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**USAID REGIONAL PROGRAM FOR THE MANAGEMENT
OF AQUATIC RESOURCES AND ECONOMIC ALTERNATIVES**

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**DELIVERABLE: SECOND YEAR ANNUAL REPORT OCTOBER 2010 -
SEPTEMBER 2011**

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**Contract No. EPP-I-00-04-00020-00
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The author's views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AECID	Spanish Agency for International Development*
AGRRA	Atlantic and Gulf Rapid Reef Assessment
ANAM	National Environmental Authority of Panama *
ARAP	Aquatic Resources Authority of Panama *
CABEI	Central American Bank for Economic Integration
CAP	Conservation Action Planning
CATIE	Agricultural and Tropical Research & Teaching Institute *
CBO	Community Based Organizations
CBT	Cahuita-Bocas del Toro
CCAD	Central American Commission for Environment and Development*
CENPROMYPE	<i>Centre</i> for Micro and Small Enterprises Promotion in Central America *
CISP	International Committee for the Development of Peoples (Italian acronym)
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora*
CMRS	Coastal and Marine Research Strategy
CORAL	Coral Reef Alliance
COTR	Contracting Officer's Technical Representative
CREDIA	Regional Environmental Documentation and Interpretation Center *
DELMYPE	Initiative for Capacities Creation to Promote Economic Local Development *
DIBIO	General Biodiversity Directorate of Honduras *
DIGEPESCA	General Directorate for Fisheries, Honduras *
ERIMC	Regional Research Strategy for Coastal Marine Resources *
FOMIN	Multilateral Investment Fund *- IADB
FUNZEL	Zoological Foundation of El Salvador *
GANP	Group of Harmonization of Fisheries Regulations *
GEF	Global Environment Facility Trust Fund - UNDP
GTZ	German Society for International Cooperation
GOF	Gulf of Fonseca
GOH	Gulf of Honduras
HRHP	Healthy Reefs for Healthy People
IAC	Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
ICAPO	Eastern Pacific Hawksbill Initiative *
IHT	Honduran Institute of Tourism *
INBOCA	Bocas Environmental and Culture Initiative *
INPESCA	Nicaraguan Institute of Fishery *
KRA	Key Results Area
MARFUND	Mesoamerican Reef Fund
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
USAID/MAREA	USAID Regional Program for the Management of Aquatic Resources and Economic Alternatives

MARENA

Nicaraguan Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources *

MCRS	Marine Coastal Research Strategy
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPA	Marine Protected Area
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
OSPESCA	Fishing and Aquaculture Organization of the Central American Isthmus*
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
RFIN	Regional Fisheries Information Network
SERNA	Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources, Honduras *
SETUR	Secretariat of Tourism, Honduras *
SICA	Central American Integration System
SG SICA	General Secretariat of the Central American Integration System
SIRPAC	Central American Integrated Register System
SPAG	Spawning Aggregations Site
STC	Sea Turtle Conservancy
STRI	Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
TRAINET	Training Results and Information Network
TRIGOH	Tri-National Alliance of the Gulf of Honduras
UCME	Utila Center for Marine Ecology
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UPESABO	Bocas del Toro Fishery Association *
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WIDECAS	Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Network
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

***Spanish acronym**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The USAID/MAREA-financed Regional Program for the Management of Aquatic Resources and Economic Alternatives, under WATER II IQC, contract number EPP-I-00-04-00020-00. Task Order 5, was awarded to Chemonics International Inc., in March 2010, and will start its second full year of implementation on October 1st, 2011, in partnership with regional and national counterparts: CCAD, OSPESCA, and USAID/El Salvador. The project will conclude September 30, 2014.

The Program is aimed at reducing threats posed by unsustainable fishing practices and coastal development by laying the foundation on right based mechanisms approach to achieve strengthened coastal-marine resources management, focusing on endangered marine species associated with fishing and conservation practices in Central America, in doing so a close and permanent coordination with fisheries and environmental authorities should be kept.

During the first eighteen months of program implementation, the approach focused on establishing and strengthening key institutional relations, and identifying the best intervention strategy for USAID/MAREA. A favorable environment was created for promoting the program's agenda, to reach agreements on objectives, and expectations, among mayor counterparts, primary audiences, and beneficiaries. Key stakeholders were identified in the field and liaised with a number of projects, programs, and institutions, making it possible to lay foundations to achieve a multiplier effect, and secure cooperative agreements needed for obtaining USAID/MAREA proposed results and goals.

In January 2011, the Regional team and offices were completed hiring the policies and communications specialists, five site coordinators, and establishing offices on the sites.

Several MOUs were signed with a number of regional organizations, and projects, and the program has managed to gain a foothold in key sites, teamed up with other projects and programs, and has entered fishing communities specially in Gulf of Fonseca, Miskito Coast, Cahuita-Bocas del Toro and Gulf of Honduras.

The agreement among CCAD, OSPESCA, and USAID/MAREA was finally accomplished and signed in June 2011. It is particularly important as it involves procedures to ensure coordination with their priorities, and lays foundation to jointly formulate a coastal marine policy for Central America, and a fishing-environmental agenda in the immediate future. A working plan to develop joined activities was drawn with inputs from both regional organizations.

The USAID/MAREA Regional Program comprises two primary components:

1. Strategic Objective 1: Promote the Effective Monitoring and Application of Policies for Coastal Marine Resources and their Legislation, and
2. Strategic Objective II: Encourage rights based access and market-based mechanisms, as well as promote management incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of the coastal-marine resources and priority marine coastal ecosystems in the region

Major achievements on Component I:

A gap analysis on regional fishing legislation, conducted under the leadership of the program team's legal specialist who visited, and interviewed with fishery stakeholders representatives of government and non-government sector institutions. This analysis identified the following

priorities for the region, necessary to address in order to promote sustainable fisheries: a) Rights-based fisheries access mechanisms that sustain their economic activities; b) Violation reporting systems; c) Better enforcement, and d) Establishment or increase of fines for violations. It was presented to OSPESCA policy group in September, 2010. Fishing authorities are expected to participate, implement strategies and procedures on these four priority issues during the life of the USAID/MAREA Regional Program.

Through subcontractor World Conservation Society (WCS), the program collected and recorded baseline information on fish populations in Belize, laying the foundations to design and start a right based access through quotas' systems for fishers in Glover's Reef Atoll. This system would be the first to be performed in the country, and expected to serve as practical example for other Central American nations.



Lobster fishermen at Glover's Reef

Also through WCS, the program provided technical assistance to develop the draft Belize Fishing Act after consulting numerous government and country private sector stakeholders. The fishing authority is gearing to present the proposal to the Belizean Cabinet, for consideration and approval. The draft incorporates gaps identified in the regional analysis of fisheries policies, particularly those regarding mechanisms for allocating special access licenses as well as raising fines at different levels. Within this context, USAID/MAREA focused on

training and exchange information among fishing authorities, and legal advisors from Belize and Honduras, and provided technical assistance to Honduras too, for the preparation of the draft law.

The program's main role and achievement lay on the incorporation of assigning rights based access mechanisms to fisherman. Currently this law draft is undergoing technical and judicial review before being submitted for approval.

Major achievements on Component II:

Up to 1,642 persons has been trained on different fisheries and coastal management related topics. An agreement signed with CENPROMYPE-SICA, allowed start leveraging of US\$463,000.00 with 390 families as direct beneficiaries. Alongside Mangrove Corridor projects, in Gulf of Fonseca (co-funded by Spain-SICA), USAID/MAREA promoted an agreement to harmonize fishing practices for 18 marine species, in Gulf of Fonseca. Notably the program forged an alliance with the BCIE CAMBio project to promote alternative economic activities in the region, with emphasis on financing lobster diving fleet conversion in Honduras and Nicaragua.

USAID/MAREA along with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Tri-National Alliance of Gulf of Honduras (TRIGOH) launched a Queen conch and Nassau grouper conservation initiative involving appraisal and consultation workshops in Belize, Guatemala and Honduras. The management plan for both species has consequently been drafted and proposed in order to harmonize conservation of grouper spawning aggregation sites and a seasonal closure between December 1st and March 30th. Along with Sea Turtle Conservancy (STC) and WIDECAS, USAID/MAREA activities resulted in the protection of 6,040 leatherback turtle nests, and 1,351 hawksbill turtle nests in different areas of the Cahuita-Bocas del Toro binational site, Rio Cañas and Gulf of Fonseca. With WIDECAS, the program has initiated support to local community groups in Playa Bluff, Bocas del Toro to promote public-private partnerships for sea turtle conservation, and will likewise work with ICAPO on the same type of strategies in Gulf of Fonseca region.

Bocas del Toro, Panama - one of the four sites of USAID/MAREA was the launching stage for its communications efforts: Information and environmental awareness toward ecosystems, species and “Code of Conduct” for boat drivers, and reef and beaches visitors, which at least attempt to increase the demand for products and services that provide conservation and sustainable use of coastal and marine resources. A parade of 350 schoolchildren with their teachers and some 50 representatives of local, national and regional public and private sectors and the regional USAID office, took place on the main street of the Island; a formal ceremony was presided over by tourism, environmental, marine, water resources and the municipality authorities, boatmen associations, and USAID Panama and El Salvador, and a popular drama "Saving the 7 species" - specially produced for the Program- was performed by from town, young student volunteers. The activity was welcome by residents and visitors, and the expressed their commitment to work with the Program, to ensure the communication efforts will help the conservation of the archipelago and its species, and to promote sustainable productive activities, among users of those resources. These communication efforts were designed by subcontractor SOLIMAR Int., who also adapted the Code of Conduct effort for Cahuita. They also designed, a Responsible Seafood Consumption effort, in support of local organizations like CORAL, Roatan Marine Park, and Utila Centre for Marine Ecology in Bay Islands, and for Bocas del Toro; reaching some 50,000 people.



“Code of conduct” sign being placed at a boat’s gate in Bocas.

