipalities

Residents of Corozal, Toledo, Caye Caulker

1. **Technical and economic justification**

The NSTMP recommends several areas of focus in terms of tourism data management including:

1. setting up the tourism statistical framework towards a basic level TSA system
2. the creation of a Tourism Observatory for market intelligence as a key tool to optimize decisions and orient investments for tourism development in the country, from a country level down to the private sector SME level of decision-making.
3. The need for a defined set of sustainable tourism indicators to evaluate satisfaction of the various target groups, integration into the community, and conservation of resources from the point of view of sustainable development. The conventional measurement for tourism performance by tourist arrivals and revenues are no longer adequate, as accurate information on the complete range of tourism’s impacts is needed to support responsible decision-making. As such, the application of sustainable tourism indicators are recognized internationally (UNWTO) as an essential support tool and integral part of policy making, planning and management processes.

Under STP1, information management support was provided to the BTB resulting in a Tourism Data Management System with streamlined national data collection, management and reporting of tourism information, improved data quality and more timely data dissemination. However as the country works towards a basic TSA, seeking to measure the direct impact of Travel & Tourism on the economy, there is a need to capture **domestic expenditure**by residents on **local and foreign travel**, as well as **visitor** **expenditure disaggregated to specific tourism related activities**. The BTB is currently exploring methods to address these data deficits by launching a household survey instrument to measure domestic tourism expenditure as a pilot project in 2016, in addition to revising and re-launching the existing Visitor Expenditure and Motivation Survey with more detailed expenditure information.

The MTCCA is committed to making strong efforts to build the capacity and empower local stakeholders within tourism governance as per the NSTMP strategic goal to “support Belizean stakeholders in taking leadership over sustainable tourism development”. With the support of the IDB (TC Number BL-T1054, Local Tourism Committees have been established in the target destinations of Corozal, Toledo and Caye Caulker. It is envisaged that this novel approach will be extended to additional strategic tourism destinations in the future to enable local stakeholders to participate in the comprehensive planning, ongoing development and sustainable management of tourism within the destinations. However, “you can only manage what you can measure” and sustainable planning needs to be based on **informed** decision-making. Specific mechanisms need to be put in place for proper destination monitoring as it relates to tourism development. The exit surveys (Summa Research) piloted in 2015 have provided a good baseline for continued destination data collection. The immediate goal of the BTB is to facilitate DMOs within the destinations to monitor the first four baseline issues of the UNWTO Global Observatories on Sustainable Tourism (GOST), specifically “destination expenditure, domestic tourism, visitor satisfaction and seasonality”. It should be noted that destination level data is currently being collected independently by multiple stakeholders within the destinations, but there is a need to put in place mechanisms to create a network with a common mandate, so that the sharing of data becomes prioritized, mechanized and institutionalized.  In addition, data collectors need to be properly trained so that the quality and the integrity of the data being collected remains consistent across all sectors.

Having a robust data management system of national and destination data including sustainable tourism indicators will allow for the identification of impacts and emerging issues; greater accountability; lowered risk, performance measurement and monitoring for continuous improvement and administration of management solutions and ultimately proactive action and decision making at both local and national levels.

1. **Description**

Preliminary list of activities and investments to be undertaken:

* Development and execution of national Domestic Tourism Household Survey (pilot)
* Program for development of destination data management systems in Corozal, Caye Caulker and Toledo including:
  + Identification of potential partners (DMO) within the destination
  + Audit of current entities collecting statistical tourism data within the destination
  + Development of destination data collection tools as per gaps identified
  + Capacity building to support destination data collection and networking
  + Create databases/clearinghouse for relevant tourism information for decision-making (ie. plans policies, legislation, statistics)
  + Development of Interactive Web Tool for destination data sharing and dissemination

1. **Products and indicators**

Output: National Domestic tourism survey completed Baseline 0; Target 1

Destination Data Management Systems established Baseline 0 Target 3

Outcome: Baseline 0; Target:

1. **Estimated cost and source of financing**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Estimated cost (US$)** | **Source** |
| Development and execution of national Domestic Tourism Household Survey (pilot) | 150,000 |  |
| Program for development of destination data management systems in Corozal, Caye Caulker and Toledo | 250,000 |
| Support to Market Intelligence |  |
| **Total** | **500,000** |

