



Belize Fund For A Sustainable Future



## Marine Spatial Planning

### Stakeholder Engagement Field Report

<b>Meeting Session: 1</b>	<b>Date:</b> April 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2023
<b>Location:</b> Sarteneja Community Center, Sarteneja Village	<b>Time:</b> 9:30 am – 11:00 am
<b>Number of participants:</b> 35	<b>Language:</b> Spanish
<b>Report submitted by:</b> 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 with stakeholders from various sectors including tourism, fisheries, local citizens, and environmental protection groups. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) process and gather input from the community, particularly from fishers and other key stakeholders.

#### 2. **Main outcome/findings:**

Key outcomes and findings from the meeting included:

- Fishers expressed concerns that while processes and consultations are conducted, development or tourism often takes precedence over their needs. They emphasized the importance of ensuring that the MSP process does not override the current beneficial relationship between beach trap fishers and the Sarteneja Alliance for Conservation and Development (SACD).
- Fishers want to ensure that their voices are adequately heard and considered in the decision-making process, rather than being overshadowed by the interests of the larger tourism and development sectors.

### **3. Concerns/Challenges:**

Several concerns and challenges were identified during the meeting:

- There was a suggestion for the government to investigate creating a retirement fund for fishermen to ensure their financial security in the long term.
- Questions were raised about how the MSP plans to integrate other small islands outside of Sarteneja into the overall strategy.
- Participants wanted to know how the MSP plans to involve major developers around Sarteneja in the planning process.
- There was a call for the MSP to identify landowners surrounding Sarteneja to ensure comprehensive planning and management.

### **4. Collaboration:**

No specific collaboration actions were discussed in detail during this meeting. However, ongoing collaboration with local communities and stakeholders is essential for the success of the MSP process.

### **5. Follow up actions by TNC/CZMAI**

To address the concerns and challenges raised, the following follow-up actions were proposed:

- CZMAI, with assistance from TNC and the Belize Fisheries Department, will organize sector-specific meetings to discuss major use zones and address the specific concerns related to fishing areas, development, and tourism.
- Efforts will be made to bring major developers around Sarteneja to the table to ensure their involvement in the MSP process.
- A systematic approach will be taken to identify landowners surrounding Sarteneja to facilitate better planning and management.
- CZMAI and TNC will continue to consult with local communities to gather input and ensure that their needs and concerns are adequately addressed in the MSP process.

### **Key Takeaways and Next Steps**

#### Takeaways:

- It is crucial to ensure that fishers' voices are heard, and their interests are adequately represented in the MSP process.
- The MSP should consider the integration and management of small islands outside of Sarteneja to ensure comprehensive coastal and marine planning.
- Bringing major developers into the discussion will help balance development needs with environmental and community interests.
- Identifying landowners around Sarteneja will facilitate more effective planning and implementation of the MSP.

#### Next Steps:

- CZMAI and TNC will organize sector-specific meetings to address major use zones and ensure the involvement of all relevant stakeholders.
- Initiatives will be taken to engage major developers around Sarteneja in the MSP process.

- A process will be initiated to identify landowners surrounding Sarteneja for better planning and management.
- Continuous consultations with local communities will be held to ensure their needs and concerns are addressed.