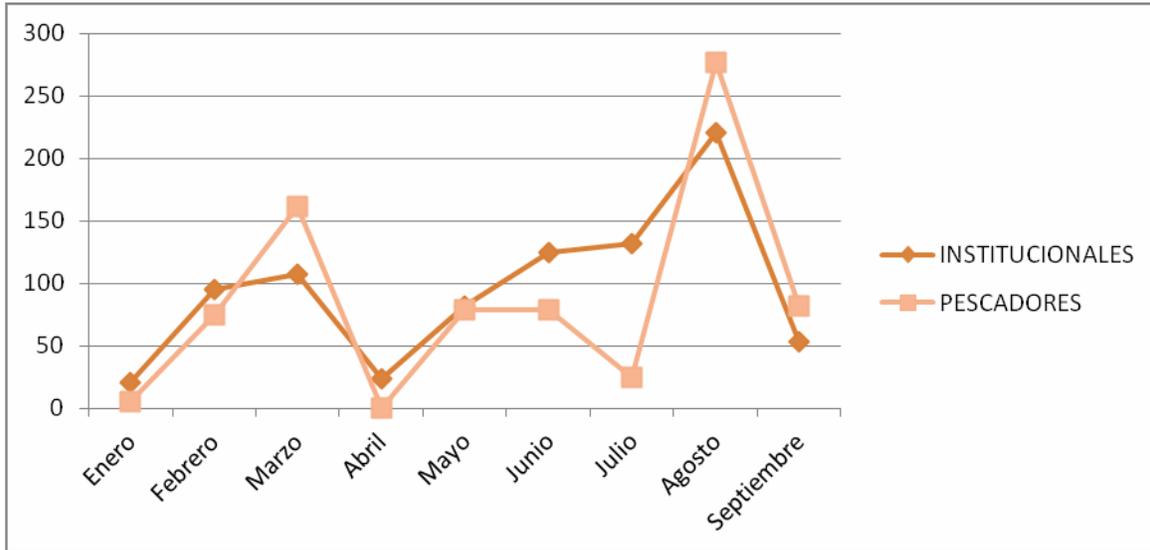
The USAID/MAREA Regional Program reached important strides in assessing the climate change impact on the Caribbean coasts (Gulf of Honduras) in Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras, supported by program subcontractor TNC and CATIE’s leadership. The findings of this program funded assessments were presented in September, and will be used to prepare adaptations plans for the region to improve management of at least 700,000 hectares in five sites with high biological importance. Similarly, USAID/MAREA supported forming 12 consulting councils, helped to establish public participation management mechanisms, for 600,000 hectares in Bay Islands National Marine Park, a Central American coastal marine area of high relevance.

The program arranged for the visit to Gulf of Fonseca, of three artisan fishermen, representatives of the Unión de Pescadores Artesanales Bocatoreños (UPESABO), from Puerto Almirante, Bocas del Toro, Panamá, to share with 180 fisherman, and 50 technicians, from El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua, their experiences on administrative, operational and production management with their colleagues in the Pacific Ocean.

During its implementation, the program had to face external elements which interfered with goals achievement. Change of environmental and fisheries government authorities in Central American countries coincided with the beginnings of the regional program, hampering the appropriation and coordination needed for the start up. The disarticulation of the CCAD and changes in this organization delayed the signing of the MOU. Meanwhile the USAID/MAREA team worked at technical levels with other programs which specifically allowed proceeding at local sites. Likewise, the complete integration of the USAID/MAREA program team happened until January 2011 which has also conditioned the agility field developments.

The Second Annual Report is organized into four sections: An Executive Summary that precedes the first part, providing context of the program, main achievements and limitations; Part I) Approach, administration, and implementation; Part II) Core of the report: Major achievements,

indicator charts which reflects the program advances in 18 months, considering the two components of the program; and Part III) Highlights the performance according to the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan. Pictures, maps, and charts being produced by the program team, illustrate the report.



Graphic 1: showing the number of institutions and persons trained Octubre 2010 – Sept. 2011

SECTION I: APPROACH, ADMINISTRATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

A. APPROACH



Map 1. Offices sites of the Regional Program USAID/MAREA (The Map belongs to a series of Maps specially designed for the Program)

Besides the key approaches of the Program: a) Institutional strengthening and policy development, b) Information research and communication and c) Piloting and promotion of right and market based resources management approaches, USAID/MAREA is working jointly with local partners, implementing adaptative management, and leveraging funds in the four transboundary sites.

Recognizing that sustainable fisheries, conservation, and economic opportunities must, without exception be achieved by local actors, USAID/MAREA developed all activities on a foundation of local participation and regional ownership.

During this reporting period, USAID/MAREA made a special effort to set up alliances with strategic partners to achieve a multiplier and synergic effect that will foster the achievement of the proposed results for the region within the periods agreed and with the resources available. Alliances with WIDECAS, ICAPO, CENTROMYPE, CABEI and AECID exemplify the practical application of the approach.



Agreement between Regional Fisheries Authorities – OSPESCA, CCAD and USAID.

The USAID/MAREA Regional Program first Task Orders were defined with USAID/MAREA subcontractors in the region to lay the foundations for integrated work taking advantage of each ones' strengths. With our regional partners, government institutions and subcontractors we have placed the highest priority on working simultaneously at regional, national, and local levels to strengthen and improve the regional policy framework and to implement

sustainable fishery practices and integrated ecosystem-based management.

The USAID/MAREA program is addressing complex issues in seeking to reduce and mitigate the effects of overfishing while simultaneously pursuing the introduction of innovative and improved practices for management of coastal marine resources at the four transboundary sites. To do this successfully, during the reporting period USAID/MAREA concentrated much of its efforts on establishing and strengthening relationships with local governments, NGOs, and the Central American integration system structures in charge of fishing (OSPESCA) and environment (CCAD). An executive committee comprised of the three parties is in operation to ensure effective program implementation and ownership as part of the agreements in the MOU.

USAID/MAREA regional team developed specific strategies that are aligned with the contractual results. Strategies were developed for communications, sea turtles, economic alternatives, monitoring and evaluation, fisheries management, and legal and regulatory framework for fisheries. These strategies will be use as mechanism to follow up the progress and results from the program with partners and allies.

B. RESOURCES

B.1 Personnel

In June 2011, Néstor Windevoxhel assumed the Chief of Party (COP) position while Gina Green, the previous COP, returned to Washington DC where she leads the Project Management Unit (PMU) that backstops the Program. Under the new COP's management and after one year of program implementation, certain functions of the team and site coordinators have been revised and redefined to continue with the program's advances and alliances, particularly with the MOU between OSPESCA, CCAD, and USAID.

During the reporting period, site coordinators for project execution were selected and regional offices set up and equipped (Map 1 shows sites with program offices). Two important specialists, one in Policies and Law and the other in Communications, were contracted to complete the regional team and the entire core team was thus in place by January 2011. From the central office in San Salvador, each specialist is responsible for supervising the site coordinator's work plan and following up on subcontractor deliverables. The field offices are located in the following sites:



Puerto Barrios Office

Gulf of Honduras (Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras) where offices have been set up at two sites: Puerto Barrios which will cover the Honduran Miskito Coast and Bay Islands, and Puerto Barrios to cover Belize, Guatemala and western Honduras.

1. **Puerto Barrios office, Guatemala:** Site Coordinator Ivo Orellana; Regional Team Supervisor Juan Carlos Villagrán. They share office space with the CISP project (Italian development cooperation).
2. **Puerto Lempira office, Honduras:** Site Coordinator Adoni Cubas; Regional Team Supervisors Sergio Martínez and Juan Carlos Villagrán

3. **Costa de Miskitos: Puerto Cabezas office, Nicaragua.** Site Coordinator Milton Castrillo; Regional Team Supervisor Sergio Martínez.
4. **Cahuita-Bocas del Toro** (Costa Rica and Panama)
Office set up in Isla Colón, Bocas del Toro, Panama: Site Coordinator Julio Barquero; Regional Team Supervisor Augusto Rosales.
5. **Gulf of Fonseca** (El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua) **Office in La Unión, El Salvador:** Site Coordinator Arnulfo Ruiz; Regional Team Supervisor Zulma Ricord de Mendoza. The office is operating in alliance with the SICA-CCAD Mangrove Corridor Project with which an MOU has been signed to share the space. This partner has been very valuable for USAID/MAREA’s implementation since both works in similar territory, running from Bahía de Jiquilisco in El Salvador to Jiquilillo in Nicaragua so sharing work space will facilitate synergies.



B.2 Subcontractors

Along with the five original subcontractors (WWF, TNC, WCS, Solimar and STC), the USAID/MAREA Regional Program incorporate two more organizations (ICAPO and WIDECAS) to work in conservation, economic alternatives, and sea turtle conservation in the Gulf of Fonseca and Bocas del Toro-Cahuita sites.

The subcontractors, regional team and coordinators met three times in the reporting period for coordination and planning in November 2010 and in April and September 2011. These meetings strengthened the program’s shared vision and implementation strategy, as well as lending greater clarity regarding the achievement of results and goals.

The program has made important contributions and advances through subcontractor work with respect to the seven species, the four implementation sites and specific themes: access rights, economic alternatives, plans and strategies for endangered species and communication and publicizing campaigns. The table below presents major accomplishments by subcontractor.