1. **Management model:** BTB, Market Intelligence and Tourism Information Management Dept. will be actively involved as the coordination agency
2. **Responsible institutions**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Lead institution** | **Participating institution** |
| Development and execution of national Domestic Tourism Household Survey (pilot) | MTCCA/BTB | SIB, Central Bank |
| Program for development of destination data management systems in Corozal, Caye Caulker and Toledo | MTCCA/BTB | LTC, BTIA, BHA, SIB, NICH, MFFSD, PA co-managers |

1. **Calendar of execution**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **2016** | | **2017** | | **2018** | | **2019** | | **2020** | |
| **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** |
| National Domestic Tourism Household Survey | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Destination Data Management Systems |  |  | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |  |

1. **Studies needed for execution:** Audit of agencies/organizations involved in relevant tourism data collection within the destinations
2. **Procedure/environmental studies or others:** Liaison with SIB
3. **Positive and negative environmental and social impacts**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Impacts** | **Positives** | **Negatives** |
| **Social** | Reduced visitor –resident conflicts through consideration of tourism impact on local residents through resident surveys  Improved visitor satisfaction can lead to higher destination expenditures  Improved products for domestic tourism |  |
| **Environmental** | * Improved decision making regarding visitor impacts results in better environmental management |  |

1. **Priority and relation to other initiatives:** Aligned with BTB Action Plan and NSTMP. Supports all policy level decision making related to sustainable development and poverty reduction.

**Sustainable Tourism Project II - BL-L1020**

**Project Data Sheets**

# Product 3.4: Tourism local value chains consolidated and strengthened (environmentally and socially) -*Direct support to Low Income Entrepreneurs (Matching grants program)*

1. **Objective:** The overall goal is to encourage the growth of sustainable cultural tourism businesses, promoting entrepreneurship and market access in order to develop economic opportunity for low income people in Corozal, Caye Caulker, Toledo and buffer communities to the MPR/Chiquibul/Caracol area. Through a combination of training, matching grants and other capacity building tools, the program will contribute positively to a rise in standards and quality of the cultural tourism product in the target areas, increase the diversity of the product offering and boost destination appeal.
2. **Location:** The target areas include the emerging destinations of Corozal District and Toledo District, local Caye Caulker residents, and the buffer communities to the Mountain Pine Ridge/Chiquibul/Caracol area such as Georgeville, San Antonio, Cristo Rey, Barton Creek, Seven Miles and Progresso, and Santa Elena and San Ignacio.
3. **Beneficiaries:**

* Low Income People (LIPs) in the target destinations, including women and vulnerable populations
* Private sector tourism businesses within the value chain which promote and utilize the products and services of the LIPs.
* Communities and residents within the destinations through indirect benefit to the local economy and improved local tourism experiences and products
* Visitors to the destinations

1. **Technical and economic justification**

Cultural tourism is one of the largest and fastest growing tourism markets worldwide and has the power to alleviate poverty, create jobs, protect heritage and promote international understanding (UNWTO 1st World Conference on Tourism and Culture 2015). Cultural diversity is also a key attribute which allows one destination to differentiate itself from another, and it provides the opportunity to develop unique tourism products at a grass roots level. The National Cultural Policy for Belize seeks to “promote culture industries and entrepreneurship, particularly among the youth and women” and Cultural Tourism development based on the blend and richness of cultures and ethnicities present in Belize is a priority set by the NSTMP towards its vision as an “exclusive multicultural sustainable destination”. All destinations in Belize would benefit from new or improved development of culture based tourism experience and activities within their product portfolios.

The Local Tourism Committees for both Corozal and Toledo have identified culture as a key foundation for their tourism development vision. There are numerous culture-based non-government organizations (COICH, COLCHA, National Garifuna Council, Toledo Maya Women’s Council etc.) active in the Districts, and both destinations have already established homestay experiences and successful sustainable cultural events based on their rich cultural offering (Chocolate Festival, Art in the Park, Battle of the Drums). However as noted in the NSTMP living culture is an asset that should be further developed and expanded throughout the year. In this respect, both Corozal and Toledo have a number of challenges common to the excursion sector (tours and attractions), which were highlighted within the Value-Chain Analysis as especially relevant to the LIPs including:

* Lack of skills (particularly hospitality skills) which limits provision of quality experiences ;
* Limited facilities (e.g., bathrooms, waste disposal, shade, area big enough for tour groups, etc.)
* Difficulty accessing affordable financing

Caye Caulker, is predominantly a sun, sand and marine destination with most visitors participating in beach relaxation (93%) and 82% snorkeling and diving (Exit Survey of May 2015). However, visitors also indicated a need for increased diversity of living culture activities (ranked 3rd for improvement after environmental quality and signage), which despite the traditional fishing heritage and authentic caye lifestyle, is absent from the island tour itineraries.

