



TERMS OF REFERENCE MARINE SPATIAL PLAN (MSP) STEERING COMMITTEE 2022

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1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE MSP PROCESS

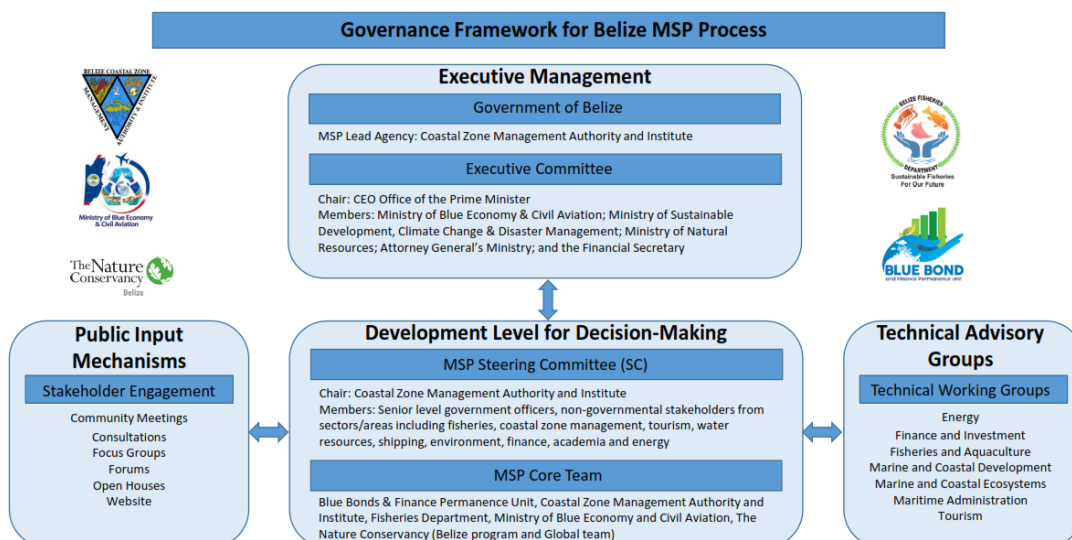
On November 4th, 2021, the Government of Belize signed the Blue Loan Agreement (BLA) and Conservation Funding Agreement (CFA) in collaboration with the Belize Blue Investment Company (BZBIC) and the Nature Conservancy (TNC). The BLA and the CFA are contingent on eight primary Conservation- Commitments/Targets and an agreed payment schedule to be realized by the Government of Belize by the 8th anniversary of the agreements. Clause 1 of the CFA obligates Belize to complete a legally enforceable Marine Spatial Plan (MSP). Key milestones for the MSP process are outlined in Annex I of this Terms of Reference.

The MSP, as defined in Clause 7 of the CFA is **“a plan analyzing and allocating parts of three-dimensional marine spaces (or ecosystems) to specific uses or objectives in order to achieve ecological, economic, and social objectives that are specified through a political process”**. The marine spatial planning process includes identifying Biodiversity Protection Zones in an iterative process. The goal of having 30% of Belize’s Ocean in Biodiversity Protection Zones will be part of the overall design such that the Biodiversity Protection Zones identified will facilitate achievement of Milestone 4.

The Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute (CZMAI), under the Ministry of Blue Economy and Civil Aviation, has been designated as the government’s lead agency for the Marine Spatial Plan (MSP) process with funding support from the Belize Fund for a Sustainable Future (BFSF).