Subcontractor	Main Tasks Accomplished
Wildlife Conservation Society WCS Theme: Rights-based mechanisms, species management and conservation laws– Belize, GOH	The Belize Fishing Act was updated and modernized, including access rights and economic alternatives. Launch of a special licensing system for catch quotas in the Glover's Reef fishery. Turtle conservation priorities identified for Nicaragua’s Miskito Coast and management alternatives proposed.
The Nature Conservancy TNC Theme: Protected areas, endangered species and climate change–GOH	Management plan proposals formulated for Nassau grouper and queen conch in the Gulf of Honduras. Vulnerability assessment conducted for the coasts of Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras on potential climate change impacts in areas with biological importance and food security significance for local populations. Five-year adaptation strategies were prepared on vulnerability in the Gulf of Honduras.
Solimar International	Six models of sea turtle conservation linked with sustainable tourism practices were designed and an implementation plan was

Subcontractor	Main Tasks Accomplished
<p>Theme: Sustainable tourism and communication efforts</p>	<p>formulated. Five campaigns to raise awareness about coastal marine resources were designed and two were launched in Bocas del Toro. Two market studies were conducted in Cahuita-Bocas del Toro and Bay Islands in terms of best management and sustainable <u>tourism practices: business development, training and marketing.</u></p>
<p>Sea Turtle Conservancy STC</p> <p>Theme: Sea turtle conservation</p>	<p>In alliance with local indigenous authorities, around 4,000 Leatherback Turtle nests and 500 Hawksbill nests were protected in the Ngobe Publé district. Twenty field technicians in Central America were trained in monitoring and management of sea turtle nesting beaches.</p>
<p>World Wildlife Fund WWF</p> <p>Theme: Institutional strengthening and economic alternatives to Miskito Coast lobster diving</p>	<p>Training was provided on best fishing practices in lobster fisheries on the Honduran Miskito Coast. An assessment was made of institutional capacities and monitoring, control and patrolling needs in the lobster fisheries on the Miskito Coast of Honduras. <u>Ecosystems critical for lobster fishing in the Gulf of Honduras and Miskito Coast of Honduras and Nicaragua were determined</u></p>
<p>Eastern Pacific Hawksbill Initiative (ICAPO)</p> <p>Theme: Hawksbill turtle conservation</p>	<p>ICAPO has initiated protection and monitoring of hawksbill turtles in the Gulf of Fonseca, as well as protection for nesting beaches from Bahía de Jiquilisco, in El Salvador, to Estero Padre Ramos, Nicaragua. A sustainable scientific tourism program was designed with the communities of Bahía Jiquilisco and Estero Padre Ramos.</p>
<p>Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Network (WIDECAST)</p> <p>Theme: Sea turtles and economic alternatives</p>	<p>Protection was provided for sea turtle nesting beaches in Moin/ Cahuita-Bocas del Toro and sea turtle-related economic alternatives were developed (sustainable tourism and craft work)</p>
<p>Centro de Ecología Marina de Utila CEMU</p> <p>Theme: fishery research to generate baseline data and populations assessment on target species</p>	<p>Data base on artisanal fishing in the Honduras Caribbean Data base on shark fishing in the Gulf of Fonseca</p>



Site coordinators and subcontractors in Workshop for the Working Plan 2011-2012



Regional team and subcontractors during planification meeting in San Salvador. Sept. 2011 (WCS, TNC, ICAPO and Solimar, San Salvador.

C. ALLIANCES AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

C.1 Program Positioning

With Regional Authorities

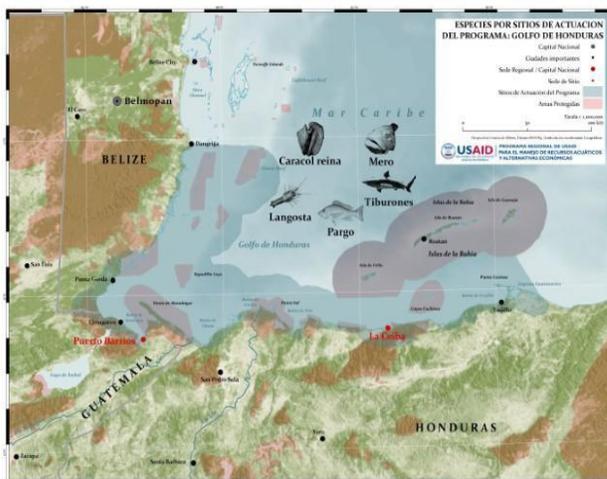
The USAID/MAREA Regional Program continued strengthening strategic alliances, especially with our SICA partners OSPESCA and CCAD. The program signed MOUs with these two organizations which formalized their support for program and detailed coordination mechanisms that will be used during implementation according to the needs expressed by the regional authorities.

The USAID/MAREA Regional Program also signed an agreement with the Central American Bank for Economic Integration's (BCIE) project CAMBio. This alliance will support financing for sustainable projects at the program sites with the goal of providing economic alternatives through loans and training to develop business plans to the sustainable use of coastal and marine resources, particularly the artisanal fishing sector.



C.2 Local partnerships

During the first quarter of FY2011, USAID/MAREA initiated activities in two of the program's four sites, the Gulf of Fonseca and Gulf of Honduras. These sites were selected as entry points due to their tri-national borders and USAID's long history of working there. Program activities were subsequently launched at the other two sites of Cahuita-Bocas del Toro and the Miskito Coast of Honduras and Nicaragua.



Gulf of Honduras – TRIGOH

Through subcontractor TNC, the program reactivated the tri-national alliance for GOH, TRIGOH (known by its acronym) which gathers the civil society organization to promote conservation and sustainable use in Gulf of Honduras. USAID/MAREA facilitated a general assembly in Puerto Barrios, Guatemala, to introduce the program and stress the need for working in tandem, especially with regard to the organization's Endangered Species Commission. TRIGOH participated actively in consultations on Nassau grouper and Queen conch management plans in the Gulf of Honduras.

Projects having themes and objectives in common with those of USAID/MAREA have been key in establishing synergies and alliances. One is the CISP project in the Gulf of Honduras, with

which an MOU has been signed to share offices and work together on economic alternatives related to artisanal fishing.

Gulf of Fonseca: A tri-national meeting of donors, projects, and programs active in the Gulf of Fonseca territory was held in January 2011. This event was decisive for positioning the program at the site. With the work of the Gulf of Fonseca site coordinator and support from NGOs and CCAD, the program identified all of the projects working in similar themes in the area. USAID/MAREA signed MOUs looking for synergies and complementarities with three international cooperation projects, the Mangrove Corridor Project (CCAD’s SICA-Spain fund), DELMYPE (Austrian funding) and the AECID-Honduras fishery project. These alliances will help to facilitate coordination and



Head table: CODECA, Governor of La Unión and USAID



Agreement with Corredor del Mangle and MAREA / USAID.

collaboration in providing training, activities promoting economic alternatives, the harmonization of seasonal closures and allowable fishing gear. Local organizations CODECA, ACTRIGOLFO, LIDER and ACUGOLFO have supported USAID/MAREA actions, and local authorities endorsing the program include the departmental governors of the three countries, along with the mayors of the 21 municipalities comprising the Gulf of Fonseca territory.

On April 6, 2011 an agreement on a technical proposal for harmonization of seasonal closures, allowable fishing gear and methods in the Gulf of Fonseca was signed in La Unión, Gulf of Fonseca, by representatives of at least 60 organized fishers and the fishing authorities of the three countries. This agreement has been sent on to OSPESCA for approval and is described in Section II, under achievements pertaining to KRA 1.1.

Bocas del Toro-Cahuitta: Launching of Code of Conduct Activity

i



Young volunteers at Colon Island in Bocas during the launching of Code of Conduct activity.

In May 2011, the program launched an information and environmental awareness campaign focusing on ecosystems, target species and a code of conduct on for visitors, swimmers, divers and boat operators in Isla Colón. The campaign was focused on the educational and scientific sectors, municipalities, national tourism authorities and coastal and marine resource users. Some 350 schoolchildren and their teachers, nearly 50 representatives of public/private local, national and regional institutions and the USAID regional office attended a parade highlighting messages about coastal and marine conservation. A play for children and adolescents written and produced especially for the occasion, called “Let’s Save the Seven Species,” was acted out by young student volunteers. The activity was well received by residents and visitors, and representatives pledged to collaborate with the program so that the campaigns are successful in contributing to the conservation of the

archipelago and its species, and to the promotion of sustainable productive activities for users of these resources.

Miskito Coast – Honduras and Nicaragua

The Nicaragua Miskito Coast Site Coordinator has worked closely with both MARENA and INPESCA authorities in Nicaragua and DIGEPESCA in Honduras to support change in lobster fishing methods. USAID/MARENA held bi-national workshops on sustainable lobster fishing techniques with the participation of Miskito communities and authorities from both Nicaragua and Honduras with the goal of jointly identifying economic alternatives for the social and economic dangers of current lobster fishing practices.



SECTION II: NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND ACHIEVEMENTS

This section presents specific advances of the USAID Regional Program for Management of Aquatic Resources and Economic Alternatives from October 2010 to September 2011. Activities will be described in accordance with the program’s two strategic objectives and the six key result areas (KRA). A summary of updated indicators for each KRA according to the monitoring and evaluation plan is included, followed by a narrative about results obtained to date.

Strategic Objective I: Promote the Effective Monitoring and Application of Policies for Coastal Marine Resources and their Legislation

A. KEY RESULTS AREAS – STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE I.

KRA 1.1 Draft, harmonize and adopt at the regional, national, and municipal level policies and legislation on target coastal and marine resources, with emphasis on rights-based, market-driven approaches.

Progress to date. The USAID/MAREA program completed a regional gap and stoplight analysis, of the legal framework and policies governing fisheries in Central America. The findings will be used to propose specific and priority actions. USAID/MAREA supported updating the legal framework in Belize and Honduras, as well as the adoption of new fishery management measures for the Gulf of Fonseca. The regulations for the Gulf of Fonseca have been brought to OSPESCA for review.

KRA	Indicator		Goals	Life Of Program
			2010-2011	
KRA 1.1	1.1.1 Number of coastal and marine resources conservation and sustainable use policies and legislation drafted and presented	Proposal	5	20
		Actual	5	5

Interviews of Central American fisheries and environmental authorities to collect inputs. From November 2011 until February 2011, the legal specialist conducted a series of interviews and visits with fishing and environment authorities, environmental public prosecutors’ offices, and NGOs in the seven countries in the program’s geographical scope to gather information about the main problems and gaps experienced in regulating fisheries.

Gap analysis, stoplight analysis and related projects. The information collected as part of the gap and stop light analysis as well as other information on legislation, policies, international accords, access rights and market instruments related to coastal and marine resources, was documented. Classified the projects to address those gaps under a regional approach, and incorporated them in the 2011 – 2012 workplan.

Fishery laws and norms. During the reporting period, USAID/MAREA and WCS drafted a new fisheries law for Belize that seeks to modernize the regulatory framework as well as to allow for rights-based and market driven fishery management mechanism. The draft formulation was enriched by an “Analysis of the Legal Framework of Fishing in Belize” and the “Scientific Analysis of Fishing Law,” conducted by a WCS specialist and presented to the Belizean government. The resulting draft law was submitted for public consultations to organized fisher groups and cooperatives in Belize City, Sarteneja, Placencia and Punta Gorda in order to find consensus on the proposed draft. The draft law is currently under consultation with fishing authorities before being sent to the Cabinet.

