



Implementation of VCs- Towards the achievement of SDG14: Experiences and Lessons

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Economy and Civil Aviation
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Belize update – Implementation of Voluntary Commitments



1. Promote and improve the legal framework for the management of fisheries / marine resources in Belize in consultation with stakeholders

- a) Endorsement and implementation of new Fisheries Bill
- b) Development and implementation of national fisheries policy
- c) Update the Coastal Zone Management Amendment Act and Regulations
- d) Implement an Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan (ICZM)
- e) Development and implementation of a national / sub regional strategy to effectively combat IUU fishing

2. Promote measures to improve management and resiliency of fisheries / marine resources

- a) Develop and implement adaptive management plans for Queen conch, Caribbean spiny lobster & finfish
- b) Expansion of replenishment zone from 3% to 10% of national waters
- c) Adopt and implement FAO Voluntary Guidelines for sustainable small-scale fisheries
- d) Set catch limits for Caribbean spiny lobster
- e) Develop a climate resilience strategy for coastal zone

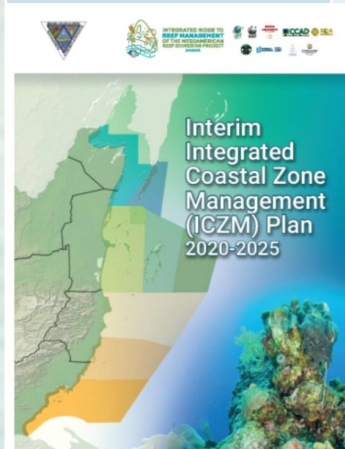
3. Increase economic benefits to fishers through the sustainable management of fisheries resources in Belize

- a) Support the adoption of a fisheries sustainability certification program (e.g. Fish Right, Eat Right)
- b) Develop new fisheries products/value added products
- c) Support access to new and higher value markets
- d) Develop policy for sustainable seaweed aquaculture
- e) Develop and implement best practices for sustainable seaweed farming

Belize Update - Implementation of Voluntary Commitments



Theme	Voluntary Commitments	Update on Implementation
1.	a) Endorsement and implementation of new Fisheries Bill	A revised Fisheries Act was endorsed in 2020 - 'Fisheries Resources Act No. 7 of 2020.
	b) Development and implementation of national fisheries policy	In December 2019, the National Fisheries Policy, Strategy and Action Plan (5 years plan 2020-2024) was finalized and approved.
	c) Update the Coastal Zone Management Amendment Act and Regulations	The CZMAI is currently in the process of hiring a consultant to update the legislative framework. This is being funded under the Government Strategic Allocation through the Blue Bonds financing.
	e) Development and implementation of a national / sub regional strategy to effectively combat IUU fishing	2014 National Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate, Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing on the High Seas. - mostly design for the high seas registered vessel. The Fisheries Department is currently working in developing the National Plan of Action for IUU fishing for its domestic fisheries. Done in partnership with the CRFM and is expected to be completed in 2024.
	d) Implement an Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan (ICZM)	ICZM Plan 2016 implemented. An interim ICZM Plan 2020-2025 developed





Belize Blue Bond for Ocean Conservation



NOV. 4 2021

Gov. signed a debt-for-nature swap with
TNC/BBICL = Blue Bond Agreement



**TWO PARTS TO THE
SIGNED AGREEMENT**

Blue Loan Agreement (BLA)

The Conservation Funding Agreement
(CFA)

**ESTABLISHMENT OF A
NEW CONSERVATION
FUND**

To distribute funding received from the
blue bonds financing.



BLUE LOAN AGREEMENT (BLA)

Enables Belize to lower its overall sovereign debt through the restructuring of the "super bond"

CONSERVATION FUNDING AGREEMENT (CFA)

Stipulates the use of savings from debt servicing to achieve agreed-upon conservation commitments.

Funds are to be invested will be managed through the establishment of a new fund for Belize.

