

Social Safeguards
Operational Policy 4.10
Indigenous People Framework

**Management and Protection of Key Biodiversity
Areas in Belize Project**

Final

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The Project Context and Objective

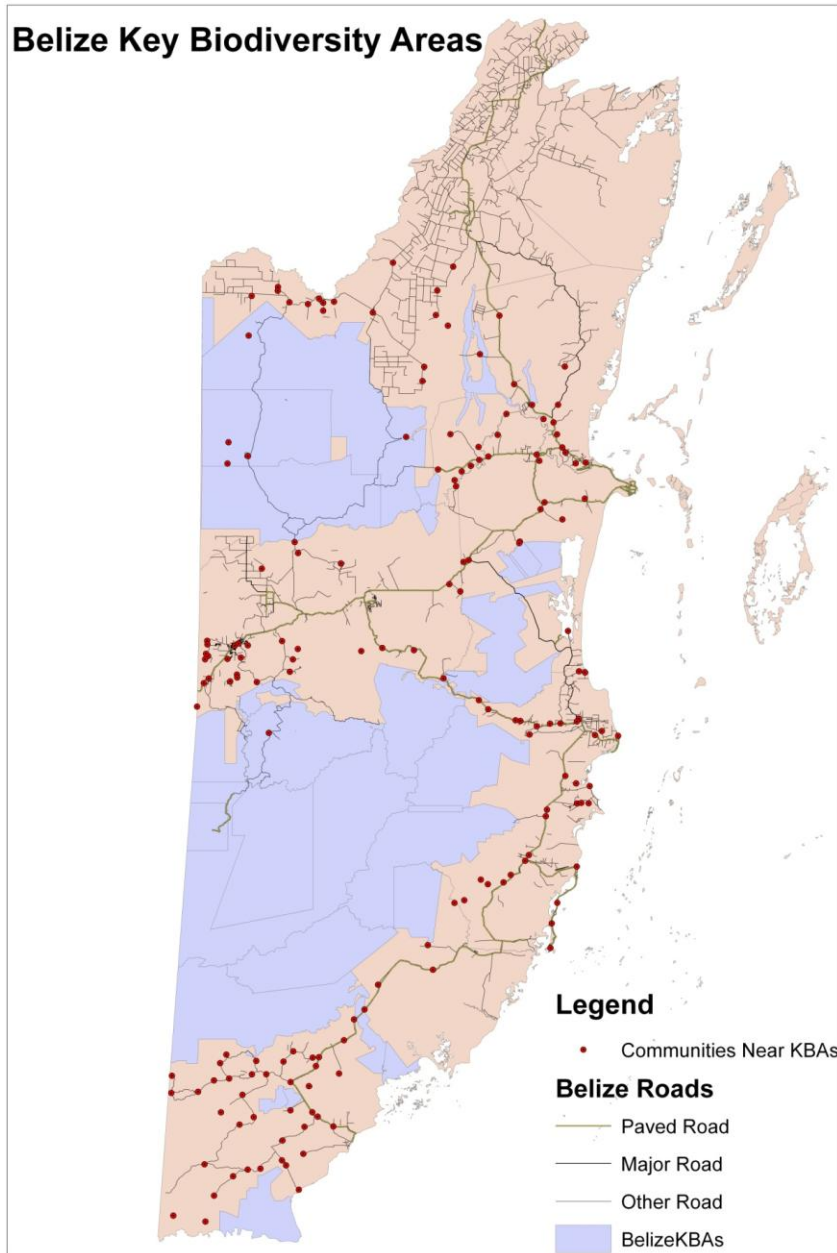
1. The proposed Project is part of the World Bank's Country Partnership Strategy for Belize (CPS FY12-FY15), which focuses on supporting the Government of Belize to achieve "Inclusive and Sustainable Natural Resource-Based Growth and Enhanced Climate Resilience." The design of the CPS was based on (a) wide Government and non-government stakeholder consultation in Belize, (b) the need for selectivity in the areas of intervention, (c) an evaluation of other donor programs to ensure the CPS fills key gaps/complements other donor programs in order to most effectively address the country's development challenges, and (d) the Bank's comparative advantage and the potential impact it could have given the importance of natural resources in Belize's development and growth prospects.
2. This project seeks to protect the natural capital of Belize, and thereby help to improve the country's growth prospects and accrue benefits to the poor who often depend on natural resource-driven sectors. It will support many of the measures identified in the First National Communication on climate change, such as the introduction of forest management plans, the promotion of agro-forestry, the restoration of abandoned agricultural lands, the establishment and maintenance of protected areas, and the development of a national forest fire management plan.
3. The Project's Development Objective (PDO) is to strengthen natural resource management and biodiversity conservation through the mitigation of threats to Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) in Belize. These threats include:
 - illegal logging, hunting, farming, and extraction of non-timber forest products (NTFP);
 - inadequate management structures, institutional arrangements, policy and legislative instruments, and capacities for forest governance, including understanding and application of sustainable forest management (SFM), sustainable land management (SLM), biodiversity conservation and sustainable human development;
 - Poverty
 - Limited awareness among resource users and resource managers that the potential benefits from the management and protection of Belize's natural capital could be harnessed for human development, and the advancement of Belize and Belizeans
4. Using the concept of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) developed by global practitioners seeking to identify and ultimately ensure that networks of globally important sites are safeguarded, a collaborative effort by the Government of Belize, Belize Tropical Forest Studies, Conservation International, and the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund resulted in the definition of the KBAs in Belize as detailed in the report "Establishing a Baseline to Monitor Species and Key Biodiversity Areas in Belize" (Meerman, 2007).
5. The KBAs roughly fall into 2 large blocks and a number of isolated sites. These include:
 - a. Selva Maya with Rio Bravo Conservation Area (104,897 ha), Aguas Turbias National Park (3,541 ha) and Gallon Jug Private Management Area (54,154 ha);