USAID/MAREA also facilitated meetings and exchanges between officials from Honduras and Belize. These exchanges resulted in rights-based mechanisms being incorporated into the draft Honduran Fishing Act.

USAID/MAREA along with the Mangrove Corridor Project (CCAD-AECID) held three national consultation meetings and a tri-national meeting in which fishing authorities, fisher associations and direct users set fishery regulation priorities in the Gulf of Fonseca where some 12,375 artisan fishers operate. The workshops concluded with the signing of the “Technical Agreement for Harmonization of Zoning Measures” by fishing authorities of El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua, which applies to main commercial species. Following suit, a workshop was held on the Miskito Coast, initiating binational dialogue to reach consensus on fishery management regarding commercial species at the site, with greater emphasis on lobster fishing along the Honduras-Nicaragua Miskito Coast.



Fisheries authorities from El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras, signing the agreement for harmonization and zoning measures in Gulf of Fonseca., La Unión, El Salvador

Table 1: Summary of Artisanal Fishing Harmonization in the Gulf of Fonseca

Agreement	No. of Species	Species Description
Harmonization of closed season	1	Shrimp <i>Litopenaeus sp.</i> From April 1 st to May 31 st every year as of 2012
Minimum sizes	2	Black ark <i>Anadara Tuberculosa</i> Minimum size 4.5 cm Stone crab <i>Menipes mercenaria</i> 9 cm
Total ban Not defined	2	Mangrove cockle <i>Anadara grandis</i> All shark species
Harmonization of fishing techniques	1	Shrimp <i>Litopenaeus sp.</i> Mesh size, height maximum four 300m-long units
Harmonization of fishing techniques	13	13 scale species regulated by means of 4” mesh size, 5m high, 300m long, maximum four units

Participating countries: Honduras, Nicaragua and El Salvador (fishing communities)
 60 fishers participated, with several fishers cooperatives and associations represented
 Fishing and environmental authorities: INPESCA, DIGEPESCA and CENDEPESCA /
 MARENA, MARN, SERNA

KRA 1.2 Draft and implement law monitoring and enforcement strategies and action plans for coastal and marine resources and ecosystem

Progress to date: Based on the result of KRA 1.1, three strategies were formulated for improving the law enforcement and compliance framework to support transformation of lobster dive fishing in the Mosquitia (Nicaragua and Honduras).

KRA	Indicator		Goals	Life Of Program
			2010-2011	
KRA 1.2	1.2.1 Number of coastal and marine resources law monitoring and enforcement strategies drafted and implemented	Proposal	1	5
		Actual	1	1

Fishing Management Measures on the Miskito Coast (Honduras – Nicaragua).

USAID/MAREA supported the Nicaraguan government in the Miskito Coast by proposing alternatives for economic alternatives that might be available to lobster fisherman as a result of the prohibition on diving. The program presented 48 alternatives, which identified by national fishing authorities, regional and local governments, fishers associations, injured divers associations and users in general. A feasibility assessment identified the economic alternatives that are suitable for financing.



Lobster's Fishery Workshop with attendance of Nicaragua and Honduras, in Ceiba, Honduras.

In La Ceiba, Honduras, USAID/MAREA sponsored dialogue with 28 fishers to analyze fishing activity problems. The meeting was attended by traders, fishing authorities headed by the Research Director of Nicaragua's INPESCA, the Director of Honduras's DIGEPESCA, and representatives of international development agencies operating in the Miskito Coast of Nicaragua and Honduras. As a result of this activity, specific actions were identified and prioritized e.g. were to support the decision of definitive closure of scuba diving fishing by 2013, harmonization of sustainable

lobster fishing practices, to promote initiatives to create alternative livelihood for lobster divers, enforcement of the law and special programs for fishermen injured by Scuba diving accidents. The meeting identified those responsible for follow-up and implementation of those actions. Measures were also identified for fishing management in the Honduran and Nicaraguan Mosquitia, to be promoted with the two countries' governments under an integrated and regional approach.

The USAID/MAREA program has influenced reform of Caribbean lobster fisheries on the Miskito Coast by supporting INPESCA the development of guidelines for former lobster fisherman in a plan entitled, "Technical and Occupational Labor Transformation for Fishers Using the Diving Technique in Lobster Fishing." The plan includes video presentations, training, proposals for economic alternatives and changes in catch regulations and enforcement. Some 1,700 divers are expected to benefit from these initiatives.

Legal enforcement and compliance strategies. Based on the findings of the legal gap analysis, the USAID/MAREA program designed and validated three strategies with the goal of improving violation report records and performance indicators, improvement of monitoring and enforcement, and greater effectiveness of fines and penalties. Training and communications plans were also designed to harmonize procedures.



Regional Workshop to create the Regional Monitoring, tracking, and enforcement network.

OSPESCA workshop on creation of the regional monitoring, tracking, and enforcement network. USAID/MAREA presented the legal enforcement and compliance strategies employed by the program and results to date. The strategies met with general acceptance from the Central American countries' fishing authorities, coast guards and armies, who recognized the importance of the MAREA/USAID program

in the regional network and also recommended including control and prevention aspects.

KRA 1.3 Promote transparency and accountability and support public participation

Progress to date. Baseline information has been gathered at Golf of Honduras in order to build the monitoring system for both violations and jurisdictional, and administrative proceedings. The analyses conducted will make possible to develop the conceptual and operational framework for reporting and violations systems in coordination with OSPESCA.

KRA	Indicator		Goals	Life Of
			2010-2011	Program
KRA 1.3	1.3.1 Trend in reporting target species related violations	Proposal	0	3
		Actual	0	0
	1.3.2. Increased effectiveness in processing target species related violations	Proposal	0	3
		Actual	0	0

Foundation laid for assessing efficacy of current reporting systems. Using the enforcement strategy developed by the legal specialist (KRA 1.2), the project designed a baseline assessment for monitoring the number of regulatory violations reports and complaints received across the region and measuring the efficacy of established reporting systems and associated procedures. This will allow the program to propose improvements, such as regional databases, unified complaints forms, and the development of regional performance indicators. These indicators can be used for local, national, and regional comparisons.

Based on this progress at regional level USAID/MAREA will pilot examples at site level of monitoring systems for both violations and Jurisdictional and administrative proceedings. USAID/MAREA regional program will start with GOH to conduct this pilot. As an initial approach specific inputs were recollected from:

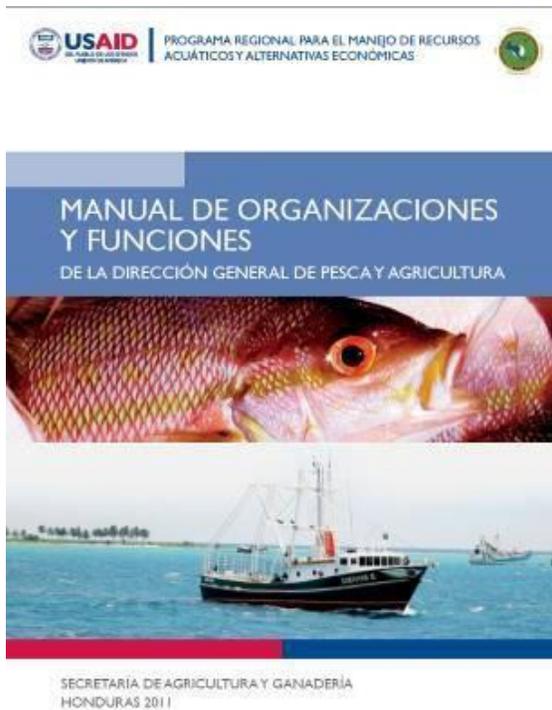
1. Regional appraisal of institutional capacities for compliance with laws connected with fishing and details of violation reporting mechanisms.
2. Partial baseline with records of violation reports and complaints from data provided by TIDE and SEA for Belize; FUNDAECO, FUNDARY and MARN, for Guatemala; and Fundación Cayos Cochinos for Honduras. General information on national records systems for all countries of the region is also available.

The pilot results will allow USAID/MAREA program to develop a conceptual proposal for a monitoring system which will serve to review the regional system actually in construction in partnership with OSPESCA.

KRA 1.4 Strengthen fisheries and environmental institutions and organizations on improved enforcement practices and rights-based, market-driven mechanisms.

Progress to date: USAID/MAREA has implemented a training strategy for carrying out specific actions according to priority themes at the program sites, such as institutional strengthening and best fishing practices. Specific trainings have been carryout on the following topics: Fisheries law in Belize and Honduras, management planning in Belize, Guatemala and Honduras, New fishing regulations in Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua, best fisheries practices and marine protected areas management in Nicaragua, Fisheries administration and procedures for Honduras, Right base lobster fisheries management in Honduras and Nicaragua among others. These activities benefit around 600 fisherman, non government and government staff.

KRA	Indicator		Goals	Life Of
			2010-2011	Program
KRA 1.4	1.4.1 Number of people from fisheries and environment governmental and non – governmental institutions trained	Proposal	600	1500
		Actual	918	918



To support institutional strengthening and government compliance with fishing regulations and norms, USAID/MAREA subcontractor WWF developed the manuals:

- “Best Fishing Practices,”
- “Procedural Handbook for Fishing,”
- “Inspectors handbook on Institutional Organization.”

These Guides are supporting institutional strengthening and transparency to fisheries governance. The manuals were presented at three specific workshops on the Honduran Miskito Coast and will be shared with the rest of the program sites in the following year.

USAID/MAREA provided financial support and technical assistance on fisheries management and economic alternatives for a workshop on the Caribbean Spiny Lobster Initiative (ILEC-GFA). The workshop focused on surveying different rights-based mechanisms as well as economic

alternatives for the prohibition on diving for spiny lobsters. This regulation will take effect as of 2013 and will affect some 4,000 divers operating on the Miskito Coast of Honduras and Nicaragua.