The area of MPR/Chiquibul/Caracol consists of four protected areas with a unique cultural heritage based on the logging and chicle industries, as well as strong ties to the Ancient Maya through the cave systems and Caracol. Living culture is a strong element of the surrounding communities, primarily representative of Yucatec Maya, including the Don Eligio Panti National Park dedicated after a re-known Maya herbalist and bush doctor from the village of San Antonio. Although cultural tours in the area have been developed, particularly through women’s groups, there is an opportunity to further link and develop living culture, and cultural heritage in general, with the attractions of the MPR and Caracol.

Investment in the excursion sector (tour operators, guides and attractions providers) was identified within the Value Chain Analysis (AFE 2015) as having the most potential to impact positively on the LIPs. The success of the Small Business Cultural Tourism Matching Grants Program of STP1 is testament to the positive impacts that concrete interventions in this sector can generate through job creation and income generation. In this program, an investment of less than USD $250, 000 grant financing, was supplemented with counterpart contribution of BZ$126,273.40, and served to increase employee number by 54%, with 79% experiencing an increase in tourists, and 79% experiencing an increase in income one year post project. Of those experiencing income growth, the majority (84%) reinvested back into their business. However it is notable that almost half of the businesses remained disconnected from any tour guide/operator and improved marketing was the top need identified to continue to grow the business[[106]](#footnote-105). Marketing and market access thus continue to be a constraint.

1. **Description:** Investment interventions within the excursion sector to develop the culture based tours and attractions for the target areas should include a combination of technical assistance, training -e.g. business administration, hospitality skills, etc.-, and minor works and equipment. Marketing, networking and linkage across the value chain are also critical for the ongoing sustainability and increased growth.

Investment would support:

* Training in cultural tourism business development, maximizing use of the training tools developed in STP1 as well as the opportunities for skills training offered by BELTRAIDE Small Business Development Centers
* Development of the Matching Grants Program based on the model and lessons learned of STP1 with consideration for the recommendations of the value-chain analysis in terms of linkage with lead firms. The program would include:
* Development of program (guidelines, evaluation criteria, application, contracts etc.) with input from NICH, BELTRAIDE, BTB and BTIA including identification of ongoing skills training to be implemented throughout;
* Procurement of Administrative Firm/Facilitator;
* Preliminary identification of potential cultural attraction service providers with the assistance of local cultural groups and the LTCs, and promotion of the program;
* Preliminary identification of lead firms (tour operators, hotel accommodations) for networking support and market linkage and promotion of the program;
* Further advertisement and promotion of the program through media;
* Invitation for application and selection of grant award;
* Execution of grant application, monitoring and evaluation.
* Support initiatives (cross business initiatives ie. sponsor fam tours, guest speakers, study tours/exchanges etc)

1. **Products and indicators**

Output: matching grants disbursed and projects implemented Baseline 0; Target 30

Outcome: increased number of market ready cultural attractions within the district. Baseline TBD ; Target:

Increased visitor number to the target areas

Baseline: Toledo 10, 526; Corozal 13,243; Caye Caulker 83,361; Cayo 70,288

1. **Estimated cost and source of financing**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Estimated cost** | **Source** |
| Program Development |  |  |
| Baseline audit of attractions | 5,000 |
| Advertisement and promotion | 5,000 |
| Procurement of Facilitator/Grant Administrator | 80, 000 |
| Training | 30,000 |
| Matching Grants execution | 350, 000 |
| Support initiatives | 30,000 |
| **Total** | **500,000** |

1. **Management model:** Administration and management of the grant will be carried out by the Facilitator/Grant Administrator with oversight from the MTCCA PPDU
2. **Responsible institutions**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Items** | **Lead institution** | **Participating institution** |
| Program Development and selection | MTCCA | BELTRAIDE, NICH, |
| Baseline audit | MTCCA | NICH, LTC |
| Advertisement and promotion | MTCCA | LTC |
| Procurement of Facilitator/Grant Administrator | MTCCA |  |
| Training | MTCCA, BELTRAIDE | Facilitator/Grant Administrator, NICH |
| Matching Grants execution | Facilitator/Grant Administrator | MTCCA, NICH |
| Support Initiatives | MTCCA | Facilitator/Grant Administrator |