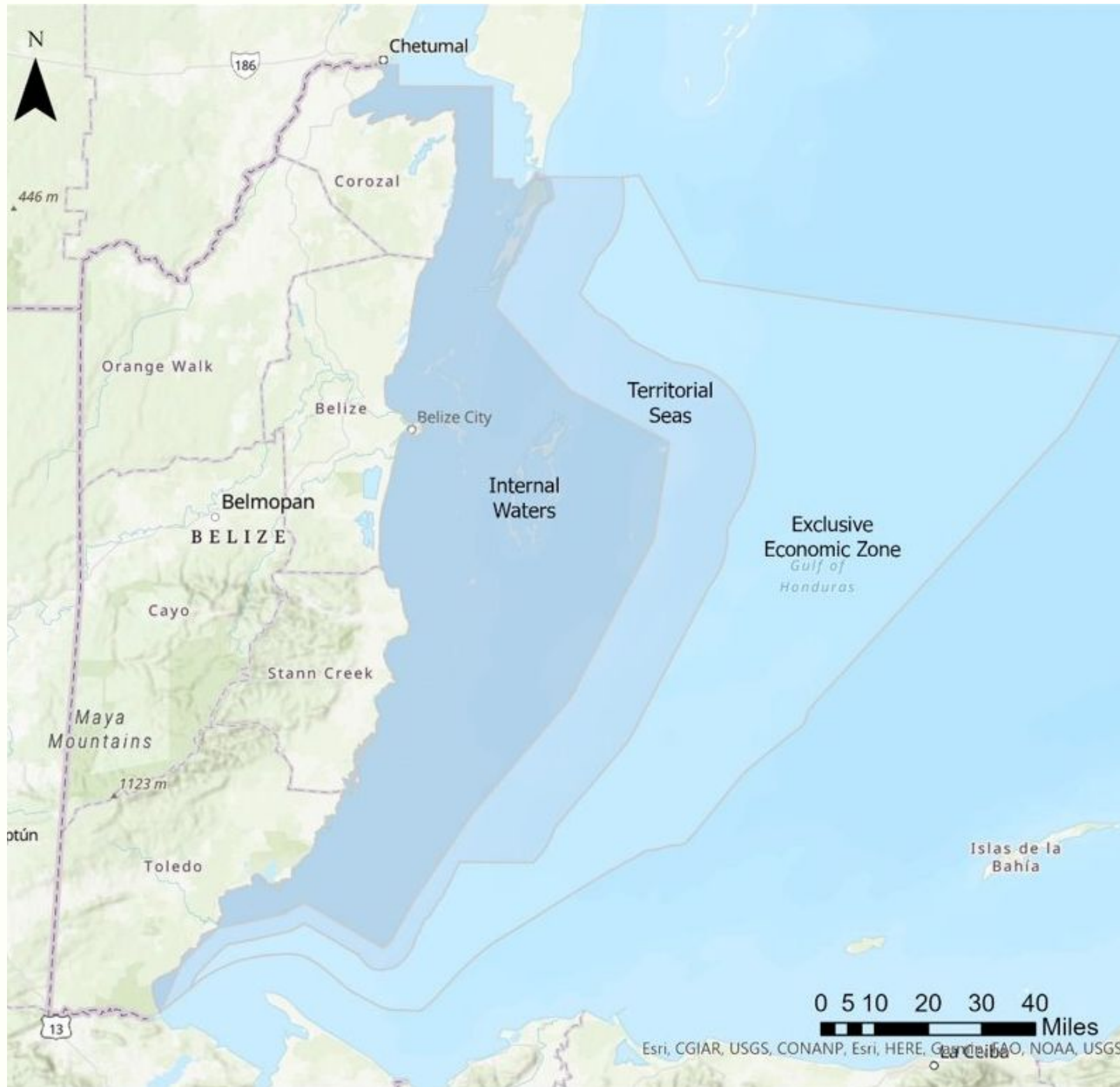
MOU – WWF, TNC and GoB

To work together in good faith and expeditiously on a collaboration to align the Belize blue bonds for ocean conservation program and the Project Finance for Permanence initiatives, specifically by coordinating efforts in planning the key conservation activities that are to be performed as part of the initiatives.