New development opportunities were explored and reviewed among 33 participants representing fisheries, environmental, development and education authorities, NGOs and fishermen, in alliance with MAPLESCA, during the Artisan Fisheries Workshop in the Costa Rica Caribbean coast at Puerto Limón, with the aim of improving the management of three USAID/MAREA target commercial marine species as are lobster, snapper and grouper, and the endangered species: Sea Turtles and Shark; which they are already implementing.

KRA 1.5 Foster research on Central American coastal management and fisheries

Progress to date: MAREA/USAID has prepared a draft for a regional research agenda based on the team experience and exchanges with key academic and research sound organizations. This will be validated, through a process designed in accordance with CCAD and OSPESCA. The Coastal and Marine topics in the agenda will be strongly based on the management questions identified by all seven countries. Eight documents have been drafted, prepared, and undergoing editing for its publication.

KRA	Indicator		Goals	Life Of
			2010-2011	Program
KRA 1.5	1.5.1 Number of regional mechanisms implemented to foster research and provide information to sustainably manage coastal and marine resources elaborated.	Proposal	1 CMRS + 3 MOU's	14
		Actual	1 CMRS-D, 3 MOU's	3
	1.5.2. Number of technical and scientific articles on coastal and marine resources	Proposal	8	30
		Actual	8	8

The national agendas common topics will serve to build the bases for the Central American region by merging these priorities with the draft already prepare by MAREA team. The regional agenda validation process will be built using the video conference systems in place at SICA. The strategy base on government regional priorities is expected to be owned and fully supported CCAD and OSPESCA which are key to achieve the expected implementation in practice.

To strengthen the strategy USAID/MAREA program will require inputs to the Academia and research organizations in the region. In order to do so agreements were signed with Akvaplan-Niva, MarFund, Coral and HRHP and agreements with CREDIA, STRI and IRBIO are under negotiation.

The following publications were drafted and prepared during the report period, and are undergoing a review to prior to selecting specific reports for digital or print publication:

1. Profile of the State of USAID/MAREA Target Species
2. Tourism Models for Sea Turtle Conservation
3. Queen Conch Management Plan
4. Nassau Grouper Management Plan
5. Climate Change Adaptation Plan in the Honduran, Belizean and Guatemalan Caribbean
6. Improvement in Green Turtle Fisheries Management in the Nicaraguan Caribbean
7. Handbook on the Organization and Functions of the General Fishing and Aquaculture Directorate of Honduras
8. Handbook for Fishing Inspectors, DIGEPESCA, Honduras
9. Good Fishing Practices for Caribbean Spiny Lobster (*Panulirus argus*)

Through the Scribd site, MAREA/USAID is currently sharing a total of 87 papers on topics related to the program. A total of 23.663 visitors and 133 followers in 46 countries, which also include all of the Central American countries (Figure 1). This site will have a virtual link with the USAID/MAREA web page.

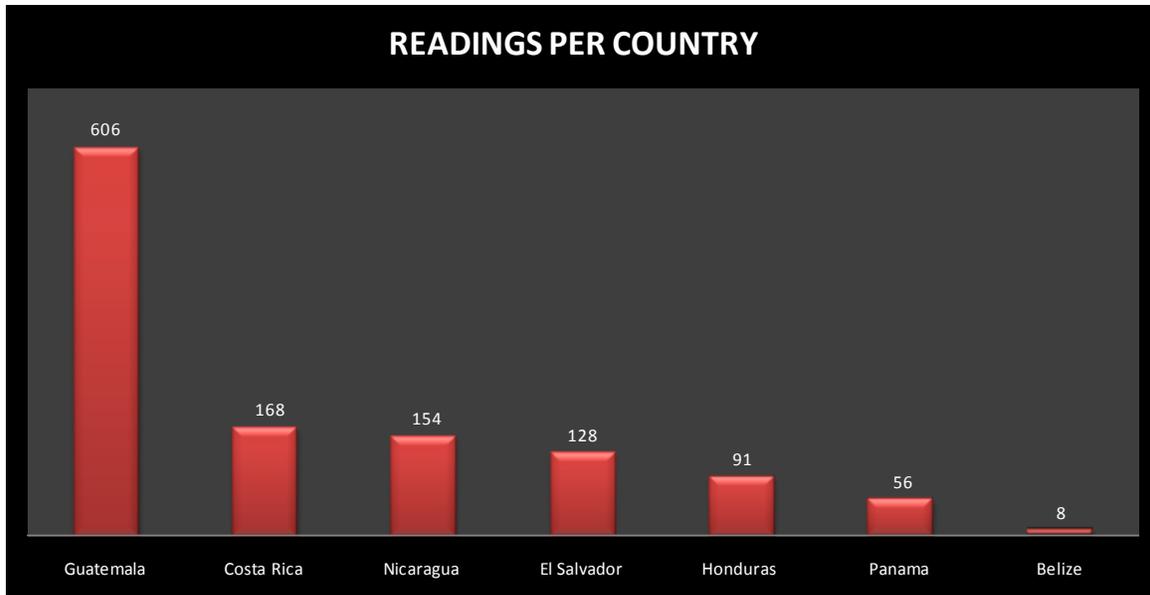


Figure 1. Number of readings per country for the Central American region
 Source: By authors based on data from http://es.scribd.com/pro_stats

KRA 1.6 Foster the adoption and implementation of multilateral environmental agreements in all non-member Central American countries

Progress to date: USAID/MAREA has facilitated the formation of a work panel for El Salvador’s adherence to the IAC with the participation of the Ministry of Foreign Relations, Ministry of Environment, CCAD, and the IAC Secretariat. The program supported Nicaragua’s participation in the 5th Conference of Parties on Sea Turtles in Bonaire. USAID/MAREA will support the Honduras and Guatemala National Sea Turtle Plans.

KRA	Indicator		Goals	Life Of
			2010-2011	Program
KRA 1.6	1.6.1. Number of countries adopting and implementing the Inter American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles or any other agreement among countries to protect target species.	Proposal	2 countries	5
		Actual	0	0



Meetings with different government agencies in El Salvador

Contacts and coordination with national authorities of El Salvador and Nicaragua.

USAID/MAREA supported the participation of a ministerial delegate from MARENA to participate in the 5th COP on Sea Turtles held in Bonaire, Dutch Antilles. This has opened channels for reactivating consideration of IAC ratification through a request and proposal submitted to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment in both countries.

The program established direct channels of communication with the respective authorities of the two countries and with the Convention Secretariat in Washington D.C. Within this framework,

USAID/MAREA is supporting El Salvador’s Foreign Affairs Ministry for a legal analysis to foster the country’s adherence to the IAC.

In coordination with the Convention Secretariat, Honduras and Guatemala were identified to support national strategy that includes compliance with the convention. The strategy will provide guidelines leading the way for its incorporation in other countries of the region.

Strategic Objective II: Encourage right and markets based mechanisms, as well as promote management incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of coastal-marine resources and priority marine coastal ecosystems in the region

B. KEY RESULTS AREAS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE II.

KRA 2.1 Train artisan and industrial fishermen on best fisheries practices, with emphasis on rights- and/or market-based approaches.

Progress to date: During this reporting period program finished assessing training needs in best practices for Central American fishing authorities, and identified the main themes related to regulation and harmonization: fishing effort, closed seasons, rights-based access mechanisms, and market and commercialization targeting.

KRA	Indicator		Goals	Life Of
			2010-2011	Program
KRA 2.1	2.1.1. Number of artisan and industrial fishermen trained on best fisheries practices, with emphasis on rights and / or market based mechanisms. (M/F/T)	Proposal	2000	5,000
		Actual	785	785

USAID/MAREA subcontractor WCS conducted a review and analysis of the Belizean Fishing Act using consultations with fishermen’s associations, processing and export cooperatives and direct users of the resources. Through this activity the program had the opportunity to train 150 users in rights-based access and ecosystem based fishing approaches.



Institutional strengthening for fisheries authorities in La Ceiba, Honduras

With the support and facilitation of subcontractor WWF, the program held workshops in Honduras in Tegucigalpa, the Miskito Coast and the Bay Islands (August 22, 25 and 26, respectively) to promote institutional strengthening and transparency among national institutions with jurisdiction over fisheries, especially with respect to Caribbean spiny lobster fishing. The workshops trained 146 participants (26% women and 74% men) including fishing authorities and participants from the naval forces, the private industrial and artisanal sector and NGOs.

Subcontractor TNC conducted a study on grouper and queen conch in the Gulf of Honduras. For this activity three national consultation workshops took place, in Belize, Guatemala and Honduras. TNC held a regional workshop in Honduras with the goal of consolidating information formulate harmonized management plans for these species in the Gulf of Honduras. Sixty-three people

participated in these activities, including scientists, fishery experts, direct users and representatives of fishery associations and processing plants.

The program provided financial support and technical assistance to organize a workshop on the Caribbean Spiny Lobster Initiative (ILEC-GFA), with 174 people attending: fishing authorities of Honduras and Nicaragua, the naval forces, members of the private industrial and artisan sector, NGOs and other members of civil society. The workshop focused on the ecosystem approach in fishing and rights-based access to fisheries, as well as development of economic alternatives to the scuba diving method in spiny lobster fishing.

Together with the Mangrove Corridor Project (Spain-SICA), USAID/MAREA trained 413 fishers in the Gulf of Fonseca area with special emphasis on the ecosystem approach, enabling fisheries management to be harmonized in the main fisheries. The training was key for the harmonization process and fisheries management at in the Gulf of Fonseca.



Three projects joined efforts to support the experience exchange among Bocas del Toro and GoF artisanal fishermen.

An interesting exchange – training tour took place between the Unión de Pescadores Artesanales de Bocatoreños UPESABO and Gulf of Fonseca fisheries communities. UPESABO is an organization founded in 1999 and to date has consolidated its experience in catch, collection and commercialization of its products through community work, successfully reducing intermediation. This has given the organization social and business credibility with its members, area authorities and consumers. UPESABO has made a commitment to the conservation and management of its main fishing species, for which ongoing training is provided to members.

The USAID/MAREA Regional Program arranged for three representatives of UPESABO, artisan to share their experiences with fisherman in the Gulf of Fonseca. Altogether 180 fishers and 50 technicians from the three countries participated in the entire event, surpassing the goal.