b. Maya Mountains block including Vaca Plateau (14,118 ha), Mountain Pine Ridge (43,372 ha) and Manatee River Forest Reserve (36,621 ha); and,

c. A number of smaller, discrete areas including Sartoon Temash National Park (16,938 ha), Aguacaliente Wildlife Sanctuary (2,213 ha), Golden Stream (6,085 ha) and Rio Grande Private Protected Areas, Peccary Hills (including Runaway Creek Nature Preserve (6,547 ha)) and Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary (15,372 ha).

The key biodiversity areas (KBAs) as determined by Meerman 2007 are presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1: THE KEY BIODIVERSITY AREAS IN BELIZE USING IUCN RED LIST OF SPECIES

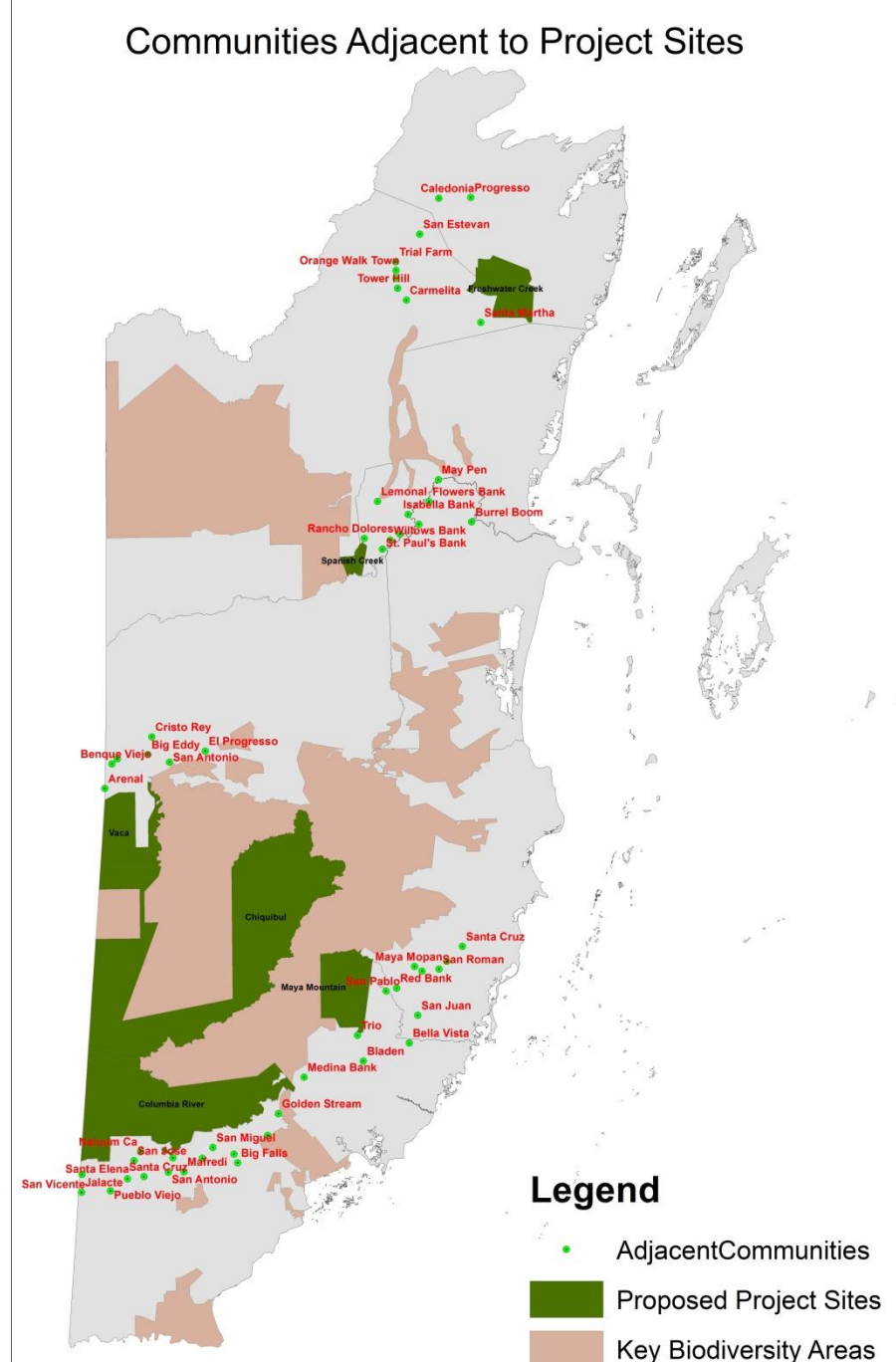


Project Activities and Potential Beneficiaries

6. This project will promote SFM, SLM, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable community development. Consequently, Belize and its people are the primary beneficiaries of this project. The country should be more resilient to climate change and natural hazards and have improved forest management arrangements; and the people, particularly those that rely on the key biodiversity areas for their livelihoods should experience an improvement in their human development.
7. The government departments that are responsible for protection and management of Belize's natural resource should benefit through improvement of capacities for resource management, including the application of ICT. The NGOs that assist with the management of protected areas and those that engage in the promotion of livelihood activities among communities that utilize protected areas with the view to reduce pressures on KBAs should experience improvement in their management capacities and they will serve as conduits through which aspects of the project could be implemented. Owners and managers of private lands in KBAs who apply biodiversity friendly management approaches could utilize the project to advocate for legal and institutional arrangements that recognize private protected areas and integrate them into the protected areas system. Toward that end, the project will work closely with them through the Belize Association of Private Protected Areas (BAPPA).
8. The project will provide incentives for conservation while strengthening local livelihoods. To that end, the project will target resource users who impact the protected areas and other lands within the KBAs and implement activities directly with them. Consequently, current users of protected areas who are Belizean residents will be direct beneficiaries. The outcomes of the livelihood activities will