



Belize Fund For A Sustainable Future



Marine Spatial Planning

Stakeholder Engagement Field Report

Meeting Session: 1	Date: April 20th, 2023
Location: Corozal Town Hall, Corozal Town	Time: 7:00pm – 8:30pm
Number of participants: 5	Language: English & Spanish
Report submitted by: Janel McNab, MSP Coordinator CZMAI	

Phase 1- Objectives of these targeted meetings are to:

1. Socialize the MSP launch (set expectations)
2. Present a timeline of activities
3. Explain what an MSP is and why is Belize doing one
4. Share where stakeholders can access information/updates on the MSP process
5. Receive stakeholder’s feedback on how they see themselves involved in the process
6. Receive stakeholder’s feedback on preferred methods of engagement for the MSP process

1. **Organizer and Collaborators:**

The meeting was attended by the public and a diverse group of stakeholders, including representatives from the tourism sector, fisheries, citizens, and environmental protection organizations. The aim was to discuss and address key issues impacting these sectors.

2. **Main outcome/findings:**

Several important outcomes and findings were identified during the meeting:

- There is ongoing illegal fishing in Belizean waters by foreign entities, which is a significant concern for local fishermen.
- Most fishermen from Corozal travel to the Sapodilla Cayes and Laughing Bird Caye for fishing, indicating a reliance on these areas for their livelihood.
- Communities are experiencing fatigue from constant consultations, which diminishes their willingness to participate.
- To relay information more effectively, it was suggested to engage schools and inform students, who can then communicate the information to their families. Other proposed methods include short videos, brochures, and surveys distributed electronically via social media, WhatsApp, and email.

3. **Concerns/challenges:**

The meeting highlighted two key concerns and challenges:

- Some participants feel they are not directly impacted by coastal issues and thus do not see the relevance of their input.
- There is a perception that their input is not effective or adequately considered in the decision-making process.

4. Collaboration:

The meeting emphasized the need for effective collaboration. It was suggested that information should be disseminated via WhatsApp or email to individuals present at the meeting, who can then distribute it to the wider community.

5. Follow up actions by TNC/CZMAI:

Follow-up actions were identified to ensure ongoing progress:

- CZMAI, with assistance from TNC and the Belize Fisheries Department, will organize sector-specific meetings to focus on major use zones.
- Efforts will be made to consult with local communities to determine the best times for follow-up meetings, incorporating alternative communication methods such as videos, brochures, and electronic surveys.

6. Key Takeaways and Next Steps:

Key Takeaways:

- There is an urgent need to address the issue of illegal fishing by foreign entities in Belizean waters.
- Utilizing alternative communication methods such as engaging schools, creating short videos, and distributing information via social media, WhatsApp, and email can help reach the community more effectively.
- Recognizing consultation fatigue and finding ways to make participation more accessible and less burdensome for the community is crucial.
- Ensuring that all stakeholders feel their input is valued and considered in decision-making processes.

Next Steps:

- CZMAI, with support from TNC, will schedule and plan sector-specific meetings to address major use zones.
- Implementing alternative communication strategies to ensure community members receive information in a more engaging and less burdensome manner.
- Launching outreach initiatives to engage with local communities and gather feedback on the best times and methods for follow-up meetings.