KRA 2.2 Pilot the use of individual transferable quotas or similar rights-based mechanisms

Progress to date; The Belize Fisheries Department, with support of USAID/MAREA and the technical advice from WCS, have finished the update of the Belize Fisheries Act, and rolled out a special license system and right based access management plan for Glover Reef from July 2011 on, for the establishment of a right-based lobster quota management. USAID/MAREA staff also met with Cayos Cochinos Foundation personnel, to discuss the implementation of rights-based fisheries mechanisms for spiny lobster, conch, and grouper, through the update of Cayos Cochinos' management plan in 2012. MAREA also had a meeting/workshop with the Fishing Authorities, Fisheries Associations and Fishermen from Honduras and Nicaragua to conduct a feasibility study for the implementation of rights-based mechanisms in the Miskito Coast, at the local, national and bi-national level.

KRA	Indicator		Goals 2010-2011	Life Of Program
KRA 2.2	2.2.1. Percentage increase of total harvest of select species under rights – based mechanisms and best fisheries practices	Proposal	5	25%
		Actual	0	0%
	2.2.2. Number of quotas established for the sustainable use of coastal and marine resources	Proposal	2	10
		Actual	1	1

USAID/MAREA subcontractor WCS continued work in monitoring, data collection and information necessary for determining catch quotas on Glover’s Reef. This will enable the use of special licenses or other type of permits ensuring rights-based access to lobster fisheries and scale species. Belize’s fishing authorities agreed to implement a catch quota licensing system for spiny lobster fishing in Glover’s Reef, which will benefit 35,000 hectares of territory through rights-based access.

USAID/MAREA and the Cayos Cochinos Foundation agreed to carry out a pilot project on rights-based fishing mechanisms for inclusion in the Cayos Cochinos marine protected area management plan. During year two of the program’s implementation, TNC will work on updating the Cayos Cochinos management plan and incorporate rights-based access mechanisms for this biologically important priority area within the Gulf of Honduras.

KRA 2.3 Increase the demand for products and services that provide conservation and sustainable use of coastal and marine resources.

Progress to date: MAREA/USAID successfully encouraged different user groups to employ best practices for sustainable management of coastal and marine resources, especially the endangered and commercially valuable species targeted by the program. The program designed and executed initial communication efforts with the goal of replicating them at other sites at the national and regional level. Outreach to different user groups is generating opportunity to achieve the program goal of increasing demand for sustainable products and sustainably produced services.

KRA	Indicator	Goals		
		2010-2011	Life Of Program	
KRA 2.3	2.3.1. Number of communications efforts	Proposal	15	40
		Actual	10	5

With the formulation of the USAID/MAREA Regional Program communication strategy, identified lines of approach for the design and execution of communication efforts for each USAID/MAREA theme.

Solimar prepared the following communication efforts in line with USAID branding and marking regulations: Visitor Regulations, Sea Turtle Visitation, Responsible Seafood, Lionfish Reduction and Sea Turtle Egg Consumption MAREA Communication specialist will follow up to ensure sustainability of this effort by replication with other local organizations.



Code of conduct posters for tourists visitors were placed on boats at Bocas del Toro

As an initial step, Solimar adapted the code of conduct for reef visitors (Tourism Regulations communication effort) and sea turtle nesting beach tourism communication effort for launch in Bocas del Toro, Panama. Activities included a 400-person parade of schoolchildren and teachers, citizens and regional, national and local authorities; the presentation of a play entitled “Let’s Save the Seven Species”; a public ceremony; and a nocturnal visit the Playa Bluff sea turtle nesting site to observe nesting

leatherback and hawksbill turtles.

The program, through Solimar, produced a series of posters and signs on the reef visitor code of conduct and placed the posters at key points on docks and boats. Three boat operators associations are participating in this ongoing effort. This communication effort is expected to impact an estimated 48,000 visitors a year in the local tourism market and generate revenues of approximately US\$1,000,000 a year, a factor to consider in designing sustainable tourism plans.

Solimar also conducted two market studies for Cahuita Bocas del Toro and Islas de la Bahia on investment opportunities for enterprises that are implementing sustainable tourism best practices, as well as, designed a communication effort for Islas de la Bahia to encourage responsible Seafood consumption practices.



Bluff beach in Bocas – Cahuita, a nesting site for leatherback and hawksbill turtles.

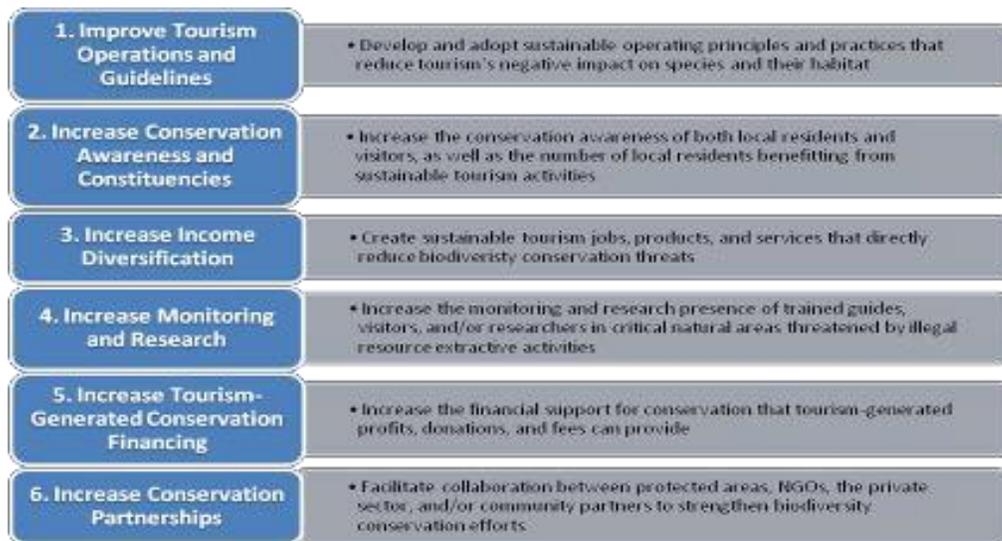
Supported by STC, local communities of Playa Bluff, Bocas del Toro, are implementing the “Sea Turtle Tourism Mitigation rules for visiting sea turtle nesting beaches”. This activity affects the management of 4 km of beach where approximately 300 leatherback and 100 hawksbill turtle nesting occur annually. Additionally, subcontractor WIDECAS is helping the program to improve a community-managed tourism enterprise that currently generates around US\$12,000 annually, but has potential to generate ten times more with the right promotion, management and planning.

Highlights among the efforts carried out include the following results:

1. **Market Study for Sustainable Tourism in the Bay Islands and the Mosquitia.** Prepared through Solimar. These two reports provide basic information for next fiscal year NATGeo activities, expected to promote a visitation increase, and support approximately 200 small and medium enterprisers in both Bocas del Toro and Bay Island.
2. **“Responsible Seafood Consumption Communication effort”.** Through Solimar USAID/MAREA program designed two communication efforts; one to support local organizations like CORAL, Roatan Marine Park and Bay Island Conservation Association, in Bay Islands, and one in Bocas del Toro. These communication efforts are expected to impact at least 6,000 visitors in Bay Islands, and at least 20,000 visitors in Bocas del Toro.
3. **“Code of Conduct for Boat operation Awareness communication effort” in Costa Rica.** A hundred people participated in the launch event hosted by the program through subcontractor Solimar. Twenty boat drivers belonging to three local associations and two private companies were included in the implementation stage. The communication effort is expected to impact some 20,000 visitors a year whose visits generate approximately US\$400,000 in tourism revenues.

More than 2,000 people from the countries comprising Gulf of Fonseca, participated in the 2nd. Hawksbill Turtle Festival, arranged by the Eastern Pacific Hawksbill Initiative ICAPO, with USAID/MAREA support, in Estero Padre Ramos, Nicaragua, one of the program’s site that together with Jiquilisco Bay in El Salvador, are the most important nesting beaches in the whole tropical Pacific coast, being the objectives to highlight sustainable tourism and optimize technical and financial resources by raising public awareness on the importance of the hawksbill turtle conservation by means of environmental education, expositions, drama, parades, dancing, singing and other artistic popular expression.

Tourism Conservation Models



The program produced the following communication tools:

- a) Descriptive pamphlet about USAID/MAREA in Spanish and English
- b) Executive summary of the program and its operational plan for 2011-2012
- c) Monthly digital information bulletin
- d) Electronic banner for news bullets
- e) Publications guide designed within the program and shared with the program's regional team. This handbook contains the classification and design of USAID/MAREA scientific, technical and training publications to guide document production both in and outside the program.
- f) Terms of Reference were prepared for creation of the USAID/MAREA web page.

Besides these tools to disseminate information on program processes and results, the program developed an intranet for use by the implementation team. This internal tool allows all regional and central office staff to monitor and share all the monthly, quarterly and annual reports, as well as maps, pictures, and documents.

The program created eight maps depicting the program site and regional interactions related to protected areas, ecosystem species habitats. This annual report includes some of these maps.

KRA 2.4 Draft/update and implement model plans and programs for recovery of endangered species and their ecosystems that promote sustainable economic development for local communities

Progress to date: USAID/MAREA facilitated the identification, formulation and implementation of 10 economic activities in the Gulf of Fonseca and Cahuita-Bocas del Toro, engaging and directly benefiting more than 550 families. These pilot plans include new fishing techniques, protection of endangered species such as sea turtles and greater value added for fishery products.

During the program's first year, subcontractor TNC finalized the preparation of Nassau grouper and queen conch recovery plans for the Gulf of Honduras. With STC and WIDECAS, the program protected approximately 6,040 leatherback turtle nests and 1,351 hawksbill turtle nests on different beaches at the Cahuita-Bocas del Toro binational site. This effort took place through the establishment of public-private partnerships. In the final quarter subcontractor ICAPO initiated hawksbill turtle protection and monitoring activities were also initiated in the Gulf of Fonseca.