2 GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK FOR THE BELIZE MSP PROCESS

The governance framework is currently being developed. However, key components are listed below:





One of the key components of the governance framework is the Steering Committee, which is also a requirement outlined under Milestone 3 “ *No later than one (1) year after signing the Agreement, the Government shall initiate the process of developing a MSP for its Ocean by: (i) designation of a lead ministry or agency for the MSP process and (ii) establishment of a MSP steering committee comprised of senior level officers or employees from governmental and non-governmental stakeholders from sectors/areas including fisheries, coastal zone management, tourism, water resources, shipping, environment, finance, academia and energy. A representative of The Nature Conservancy will be a member of the MSP steering committee. For the avoidance of doubt, the Government shall have full discretion to determine whether the governmental stakeholders participating in the MSP steering committee are Ministry or agency-level members.*”

3 PURPOSE OF THE MSP STEERING COMMITTEE

The MSP Steering Committee will provide leadership and oversight of outputs and the timeline to complete the MSP. The purpose of the Steering Committee is to review outputs, provide technical, policy and legislative input, and work to find agreement on these outputs from all relevant sectors engaged in the MSP Process. The Steering Committee will provide their recommendation(s) on outputs via the Blue Bonds and Finance Permanence (BBFP) Unit for approval by the Executive Committee before outputs are presented to MSP Stakeholder Workshops and for the general public engagement.

4 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MSP STEERING COMMITTEE

The MSP Steering Committee (SC) is responsible for coordinating technical, policy and legislative input into the outputs, and tasked with overseeing and requesting input from Technical Working Group (TWG) members. Specific functions of the Committee are to:

1. Provide oversight to and ensure coordination, collaboration and synergies between, the MSP process and the multiple national/large-scale initiatives.
2. Approve the establishment of the Technical Working Groups, based on the recommendations of the MSP core team, to provide technical expertise, best practices, scientific advice and local knowledge for outputs and Steering Committee recommendations.
3. Provide oversight and guidance to the Technical Working Groups in their review of all outputs of the process, as required.
4. Approve the MSP process work plan and timelines, and provide necessary oversight and coordination support to ensure timely delivery of the work plan.
5. Discuss and review updates provided by CZMAI, and identify issues requiring executive-level decisions to be submitted via the BBFP Unit to the CEO Committee and/or Cabinet.
6. Review and approve all outputs and provide recommendations via the BBFP Unit before outputs are presented to the MSP Stakeholder Workshops.



7. Assist with the review of on-going monitoring and evaluation of MSP process activities.
8. Provide inputs to inform necessary legal and policy reforms to support the implementation and enforcement of the MSP
9. Serve as the focal point tasked with supporting the provision of appropriate information from their respective agencies/organizations to the MSP process through the established data sharing arrangement.
10. Facilitate the dissemination of information or minutes of meetings where applicable on the MSP Process particularly, among their agencies, organizations, departments and stakeholders to ensure efficiency and uniformity of the information disseminated.
11. Abide by the Ground Rules and Code of Conduct (Annex II).
12. Abide by the MSP Guiding Principles for Decision Making (To be developed).

Responsibilities of the **Steering Committee Chair** are the following:

1. The Chair of the Committee is the Chief Executive Officer of the Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute. The Vice-Chair will be elected from amongst the membership, and will be eligible for re-appointment. The term of the Vice Chair will be two years.
2. The Chair of the Committee shall perform the following functions:
 - i. Serve as the primary Steering Committee representative and liaison with the BBFP Unit to provide continuous updates and report major issues or concerns, which arise during the project, and matters requiring decisions at the Chief Executive Officer and/or Ministerial level;
 - ii. Work closely with the MSP Process Lead to facilitate smooth and effective Committee and project operations and processes;
 - iii. Provide effective facilitation and leadership to the Committee.

Specific tasks for all **Steering Committee Members and Alternates** are the following:

1. Participate in Steering Committee meetings; If SC member or alternate fails to attend three (3) consecutive meetings, a formal letter of concern will be sent from CZMAI, as the Committee Chair, to the respective Ministry or Organizations to re-affirm their participation.
2. Review and provide feedback on proposed inputs and outputs within ten (10) business days to project documents. For urgent and time-sensitive matters requiring a quicker response, the timeframe for submission of feedback shall be specified.
3. Collaborate with other Steering Committee members and the MSP Process Lead during meetings and in between meetings as required;



4. Assist with the project outreach and/or networking with individuals, groups, organizations and government agencies involved in integrated marine management and MSP processes in the country;
5. Serve as an active and effective liaison between the Steering Committee, CZMAI and, the sector/agency/organization that they represent;
6. Disseminate collectively agreed information about the process and derived products to their own networks, according to the processes outlined within the MSP process Communications Plan and Strategy;
7. Consult and liaise with their sector/agency/organization on planning related issues; and
8. Communicate any concerns or questions to the Steering Committee.