One of the key commitments of the Blue Bond Agreement is the

DELIVERY OF THE MARINE SPATIAL PLAN

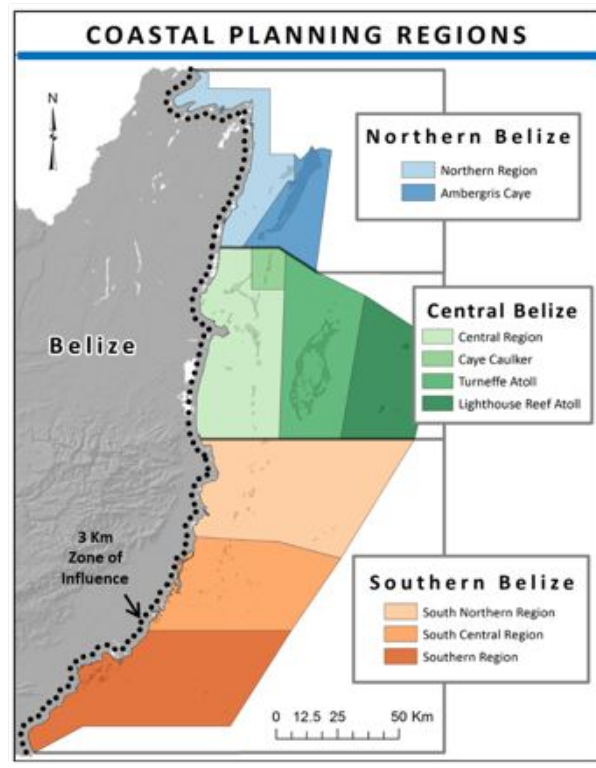
- Legally enforceable and provides guidance on the best use of space for activities.
- Facilitate the expansion of areas under biodiversity protection up to 9.5%.





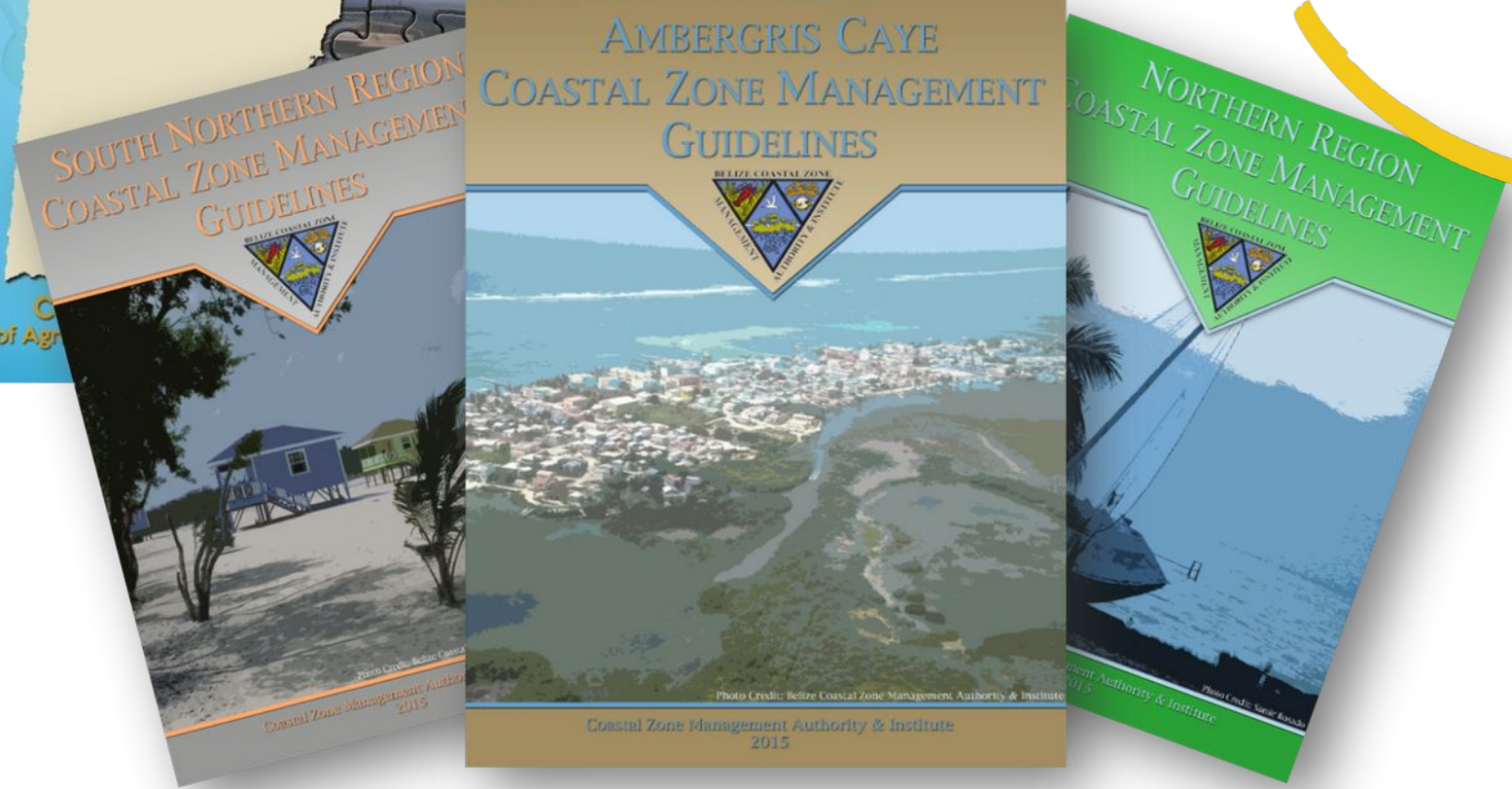
Belize Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan 2016