KRA	Indicator		Goals	Life Of Program
			2010-2011	
KRA 2.4	2.4.1. Number of model plans and programs drafted or updated and implemented for coastal and marine resource management	Proposal	8	18
		Actual	3	3
	2.4.2. Value (USD) of additional sales of products or services that can be directly attributed to the activity interventions and which support conservation and / or sustainable use efforts.	Proposal	1M	7M
		Actual	0	0
	2.4.3 Number of sea turtle hatchlings protected and released.	Proposal	200,000	1,500,000
		Actual	200,000	200,000

Model plans or programs for management of coastal and marine resources. With the support of subcontractor Solimar, the program developed a Guideline for tourism based on Sea Turtle conservation, consisting of a compendium of good practices of conservation, marine protected areas and species management combined with sustainable community tourism. The guide documents six conceptual models, 16 strategies and 12 case studies illustrating friendly practices as the consequence of two important events:

Results of a bi-national workshop in Bocas del Toro-Cahuita with nine conservation organizations and technical authorities of Panama and Costa Rica organized by USAID/MAREA.

Results of an international sea turtle symposium held in San Diego, California



National Consultation Workshop on Nassau Grouper and Queen conch in Belize

The guideline consists of a set of planning instruments for the development of community tourism enterprises. It is intended for electronic dissemination throughout the region as a planning tool to benefit more than 100 organizations, entities or conservation projects, community organizations, protected areas administrators, tourism businesses and the private sector.

Plans for Nassau grouper and Queen conch recovery. TNC with support from TRIGOH, artisan fishers' organizations, authorities of the three Gulf of Honduras countries and USAID/MAREA completed the Nassau

grouper and Queen conch recovery plans for the Gulf of Honduras site. As a first step the program conducted an appraisal of current populations and fishing practices of these two species, and then assessments were made of: (a) social and economic conditions of fishers depending on these species; (b) legislation and regulations; (c) conservation efforts and (d) case studies on management and conservation. The program presented findings to scientists, experts, officials and community representatives at three national workshops in Belize, Guatemala and Honduras. TNC used participants' recommendations to formulate management and recovery plans, which in turn were discussed and validated by 30 participants from the three countries at a regional workshop.

Main measures proposed for grouper recovery include: (a) harmonization of the closed season from December 1st to March 30th, (b) ban on fishing in spawning aggregation sites and (c) regulations on maximum and minimum sizes for Queen conch, the plan includes recommendations for a temporary closed season and permanent ban in specific areas.

Economic alternatives: In alliance and coordination with CENPROMYPE/SIECA, through a short-term consultation USAID/MAREA assisted nine fishing communities to identify, formulate and approve business plans as economic alternatives in the Gulf of Fonseca. The projects financed include the incorporation of new fishing techniques, greater value for fishery products and protection for endangered species associated with the fishery, such as sea turtles. The implementation of these plans engages 390 families directly and more than 1,400 indirectly, with additional income on the order of an estimated US\$355,000.



In Almirante, Bocas del Toro, USAID/MAREA completed drafting a pilot project with the Union of Bocas del Toro Boat Drivers (157 members), for sustainable mariculture in Bahía de Almirante. The project has been accepted for financing by the GEF Small Grants program in Panama.

Additionally, USAID/MAREA initiated documentation of a portfolio of profiles and projects for two sites, Gulf of Honduras and Miskito Coast. According to preliminary projections this is expected to benefit more than 1,400 families directly and over 4,500 indirectly. An investment of some US\$2.5 million will be required to complete and implement this project portfolio, which will help generate an estimated US\$2 million in additional sales of products and services at the program sites.

Sea turtles. In March 2011, USAID/MAREA, through subcontractor STC, initiated protection and monitoring of leatherback and hawksbill nests at Chiriquí, Roja, Veraguas and Bluff beaches in Panama. In FY2011 the program strengthened a work alliance with the Ngobe Bugle indigenous territory, resulting in greater participation and local ownership of beach management and protection efforts.

In June 2011, USAID/MAREA contracted WIDECASST to complete the bi-national protection effort that included the beaches of Moín, Matina and Cahuita in Costa Rica, as well as the San San Pon Sac beach in Panama. WIDECASST has implemented protection of nests and hatchlings, application of climate change adaptation measures at nesting beaches and begun the generation of economic alternatives (sustainable tourism and craft work) related to sea turtles.

Through program efforts a total of 7,401 nests of endangered sea turtles were protected, corresponding to the following species: Leatherback turtles (6,040 nests); Hawksbill turtles (1,551 nests) and Green turtles (10 nests). Hatchlings from the nests have not yet been counted in their entirety but the following numbers are projected: 314,080 Leatherback hatchlings, 183,736 Hawksbill hatchlings and 575 Green hatchlings for a total of 497,816 protected hatchlings up to September 2011. Technical staff anticipates fifty percent successful eclosion for the three species.

In June through ICAPO, USAID/MAREA began hawksbill monitoring activities in the Gulf of Fonseca. Similarly, this effort combines nesting beach protection in the Bay of Jiquilisco in El Salvador and Estero Padre Ramos in Nicaragua, with the development of economic alternatives

through a program of scientific volunteers and the provision of tourism services by the communities. As initial results, the Hawksbill Conservation Committee has been organized in Padre Ramos Nature Reserve, comprised of USAID/MARENA and local and community organizations. At the end of the 2011 season (September) in the program expects to protect a total of 600 hawksbill nests, which represents the largest nesting of hawksbill turtles in the entire tropical western Pacific reported to date.

KRA 2.5 Foster the establishment of public-private alliances and partnerships to leverage funds for conservation and sustainable harvest practices.

Progress to date: USAID/MARENA leveraged \$ 648,577 to implement its activities in alliance and cooperation with regional and national entities, which include Spanish, Italian and Austrian development agencies, the United Nations Development Program, the Small Grants Program, the Central American Bank for Economic Integration and the Inter-American Development Bank.

KRA	Indicator		Goals	Life Of
			2010-2011	Program
KRA 2.5	2.5.1. Value (USD) of non-USG financed conservation efforts leveraged, payment for environmental services, or additional revenues provided for conservation by governments and the private sector	Proposal	500,000	5M
		Actual	648,577	648,577

USAID/MARENA contacted the BCIE-CAMBio project in Nicaragua, which manages a portfolio of projects that can receive funds to diversify production, and which has been opened to establish priorities with the private industrial sector of the country. The purpose is to facilitate access to financing for economic alternatives to scuba diving techniques for lobster fishing and to aid in the economic diving to other alternatives.

USAID/MARENA forged alliances with 10 initiatives and entities to coordinate institutional efforts and leverage financial resources for training and productive activities (Annex C).

A partnership with the SICA-Spain Mangrove Corridor Project and the AECID Fishery Development Project in Honduras leveraged US\$45,800 in the Gulf of Fonseca, which resulted in investments in trainings for artisan fisherman’s organizations, With CENTROMYPE/SIECA’s DELMYPE project the program developed nine business plans which resulted in leveraging of US\$463,000.



Work meeting with representatives of the CISP Project in Pto. Barrios.

In the Gulf of Honduras, the program signed MOUs with CORAL, CISP and FONDOSAM to coordinate efforts related to institutional operation, implementation of awareness-raising campaigns and joint fundraising for productive projects at the site.

On the Miskito Coast, the program signed an agreement with UNDP through the Mosquitia Biodiversity Project in Honduras. The program is coordinating identification and implementation of economic alternative projects on behalf of divers who engage in scuba diving for lobsters.

In Cahuita-Bocas del Toro the program coordinated with the Small Grants Program of the Global Environment Facility (GEF SGP), Panama, to provide technical and financial assistance for organizations at the site. USAID/MARENA drafted a project proposal for sustainable mariculture

with fishermen in Bahía de Almirante (UPESABO). The proposal has been received by GEF SGP, signifying leveraging of US\$51,875 to implement the plan.

The alliance with BCIE’s CAMBio project combines USAID/MAREA’s capacities to organize fishermen’s groups, identify and formulate economic development proposals, provide technical assistance and formulate bankable sustainable projects, thereby increasing revenues and improving living conditions for the communities through access to credit lines. More than 2,000 families are expected to benefit directly and more than 10,000 indirectly. As negotiation tool USAID/MAREA will present to different potential donors project proposals portfolio for all MAREA sites.

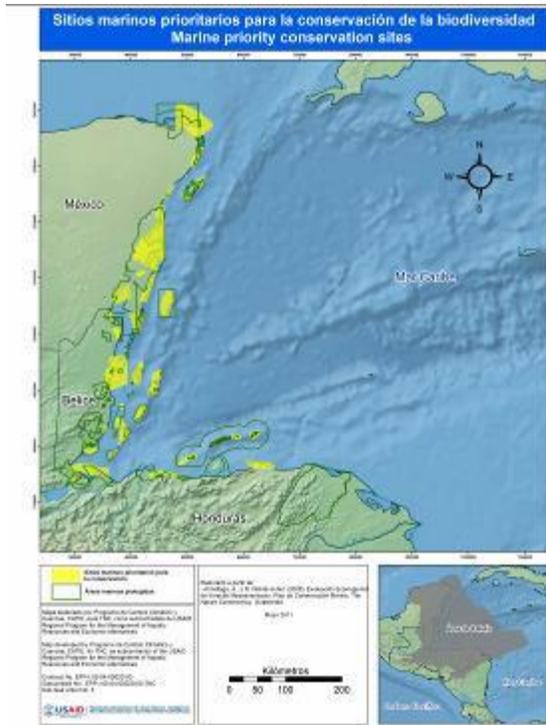
Another regional agreement in development will be with IADB through the NatGeo initiative, facilitated by subcontractor SOLIMAR International. A regional virtual marketing platform will be implemented to promote tourism destinations employing best management practices linked with sustainable tourism. More than 200 small and medium enterprises in the region are expected to engage and financially benefit from this initiative. IADB has committed co financial resources to implement the NatGeo platform.

KRA 2.6 Promote coastal and marine protected areas management as an important tool for sustainable fisheries and tourism

Progress to date: USAID/MAREA, supported by subcontractor TNC, completed a vulnerability assessment and climate change adaptation plan for the coast of Belize and the Guatemala and Honduras Caribbean. Adaptation measures were then identified for five sites with biological significance in the Gulf of Honduras. Additionally, the program implemented a special licensing system Glover’s Reef Marine Reserve in Belize, giving fishermen greater participation and responsibility in management of fishery resources. Altogether, the program implemented management improvement actions over approximately 700,000 hectares.