1. **Calendar of execution**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **2016** | | **2017** | | **2018** | | **2019** | | **2020** |
| **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** | **S1** | **S2** |  |
| Program Development and selection |  | **x** | **x** | **X** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Baseline audit |  | **X** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Advertisement, promotion |  |  | **x** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Procurement of Facilitator/Grant Administrator |  | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Training |  |  |  | **x** | **x** | **x** |  |  |  |
| Matching Grants execution |  |  |  | **X** | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |
| Support Initiatives |  |  |  |  | **X** | **X** |  |  |  |

1. **Studies needed for execution:** Baseline audit of cultural attractions and lead firm identification
2. **Procedure/environmental studies or others:** Ensure all businesses are legally compliant.
3. **Positive and negative environmental and social impacts**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Impacts** | **Positives** | **Negatives** |
| **Social** | * Increased employment opportunities * Increased knowledge and awareness of sustainable/best practice * Increase in cultural pride * Increased income to LIPs * Increased economic benefit to tourism sector * Increase in skills and empowerment | * Potential for cultural degradation if improperly managed. Cultural education of private sector and visitors needs to be incorporated within the program |
| **Environmental** | * Increased sanitation and waste management * Promotion of best practice and increased environmental awareness * Improved aesthetics of buildings and surroundings | * Small scale land clearing |

1. **Priority and relation to other initiatives:** Aligned with NSTMP and Cultural Policy. BELTRAIDE Small Business Development Centers offer business training for entrepreneurs. BTB is considering potential capacity building/training for Tour Operators and Guides within the Corozal District.