5 MSP STEERING COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

Committee members are invited to join the Steering Committee (SC) to represent the numerous sectors and user groups necessary for a broad scale and multi-sector planning process. The Committee reflects all sectors of interest, with representatives from Government, Non-Government, Private Sector and non-commercial user groups. Steering Committee members reserve the right to reconsider their involvement in the process at any time through established procedures. The MSP Process Lead will be the secretary to the SC while the MSP Coordinator will serve as the Recording Secretary along with other necessary support from the MSP core team as needed. The Steering Committee should include representatives from the following as per milestone 3:

1. Ministry of Blue Economy and Civil Aviation
2. Ministry of Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management
3. Ministry of Tourism and Diaspora Relations
4. Ministry of Finance, Economic Development and Investment
5. Ministry of Natural Resources, Petroleum and Mining,
6. Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute
7. Blue Bonds/Finance Permanence Unit, Office of the Prime Minister
8. The Nature Conservancy
9. Belize Network of Non-Governmental Organizations (BNN)
10. Belize Port Authority
11. Energy Unit, Ministry of Public Utilities, Energy and Logistics
12. University of Belize (UB)
13. Belize National Coast Guard
14. Belize Fisheries Department
15. Belize Forest Department
16. Department of Environment
- 17-20. Chairs of 4 TWGs: (1.) Finance and Investment; (2.) Fisheries (*inclusive of Aquaculture*); (3.) Marine and Coastal Ecosystems; (4.) Tourism



Technical Working Groups

The Technical Working Groups will be established under the guidance of the Steering Committee. Detailed TORs will be prepared, the working groups will include the following thematic areas and proposed Chairs:

1. Energy (Recommended Chair-Chair-Belize Electricity Limited)
2. Finance and Investment (Recommended Chair-Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry)
3. Fisheries inclusive of Aquaculture (Recommended Chair-Northern Fishermen Co-operative Society Ltd.)
4. Marine and Coastal Development (Recommended Chair-TBD)
5. Marine and Coastal Ecosystems (Chair-Wildlife Conservation Society)
6. Maritime Administration (Recommended Chair- TBD)
7. Tourism (Chair- Belize Tourism Industry Association-BTIA)

6 PROCEDURES AND COMMUNICATIONS OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

1. The Secretary of the Committee is the MSP Process Lead, and the Recording Secretary is the MSP Coordinator.
2. Meetings will be led by the Chair, according to an approved agenda.
3. Minutes of all meetings will be produced, approved, signed and filed for the record.
4. The Committee will meet quarterly, at minimum, and convene special meetings as needed during the term of the project. Project documents, such as terms of reference, reports, etc., can be reviewed for approval and responses provided by members via email correspondence. Members will be given a deadline of 10 working days, unless otherwise agreed; a member's agreement will be assumed if s/he does not respond by the deadline date established.
5. The quorum for meetings will be 50% of the membership plus 1, and shall include attendance by five of the seven NGO/private sector representatives.
6. Decisions shall be made by consensus. Should there be differing opinions, voting will be done. In the event of a tie, the Chair shall have the casting vote.
7. One alternate for each member may be appointed. An alternate member will have voting authority, when needed, only in the absence of the member. The nominated alternate shall provide relevant comments/feedback, to the Ministry or Organization they are representing.

7 AMENDMENTS TO THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Steering Committee shall periodically review its own performance and Terms of Reference (ToR) and recommend any changes it considers necessary this ToR in order to improve the delivery of its functions and responsibilities.