be increased incomes for the targeted population, improved land conditions in KBAs, and a broadening of the sustainable job opportunities that reduce pressures on the KBAs and that fit within the livelihood systems of the target beneficiaries. A social assessment will be undertaken around each of the prioritized KBAs as part of project activities to determine specific activities and target communities to be supported in and around them. The results of the social assessment and consultations will be used to inform the design and implementation of specific project interventions.
9. The management and protection efforts will impact a diversified population. Efforts will be made under the project to reach and engage all those who are affected. However, in line with World Bank Operational Policy 4.10 indigenous peoples and women near prioritized KBAs will be targeted for consultation and to ensure that they are among the beneficiaries of the project. Women are specifically singled out in light of Belize's ratification of the Convention on the Elimination on all forms of Discrimination Against Women in May 1990, Conference of the Parties (COP) Decision 1X/24 on the approval and endorsement of the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) Gender Plan of Action and COP Decision X/19, which amongst other matters invited Parties to consider gender as a core cross-cutting issue in the implementation of biodiversity-related activities.
10. While some of the project activities will impact, or has the potential to impact, the entire

protected area system, some of the activities will be site specific. The site specific activities, while they have not yet been finalized, will be implemented in and around six protected areas; Chiquibul National Park, Vaca Forest Reserve, Maya Mountain Forest Reserve, Colombia River Forest Reserve, Freshwater Creek Forest Reserve and Spanish Creek Wildlife Sanctuary. The locations of those sites and the adjacent communities are presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2: The Target KBAs for the Proposed Project



11. Of the six proposed sites, three have cross boundaries issues since each of the three abuts the Belize Guatemala border; Vaca Forest Reserve, Chiquibul National Park and Colombia River Forest Reserve. There is significant cross boundary incursions for illegal logging, hunting, poaching, farming, and, looting of archaeological sites. Of note is that there are no Belizean communities buffering the Chiquibul National Park. Another important point is that some of the users of protected areas do not live in communities that are proximate.