KRA	Indicator		Goals	Life Of Program
			2010-2011	
KRA 2.6	2.6.1 Number of hectares in areas of biological significance under improved management as a result of USG assistance.	Proposal	150,000	1,200,000 Ha
		Actual	35,000	35,000
	2.6.2 Number of fishery groups complying with protected areas management plans	Proposal	3	15
		Actual	2	2

Prioritization of sites with biological significance: USAID/MAREA identified and prioritized sites with biological significance in the region on the basis of eco-regional assessments and national marine gaps analyses. The program selected sixteen sites as the focus of program efforts toward improved management. Based on inputs from TNC, the program will concentrate efforts to increasing the number of hectares under protection or considered in sustainable management plans. Maculís, on the Gulf of Fonseca, was identified by another USAID-financed project as having biological significance. Maculís and other areas will be assessed and prioritized according to the initial list of areas of biological importance.



The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of Nicaragua (MARENA) has asked USAID/MAREA to support a review of the limits and zoning of the 85,000 ha Cayos Misquitos Biosphere Reserve in accordance with its uses.

Climate change vulnerability assessments and adaptation plans

Through TNC and with the participation of TRIGOH member organizations, USAID/MAREA conducted a climate change vulnerability assessment for the entire coast of Belize and the Guatemalan and Honduran Caribbean. Based on this information, the program drafted an adaptation plan for the main coastal and marine ecosystems (mangroves and coral reefs), USAID/MAREA target species, and community productive economic activities with an emphasis on fishing. The program formulated specific strategic actions to increase resilience to

climate change effects for five areas of biological importance (Glover’s Reef Marine Reserve, Port Honduras Marine Reserve, Punta de Manabique Wildlife Refuge, Cayos Cochinos National Monument and Bay Islands National Marine Park).

Co-Management mechanisms in Glover’s Reef and Bay Islands

With USAID/MAREA support and the endorsement of the Belize Fishing Department, WCS designed and implemented a special catch quota licensing system for Glover’s Reef. With this system, fishermen’s rights-based access to the fisheries can be established while also giving them greater responsibilities in control, monitoring and patrolling of the marine reserve resources. Details can be found in KRA 2.2.

Through TNC, USAID/MAREA is supporting the Forest Conservation and Protected Areas Institute (ICF) in the formation of 12 consultative councils for the recently created Bay Islands National Marine Park in Honduras. These councils will serve as the main mechanisms for local participation in decision-making about the protected area’s management, and in upcoming months they will also take an active part in drafting the park’s first management plan.

SECTION III: PERFORMANCE MONITORING PLAN

The Performance Monitoring Plan was designed and approved by USAID during project start-up. As the project has progressed, the technical staff in consultation with the Contracting Officer's Technical Representative explored modifications to the plan to better reflect the project's goals and opportunities given the socio-economic context.

The plan is a collective construction by members of the work team, facilitated by the M&E specialist, and approved by the USAID/MAREA COTR. Over the year efforts have been made to improve information-sharing systems to prepare the monthly, quarterly and annual reports required of the team.

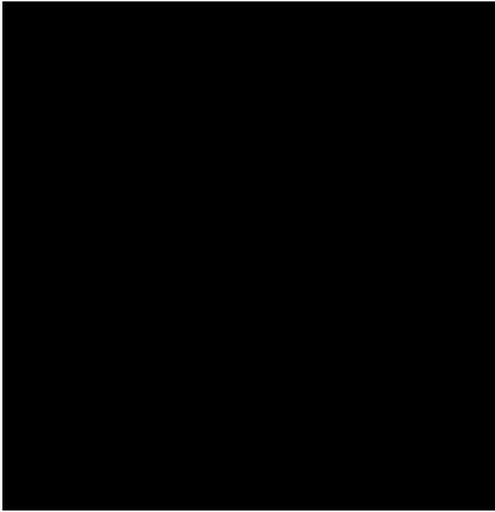
The greatest effect of the actual political context is on goals related to leveraging funds and activities aimed at improving revenues for local coastal communities. Moreover, for some indicators proposed annual targets have been surpassed due to the capacity of program partners to perceive and seize opportunities for implementing activities.

The internet is being used as a practical information-sharing mechanism providing access to the different periodic reports on the program and to document progress toward its goals. In addition, information gathering by all of the team specialists has been strengthened, and work has focused on defining the results chains and intermediary products and documenting progress based on program indicators. Advances can be seen in the summary in the annex that follows.

ANNEX A Summary of PMP Indicators

KRA	Indicator		Goals	Life Of Project
			2010-2011	
KRA 1.1	1.1.1 Number of coastal and marine resources conservation and sustainable use policies and legislation drafted and presented	Proposal	5	20
		Actual	5	
KRA 1.2	1.2.1 Number of coastal and marine resources law monitoring and enforcement strategies drafted and implemented	Proposal	1	5
		Actual	1	
KRA 1.3	1.3.1 Trend in reporting target species related violations	Proposal	0	3
		Actual	0	
	1.3.2. Increased effectiveness in processing target species related violations	Proposal	0	3
		Actual	0	
KRA 1.4	1.4.1 Number of people from fisheries and environment governmental and non – governmental institutions trained	Proposal	600	1500
		Actual	918	918
KRA 1.5	1.5.1 Number of regional mechanisms implemented to foster research and provide information to sustainably manage coastal and marine resources elaborated.	Proposal	1 CMRS + 3 MOU's	14
		Actual	1 CMRS-D, 3 MOU's	3
	1.5.2. Number of technical and scientific articles on coastal and marine resources	Proposal	8	30
		Actual	8	8
KRA 1.6	1.6.1. Number of countries adopting and implementing the Inter American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles or any other agreement among countries to protect target species.	Proposal	2 countries	5
		Actual	0	0
KRA 2.1	2.1.1. Number of artisan and industrial fishermen trained on best fisheries practices, with emphasis on rights and / or market based mechanisms. (M/F/T)	Proposal	2000	5,000
		Actual	785	785
KRA 2.2	2.2.1. Percentage increase of total harvest of select species under rights – based mechanisms and best fisheries practices	Proposal	5	25%
		Actual	0	0%
	2.2.2. Number of quotas established for the sustainable use of coastal and marine resources	Proposal	2	10
		Actual	1	1
KRA 2.3	2.3.1. Number of communications efforts	Proposal	15	40
		Actual	5	5
KRA 2.4	2.4.1. Number of model plans and programs drafted or updated and implemented for coastal and marine resource management	Proposal	8	18
		Actual	3	3
	2.4.2. Value (USD) of additional sales of products or services that can be directly attributed to the activity interventions and which support conservation and / or sustainable use efforts.	Proposal	1M	7M
		Actual	0	0
	2.4.3 Number of sea turtle hatchlings protected and released.	Proposal	200,000	1,500,000
		Actual	200,000	200,000
KRA 2.5	2.5.1. Value (USD) of non-USG financed conservation efforts leveraged, payment for environmental services, or additional revenues provided for conservation by governments and the private sector	Proposal	500,000	5M
		Actual	648,577	648,577
KRA 2.6	2.6.1 Number of hectares in areas of biological significance under improved management as a result of USG assistance.	Proposal	150,000	1,200,000 Ha
		Actual	35,000	35,000
	2.6.2 Number of fishery groups complying with protected areas management plans	Proposal	3	15
		Actual	2	2

ANNEX B Financial Summary



***Estimate**



ANEXO C. MOU'S FIRMADOS CON ORGANIZACIONES CLAVE

Nombre organización	Representante Legal	Enlace	Tema de colaboración	Tipo de Documento	Fecha de suscripción o programada
1. MOU con Proyecto Trinacional Corredor del Mangle – Golfo de Fonseca	Roberto Rodríguez	Edgar Herrera Scott	Espacio compartido para oficinas Líneas de trabajo conjuntas	Carta de Entendimiento	Noviembre 2010
2. PNUD Fondos GEF, Tegucigalpa, Honduras		Luigi Loddo	Alternativas económicas sostenibles Diseño de un programa productivo para la Costa Moskitia. Compartir oficinas en Pto. Lempira	Acuerdo de intenciones	10 de febrero 2011
3. OSPESCA/CCAD/USAID	Mario González Néstor Windevoxhel	Carlos Roberto Hasbún	Implementación de todo el programa regional	Memorandum de Entendimiento	24 de Junio 2011
4. Coral Reef Alliance CORAL, Roatán, Honduras	Rick MacPherson	Jenny Myton	Coordinación de esfuerzos en Islas de la Bahía.	Acuerdo de intenciones	10 de mayo 2011
5. AKVAPLAN-NIVA	Anton A. Giaever	Héctor Andrade	Apoyo para desarrollar investigaciones marino costeras. Empleo de información para la toma de decisiones	Memorando de Entendimiento	Enero 2011
6. Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli CISP- Guatemala/ Asociación Programa de Gestión Ambiental Local ASOPROGAL	Melvyn Teni/Eugenia Juarez Xol		Asistencia y apoyo para alternativas productivas l Golfo de Honduras.	Carta de Intenciones	Mayo 2011
7. Fondo para el Sistema Arrecifal Mesoamericano	Lorenzo Rosenzweig Pasquel	María José González Fuster	Colaboración para la recaudación de fondos. Zona Marino Costera del GOH	Convenio Marco de Cooperación Institucional	Enero 2011

Nombre organización	Representante Legal	Enlace	Tema de colaboración	Tipo de Documento	Fecha de suscripción o programada
8. Proyecto CAMBIO BCIE – SICA	Vicepresidente del Banco	Yuri Zenteno	Asistencia técnica y financiamiento planes de negocios	Acuerdo Marco	20 de Julio 2011
9. Proyecto Desarrollo Pesquero en el Golfo de Fonseca PDPGF – AECID Hd.	Carlos Andara Néstor Windevoxhel	Carlos Andara	Conservación y manejo de recursos marino costeros zona costera de Honduras	Carta de Intenciones	17 Junio 2011
10. DELMYPE-SICA Cooperación austriaca, San Salvador, El Salvador	Ingrid Figueroa de Santa María	Salvador Martínez	Creación de Capacidades Locales	Memorandum de Entendimiento	Septiembre 2011