1. Note that any increase in visitation may not be apparent at year of completion, perhaps not until1-2 years after completion- and in fact visitation may decrease during works period. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Note that increased visitation will not be experienced at year of completion and may not be evident until 2 years after. In fact visitation may decrease due to inconveniences during periods of works. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
3. TIDE annual report 2013 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
4. ERI [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
5. Analysing vulnerability of Belize’s tourism development sector to climate change, CCD November 2014 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
6. Related activities have been included in Components 1 (ecosystem-based coastal adaptation) and 3 (institutional strengthening at the national level and within the tourism value chain) in order to mainstream the approach throughout the entire project. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
7. Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean (2000) Belize: Assessment of the Damage Caused by Hurricane Keith, 2000 – Implications for Economic, Social and Environmental Development [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
8. 1 meter sea level rise place 73% of major tourism properties at risk, increasing to 86% under a 2 meter sea level rise scenario (Caribsave 2012) [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
9. Caribsave. 2012. CARIBSAVE Climate Change Risk Profile for Belize [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
10. Government of Belize. 2013. National Climate Resilience Investment Plan; Caribsave. 2012. Caribsave Climate Change Risk Profile for Belize. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
11. Corozal Local Planning Working Group (2014) Corozal Town Municipal Development Plan, Final Draft [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
12. Impact Indicators: rise in SST, SLR, increase in hurricane intensity and increase in air temperature; area and health of coral reef, area of mangrove, number of hotels and tourism attractions (Caribsave 2014) [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
13. ERI. 2015. Mainstreaming Biodiversity, Ecosystem Services and Coastal Resilience in Tourism Development [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
14. CZMAI. 2015. *Northern Region Coastal Zone Management Guidelines*. Belize Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
15. ERI. 2015. Mainstreaming Biodiversity, Ecosystem Services and Coastal Resilience in Tourism Development [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
16. CZMAI. 2015. *Southern Region Coastal Zone Management Guidelines.* Belize Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
17. Punta Gorda Local Planning Working Group .2014. Punta Gorda Municipal Development Plan [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
18. Meerman, J. 2011. Provisional Report on the 2011 Wildfires, Aftermath of Hurricane Richard [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
19. AMEC E&C Services Limited (2001) Macal River Upstream Storage Facility, Environmental Impact Assessment – Part 2, Support Documents – Volume I of IV. Belize Electrical Company Limited [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
20. For a 10 km width of the coastline; Impact Indicators: rise in SST, SLR, increase in hurricane intensity and increase in air temperature; area and health of coral reef, area of mangrove, number of hotels and tourism attractions (Caribsave 2014) [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
21. ERI. 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
22. CZMAI. 2015. *Southern Region Coastal Zone Management Guidelines.* Belize Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
23. CZMAI. 2015. *Caye Caulker Coastal Zone Management Guidelines*. Belize Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
24. ERI. 2015. Mainstreaming Biodiversity, Ecosystem Services and Coastal Resilience in Tourism Development [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
25. CZMAI. 2015. *Caye Caulker Coastal Zone Management Guidelines*. Belize Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
26. ERI. 2015. Mainstreaming Biodiversity, Ecosystem Services and Coastal Resilience in Tourism Development [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
27. Impact Indicators: rise in SST, SLR, increase in hurricane intensity and increase in air temperature; area and health of coral reef, area of mangrove, number of hotels and tourism attractions (Caribsave 2014) [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
28. Caribsave. 2012. CARIBSAVE Climate Change Risk Profile for Belize [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
29. CNP has been impacted by 5 hurricanes over the past 100 years (Un-named-1918, Anna-1961, Hattie-1961, Fifi-1974, Greta-1978) (Meerman and Moore 2009) [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
30. 7.5% of MPR-Chiquibul is at high fire risk (ERI 2015) [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
31. These ecosystems are considered fire adapted [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
32. Meerman, J. 2011. Provisional Report on the 2011 Wildfires, Aftermath of Hurricane Richard. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
33. De Vries, G. 2004. Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve Visitor Use Plan. Forest Department [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
34. Meerman, J. and Moore (2009) Chiquibul Cave System Management Plan, 2010-2015 [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
35. Briggs, V. et al. 2013. “Conceptual Ecological Model of the Chiquibul/Maya Mountain Massif, Belize” *Human and Ecological Risk Assessment* 19(2): 317-340 [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
36. AMEC E&C Services Limited (2001) Macal River Upstream Storage Facility, Environmental Impact Assessment – Part 2, Support Documents – Volume I of IV. Belize Electrical Company Limited [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
37. ERI. 2015. Mainstreaming Biodiversity, Ecosystem Services and Coastal Resilience in Tourism Development [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
38. De Vries, G. 2004. Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve Visitor Use Plan. Forest Department [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
39. Briggs, V. et al. 2013. “Conceptual Ecological Model of the Chiquibul/Maya Mountain Massif, Belize” *Human and Ecological Risk Assessment* 19(2): 317-340 [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
40. ERI. 2015. Mainstreaming Biodiversity, Ecosystem Services and Coastal Resilience in Tourism Development [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
41. Meerman, J. and Moore (2009) Chiquibul Cave System Management Plan, 2010-2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
42. Uyarra, M. et al. “Island-Specific Preferences of Tourists for Environmental Features: Implications of Climate Change for Tourism-Dependent States.” *Environmental Conservation* 32.1 (2005): 11–19; Schuhmann, P et al. 2015. Tourist survey examining the importance of coastal and marine resources to tourism in Barbados: Preliminary results [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
43. Nationally, 1 m SLR would partially or fully inundate 73% of the major tourism properties; 50 m SLR-induced erosion scenario would damage 95% of properties. With 1 m SLR, Caye Caulker would lose 96% of beach area. Corozal, Toledo and Caye Caulker are all currently experiencing coastal erosion and changes to sediment flow (Scott et al. 2012; CARIBSAVE, 2014; CZMAI, 2015) [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
44. Fire risk and associated damage to infrastructure and tourism assets is highest in MPR-Chiquibul, Toledo and Corozal (ERI 2015). [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
45. For example, a reduction a surface water due to drought risk (GOB 2013). [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
46. CARIBSAVE, 2014. Analyzing Vulnerability of the Belize Coastal Tourism Sector [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
47. Corozal Town, Corozal and Punta Gorda, Toledo already experience regular flooding during high tides and/or heavy rains, which cuts off access to services and tourism assets (Corozal Local Planning Working Group, 2014; Punta Gorda Local Planning Working Group, 2014) [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
48. (GOB 2013) [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
49. For example, disaster and climate resilience is not explicitly addressed in the National Sustainable Tourism Master Plan. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
50. For example mangrove restoration programs in Corozal and Toledo. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
51. The following related activities will be financed through separate components of this project: Product 1.4 – Ecosystem based shoreline stabilization works for Caye Caulker and/or Corozal, Product 2.5 – Protected area management programs and/or climate adaptation programs improved and implemented, Product 3.2 – Policy and legislation improved or developed, Product 3.3 – Destination planning and management improved and Product 3.4 – Tourism local value chains consolidated and strengthened (environmentally and socially) [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
52. See for example: [U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit](https://toolkit.climate.gov/) and Scott, H. et al. 2013. *Climate Change Adaptation Guidelines for Ports.* Enhancing the Resilience of Seaports to a Changing Climate Report Series. National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
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