ANNEX I – MSP MILESTONES

Exhibit A: Conservation commitments related to the MSP

Milestone 3: No later than one (1) year after signing the Agreement, the Government shall initiate the process of developing a MSP for its Ocean by: (i) designation of a lead ministry or agency for the MSP process and (ii) establishment of a MSP steering committee comprised of senior level officers or employees from governmental and non-governmental stakeholders from sectors/areas including fisheries, coastal zone management, tourism, water resources, shipping, environment, finance, academia and energy. A representative of The Nature Conservancy will be a member of the MSP steering committee. For the avoidance of doubt, the Government shall have full discretion to determine whether the governmental stakeholders participating in the MSP steering committee are Ministry or agency-level members.

Milestone 4: No later than three (3) years after signing the Agreement, the National Assembly shall approve and the Government shall formally sign into law and Gazette Biodiversity Protection Zones covering a total of 25% of its Ocean. After achievement of this Milestone, a Conservation Event will occur under the Agreement in respect of this Milestone if and only if Belize shall thereafter have less than 25% of its Ocean in Biodiversity Protection Zones.

Milestone 6: No later than five (5) years after signing the Agreement, (a) the National Assembly shall approve and the Government shall formally sign into law and Gazette Biodiversity Protection Zones covering a total of 30% of Belize's Ocean, or the percentage stated in the MSP; and (b) the MSP shall have been completed and approved by the National Assembly, signed into law, Gazetted and Implemented. After achievement of this Milestone, a Conservation Event will occur under the Agreement in respect of this Milestone if and only if Belize shall thereafter have less than the lower of 30% and the percentage stated in the MSP of its Ocean in Biodiversity Protection Zones or Belize shall rescind the enactment of the MSP.

Milestone 8: No later than eight (8) years after signing the Agreement, Belize shall have approved Management Plans for the Biodiversity Protection Zones, and the ministry with authority over such plans shall have signed the Management Plans. After achievement of this Milestone, a Conservation Event will occur under the Agreement in respect of this Milestone if and only if Belize shall rescind such Management Plans



ANNEX II – STEERING COMMITTEE GROUND RULES AND CODE OF CONDUCT

A member's participation on MSP Committees and/or Technical Working Groups entails responsibilities to their sector's interests, the broader public and the Committee or Group itself. To ensure that each member's interactions are transparent, effective, and efficient as per the MSP Guiding Principles for Decision Making (To be developed), Ground Rules and a Code of Conduct (outlined below). All members will endeavour to adhere to the following and should bring concerns to the attention of the MSP Executive Committee Chair.

GROUND RULES

1. Use the best available knowledge and information to inform decisions for the MSP including best available ecological, economic, social and cultural data.
2. Draw on the experience, knowledge and expertise of government staff, resource managers, marine stakeholders, the conservation community, local experts and scientists to develop sound, scientifically defensible decisions and recommendations.
3. Utilize methods that are transparent in their application.
4. Work cooperatively to achieve project goals.

CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Demonstrate a commitment to the Committee or Technical Working Group by working cooperatively and in good faith to move the process towards its goals and products, respecting the context and objectives of the MSP process described above;
2. Demonstrate a commitment to the Committee or Technical Working Group by planning for the continuity of their membership until the end of the process;
3. Demonstrate respect for other members by respecting their values and interests, avoiding inflammatory language, listening to others without interrupting, and being punctual;
4. Ensure honest and open communication and the timely sharing of information or concerns relevant to the Committee or Technical Working Group;
5. Ensure appropriate communication with external audiences that accurately describes the Committee or Technical Working Group and is consistent with this Terms of Reference;
6. Promote the planning process above individual interests;
7. Ensure accountability to the interests of their sector and Committee or Technical Working Group by:
 - attempting to fulfill all of the responsibilities outlined in these Terms of Reference,
 - communicating their sectors' issues and information to the Committee or Group; and
 - communicating progress to other audiences.



DATE OF ENDORSEMENT:

28TH DAY OF OCTOBER 2022

SIGNED:

CHANTALLE SAMUELS (MRS.)

CHAIR

MSP STEERING COMMITTEE