Potential Impacts of the Project

- (a) The proposed project has the potential to contribute to the management of protected areas and to improvement in the livelihoods of traditional users of forests within protected areas, particularly those that are within key biodiversity areas (KBAs). As a result of project activities, the Forest Department, protected areas management organizations (PAMOS) and communities buffering KBAs will be better skilled and will have the resources to carry out sustainable forest management activities, resulting in better managed forests. They will also be better equipped and better skilled to carry out enforcement of the laws related to protected areas, wildlife, and forest management and care.
- (b) Successful implementation of the project will result in a GIS application that supports site management, monitoring and evaluation, resource inventory etc. It will be developed using pilot sites, but once developed it could be applied to any site, as long as the relevant data has been collated and entered into the GIS.
- (c) This improvement in management will have a positive impact on the provision of ecosystem services such a clean water, and water retention to limit the impact of flooding and wildlife sightings. From this perspective all Belizeans could potentially benefit from this project.
- (d) Traditional users of resources within protected areas could be negatively impacted, particularly those who extract resources. At present the only category of protected areas that legally allow extractive uses is forest reserves. The project recognizes this potential and has made provisions to support the development of livelihood alternatives that reduce pressures on the biodiversity of KBAs. The project implementers will need to ensure that the benefits from the livelihood support will accrue to those who actually utilize the forest and apply pressure to the KBAs.

The Social Assessment Plan

12. The project will need to take a close look at the protected areas and profile the users of the resources of each PA. To do so, a full description of the resources of each area will be required. The potential market for the various resources of PAs will also be identified. This background information should be used to conduct a social assessment of the communities that are proximate to the KBAs. The social assessment will carry out the following tasks:
 - (a) Review the legal and institutional framework applicable to Indigenous Peoples and other potentially affected ethnic groups.

- (b) Gather baseline information on the demographic, social, cultural, and political characteristics of the affected Indigenous Peoples' communities and other ethnic groups, the land and territories that they have traditionally owned or customarily used or occupied, and the natural resources on which they depend.
- (c) Taking the review and baseline information into account, identify the key project stakeholders and prepare a culturally appropriate process for consulting with the Indigenous Peoples and other ethnic groups at each stage of project preparation and implementation
- (d) Document, based on free, prior, and informed consultation, with the affected Indigenous Peoples' communities and other affected ethnic groups, the potential adverse and positive effects of the project. Critical to the determination of potential adverse impacts is an analysis of the relative vulnerability of, and risks to, the affected Indigenous Peoples' communities given their distinct circumstances and close ties to land and natural resources, as well as their lack of access to opportunities relative to other social groups in the communities, regions, or national societies in which they live.
- (e) The identification and evaluation, based on free, prior, and informed consultation with the affected Indigenous Peoples' communities, of measures necessary to avoid adverse effects, or if such measures are not feasible, the identification of measures to minimize, mitigate, or compensate for such effects, and to ensure that the Indigenous Peoples receive culturally appropriate benefits under the project.
- (f) The indigenous peoples of Belize who could be impacted by the project are the Maya (Mopan, and Kekchi) and the Garinagu. Other ethnicity that could be impacted includes the Creole, Mestizo, and East Indians.

Framework for Consultation

13. Figure 2 shows the communities adjacent to the target KBA sites. There are some activities that will be carried out at these sites only. Those activities have not yet been fully identified but will involve preparation of management plans, delineation of boundaries, provision of enforcement services etc. The lessons learned could be used to scale up some of the project activities to the overall protected areas system.
14. There are activities such as legislative reform and training in sustainable forest management that could have system wide impact. The project will need to undertake consultations at the site level for the site specific activities and nationwide for activities that will have system wide impacts.
15. The majority of the indigenous peoples reside in the southern districts. They will need to be consulted on the system wide activities of the project. The southernmost target site is Colombia River Forest Reserve. That site is used by Mopan and Kekchi Maya and, to a lesser extent, the Mestizo in the area. Maya Mountain Forest Reserve is used by Mopan and Kekchi Maya and by Mestizos from the Banana Belt. In general, Garinagu do not use these specific sites.
16. In the west of the country, the Vaca Forest Reserve is used primarily by the Mestizos in western communities though Mopan Maya from San Antonio Cayo also use that site. Spanish Creek Wildlife Sanctuary in the Belize District is within proximity of the Belize River Valley

communities. The River Valley communities are primarily of Creole descent. Freshwater Creek in the north is within reach of mostly Mestizo communities and more recently Mennonite communities.