"Promoting the Wise, Planned Use of Belize's Coastal Resources."



Links between MSP & ICZM Plan

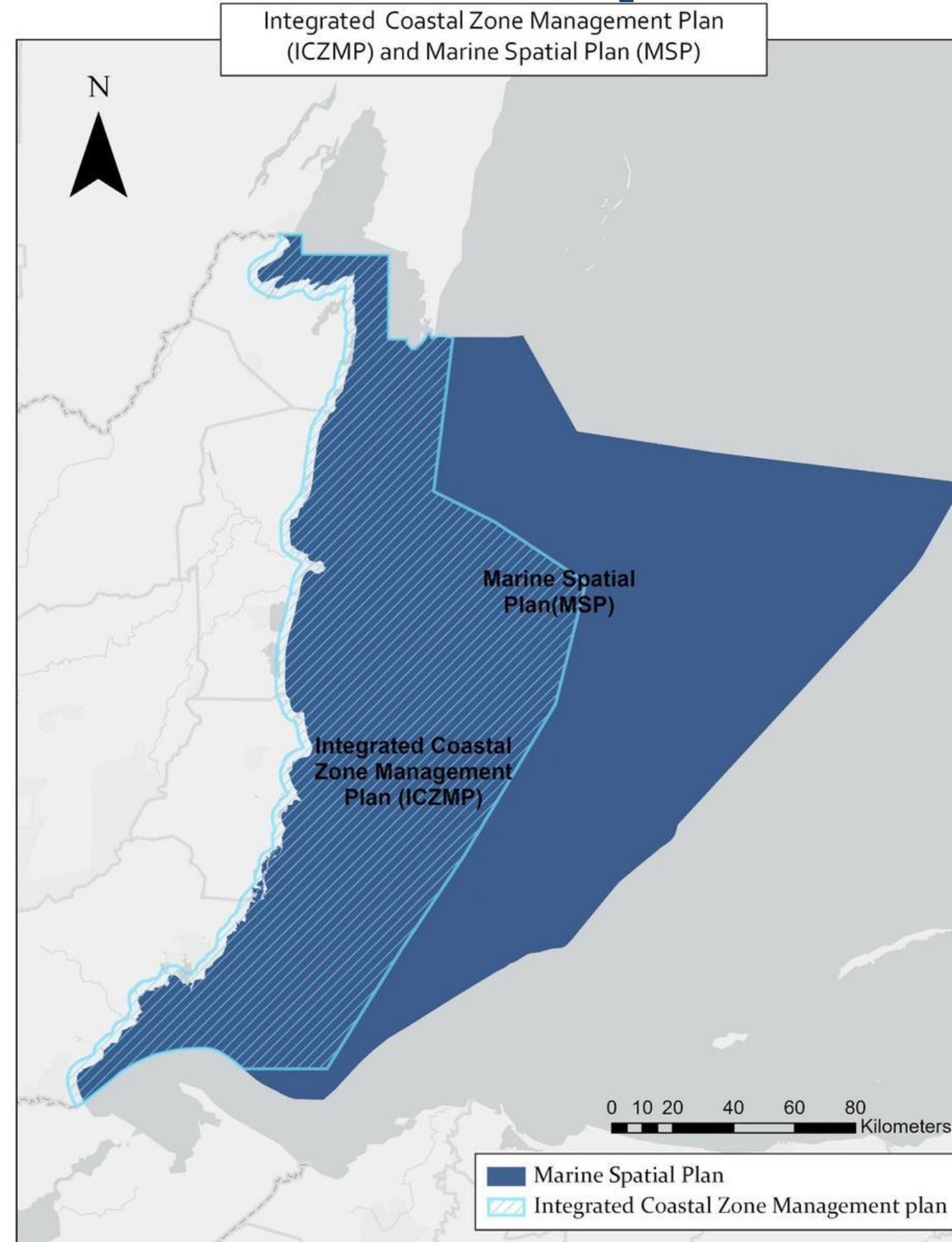
MSP is not new to Belize!



