

SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT IN DESIGN * (*)

Harnessing Digital Technology and Innovation for Belize's Smart Marine Initiative

PITCH ELIGIBILITY DATE		COUNTRY(IES)
05/25/2022		Belize
ALIGNED WITH COUNTRY STRATEGY?		
Yes		
PARTNER(S)		
Turneffe Atoll Sustainability Association		
PRELIMINARY CLASSIFICATION ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL IMPACT		
C (**)		
TOTAL BUDGET	IDB Lab	LOCAL COUNTERPART AND COFINANCING
US 800,000	US 400,000	US 400,000
DESCRIPTION		

The problem: More than 40% of Belize's coral reefs are under immediate threat from overfishing, sedimentation, marine pollution, ocean warming and acidification, all actions that contribute to and are accelerated by climate change. The Turneffe Atoll Marine Reserve (TAMR) is the largest of three offshore Atolls in Belize, and since 2011, coral reef sites in Turneffe have consistently scored a 'Poor' condition according to the Integrated Healthy Reef Index score card.

The solution: The proposed solution will: (i) implement disruptive and innovative digital systems and tools to increase ecological and economic benefits for local stakeholders that depend on TAMR for their livelihoods, allowing them to become better stewards of marine resources; (ii) enable healthy, enhanced and functional ecosystems that support local communities in a sustainable manner through integrated management of the marine environment, surveillance and enforcement via adaptive management programs; and (iii) develop a unique Virtual Reality engagement app aimed at key stakeholders.

The beneficiaries: The main target group of the project is over 2,710 fishers, who collectively support an estimated 15,000 Belizeans, operating in and around the TAMR, impacted by the direct and indirect effects of climate change and who have also seen a substantial reduction of income as a result of the global pandemic.

The partner: The project will be implemented by the Turneffe Atoll Sustainability Association (TASA). TASA is the official co-management entity, along with the Government of Belize, of the Turneffe Atoll Marine Reserve since October 2013. TASA's sole purpose of co-managing the Reserve. This co-management structure in Belize has been recognized nationally, regionally and internationally due to TASA's expertise and stakeholder makeup.

*The information mentioned in this document is indicative and may be altered throughout the project cycle prior to approval. This document does not guarantee approval of the project.

**The IDB categorizes all projects into one of six E/S impact categories. Category A projects are those with the most significant and mostly permanent E/S impacts, category B those that cause mostly local and short-term impacts, and category C those with minimal or no negative impacts. A fourth category, FI-1 (high risk) Financial Intermediary (FI)'s portfolio includes exposure to business activities with potential significant adverse environmental or social risks or impacts that are diverse, mostly irreversible or unprecedented, FI-2 (medium risk) FI's portfolio consists of business activities that have potential limited adverse environmental or social risks or impacts, FI-3 (low risk) FI's portfolio consists of financial exposure to business activities that predominantly have minimal or no adverse environmental and social impacts.

The IDB Lab's contribution: IDB Lab's contribution requested is a non-reimbursable Technical Cooperation of US\$400,000 (a SPARK operation) to be matched by counterpart resources, IDB Lab funding which will be utilized to develop and implementing digital systems that help to strengthen Adaptive MPA Management; develop and implement an integrated approach to marine resource management within Turneffe Atoll Marine Reserve; and development of the cross-platform TASA Engagement application.

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