17. The project may affect the livelihoods of some families. Those families will need to be identified and encouraged to participate in the consultations.

Consultations with the Mopan and Kekchi Mayan Communities

18. In the Mayan communities the consultations should ensure that there is dialogue with the Mayan Leaders at various levels. These include several advocacy groups, cultural leaders and political/community leaders. Each of these should be taken into consideration when consulting with the Mayan people.
19. The Maya people in Toledo and Stann Creek have had the Toledo Mayan Cultural Council (TMCC), the Kekchi Council of Belize (KCB), The Toledo Maya Women Council, and The Mayan Leaders Alliance as organizations that advocate for their cause. The TMCC has since been replaced by the Julian Cho Society. These organizations work together to advocate for the rights of the Mopan and Kekchi Mayan People, including land rights and the ability to improve their quality of life. The Julian Cho Society (JCS), the KCB, the Toledo Maya Women Council, and the Mayan Leaders Alliance (MLA) are all important stakeholders in anything that affect Mayan people. They can provide insights into impacts and how best to ensure that the Maya people benefit from project activities. These groupings have experience in both advocacy and litigation. They have had successes in the international arena as well as in the courts of Belize. They have also had their challenges. In general, it is best to involve them in any discussion about project implementation and project activities. Their leadership is vibrant and very well documented so they should be easy to find. If they see benefit for the Mayan people, they will provide support to the project and assist with dissemination of information. Discussions should be held with them before moving to the village level for consultations.
20. Each Maya Community, particularly in Toledo, and to some extent the Stann Creek District, has a governance structure that needs to be recognized when seeking to undertake projects that could affect their residents. – Traditionally, each Maya community has an alcalde, a deputy referred to as the 2nd alcalde, and village police who take instructions from the alcalde. In the alcalde's absence they take instructions from the 2nd alcalde. In addition the village also has a Mayordomo who is responsible for the Catholic Church in the village. The Village council structure co-exists with the traditional alcalde system.
21. Within the village the alcalde is responsible for land allocation and for maintaining peace and order. The alcalde is also responsible for calling village meetings and for setting up village clean up days known as fajina. The village council is responsible for village governance as prescribed in the Village Council Act.
22. Within each village decision making is through consensus. Typically the leaders call a village meeting through the alcalde. The issue at hand is raised and the participants then engage in dialogue. At the onset, the discussions are loud as participants express themselves; but as the

participants get closer to agreement the decibel levels decrease; a sign that they are get closer to a consensus. Project proponents need to bear this in mind as free, prior and informed consent is pursued. It is best to use both the Alcalse and Village Council structures to set up village discussions about the project.

23. The Yucatecan Maya in Belize have mostly been assimilated into Mestizo culture and as a result do not have institutional structures similar to that of the Mopan and Kekchi Maya. While some of the Yucatec culture still resides in northern Belize social interactions are more mainstream. Access to residents of rural communities is best done through the village council while in urban settings, through the television media. Sending messages through school age children will work in these communities but will also serve as an additional option in the Mopan and Kekchi communities of Toledo and Stann Creek.
24. The use of PowerPoint presentations in the village meeting sessions will not be practical in many of the village settings. If a prepared presentation is needed, use a flip chart format. Carry hand outs to leave with meeting participants.

Consultation with the Garinagu

25. The Garinagu have six communities in Belize; Barranco, Punta Gorda, Hopkins, Georgetown, Seine Bight, Dangriga. In addition, Garinagu reside in every town in Belize. The Garinagu have not established any community since Georgetown which was established by people from Seine Bight in 1960. Instead, they have integrated into existing communities.
26. While the Garinagu are traditionally fishers and farmers, they have become integrated into Belize's cash economy. Many are now full time employees. A Garifuna has taught in almost every catholic school in Belize. Many are still teachers. They have also served as police officers and as nurses. While some are tour guides, not many earn their living from the forest.
27. The main Garifuna institution in Belize is the national Garifuna Council. Founded in 1980, the council has advocated for the preservation of the Garifuna culture. The Council, in collaboration with the government of Belize successfully submitted a candidature file for the declaration of the Garifuna Language, Music and Dance as a masterpiece of cultural and intangible heritage of humanity. The GARIFUNA Council holds regular meetings every two months, and once a year, it hosts a National Convention. While the Garifuna Council cannot claim that it speaks for all Garinagu in Belize, it certainly advocates for their cultural and economic wellbeing. It also represents the Garinagu in commissions and other groupings that require representation of indigenous peoples in general and Garinagu in particular.
28. The Garifuna Council has a radio station in Dangriga called Hamalali Radio that it uses to disseminate messages of interest to Garinagu. While the station does not currently have national coverage, the vision is that this will happen.
29. The Council should therefore be contacted during consultations about project activities to identify mechanism through which Garinagu can be contacted in the pursuit of free and prior consent. The village councils in the rural communities could also help to ensure that Garinagu are both engaged and informed during project consultation.

Consultation with Other Ethnic Groups

30. Belize is blessed with a number of other ethnicities beside the indigenous Maya and Garinagu. These other ethnicities include the Creole, Mestizo, Mennonite, East Indians and Caucasian among others. In general these ethnic groups use mainstream media as their source of information. In general, they do not have advocacy bodies that speak on their behalf. These groups are best reached through community meetings in their respective communities and through community leaders.

Institutional Arrangements for Screening of Project Supported Activities

31. The Ministry of Forestry Fisheries and Sustainable Development (MFFSD) will be the recipient of the proposed GEF Grant and will provide the overall institutional coordination required to implement project activities. As such, MFFSD will be responsible for overall oversight of project implementation and for related policy decisions. It will be ultimately responsible for project implementation, including financial management and procurement in accordance with Project's Operational Manual and Procurement Plan.
32. Day-to-day management of the implementation of project activities will be undertaken by a project management unit established within National Protected Areas Secretariat (NPAS) or any other agency that supplant it as the vehicle for the implementation of the NPASP; and the Protected Areas Conservation Trust (PACT) as fiduciary manager; in partnership with:
- (i) **Forest Department** – The lead government implementing agency with mandate for the management and operations of forest reserves, national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, natural monuments, and nature reserves as provided for by the Forest Act and the National Parks System Act.
 - (ii) **Association of Protected Areas Management Organizations (APAMO)** – A non-governmental umbrella agency that is made up of NGOs who manage protected areas and work with communities that buffer protected areas. The establishment of APAMO grew out of the recognition of the problems and challenges that resulted from inadequate and ineffective coordination among protected areas management organizations. The founding members of APAMO also recognized the need to aggressively lobby the Government of Belize as well as international agencies for stronger support and commitment for the conservation and management of protected areas.
 - (iii) **Department of the Environment** – Government agency responsible for enforcement of environmental legislation; will support project implementation through necessary consultations.
 - (iv) **Protected Areas Management Agencies** – Responsible for the implementation of project activities in specific Protected Areas under their jurisdiction within the KBA target sites.

33. It is currently envisaged that project management will have a two prong structure; all matters related to procurement and financial management, financial reporting and other fiduciary responsibilities will be the purview of the Protected Areas Conservation Trust while all matters related to project activity coordination, supervision and monitoring of project activities, and project implementation will be the purview of the Project Management Unit. The project management unit will screen all project activities with support from its implementing partners and the project steering committee.

Monitoring and Reporting Arrangements

34. A Project Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) team will be established to monitor project implementation. This team will be made up of persons from the Project Management Unit (PMU) and from the Fiduciary manager, PACT. The project should also give consideration to including the Environmental Research Institute at the University of Belize in the Monitoring body. This unit will track progress against the indicators in the project's Results Framework. As part of the monitoring process the team will engage residents near project sites to find out the impacts of the project on them.

Disclosure Arrangements for IPPs

35. To date the project has been discussed in broad terms with communities across and with organizations that manage protected areas. Maya Leaders have also been notified of the project.
36. Once project activities are clearly defined for the specific project sites it will become clear which indigenous communities will be impacted by the project. At the moment these seem to be selected communities near Maya Mountain Forest Reserve and in the vicinity of Columbia River Forest Reserve. At the beginning of project implementation the project will need to prepare and socialize an Indigenous Peoples Plan.