BELIZE ICZM PLAN 2016

- Scope: Territorial seas and internal waters
- Focused on current activities already taking place within Belize's ocean space.
- Aim is to reduce threats to sensitive habitats; corals, seagrass beds, and mangroves.

ICZM Plan & MSP Scope



BELIZE SUSTAINABLE OCEAN PLAN 2026

- Scope: All of Belize's ocean space, including its Exclusive Economic Zone
- Considers both current and potential activities that can become a part of a thriving Blue Economy.
- Aims to increasing biodiversity protection within our blue space as well as bolster existing protected areas system.



INTEGRATED RIDGE TO
REEF MANAGEMENT
OF THE MesoAMERICAN
REEF BIOSPHERE PROJECT
IMRRMP



Belize Update - Implementation of Voluntary Commitments



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2.	<p>a) Develop and implement adaptive management plans for Queen conch, Caribbean spiny lobster & finfish</p> <p>b) Expansion of replenishment zone from 3% to 10% of national waters</p> <p>c) Adopt and implement FAO Voluntary Guidelines for sustainable small-scale fisheries</p>	<p>Delivered</p> <p>November 4, 2021, the Government signed a debt-for-nature swap with TNC/BBICL named the Blue Bond Agreement. This agreement has several conservation commitments. Through these commitments, Belize has presently protected 20.3% of its Ocean space and accomplished a total of 11.5% under high biodiversity protection zones (replenishment zones). By end of 2024, Belize must realize a total of 25% of protection of Belize's Ocean space and by 2026 to have achieved 30% protection</p> <p>These guidelines have been adopted by Belize in collaboration with the OSPESCA</p> <p>Insights into how OSPESCA supports implementation of the SSF Guidelines in Central America Directrices voluntarias para lograr la sostenibilidad de la pesca en pequeña escala en el contexto de la seguridad alimentaria y la erradicación de la pobreza Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Alimentación y la Agricultura (fao.org)</p>

Belize Update - Implementation of Voluntary Commitments



Theme	Voluntary Commitments	Update on Implementation
2.	d) Set catch limits for Caribbean spiny lobster	No catch limits have been set to date. However, the work to be undertaken through the IDB will focus in doing a comprehensive stock assessment and updating the management plan
	e) Develop a climate resilience strategy for coastal zone	Resilience Strategy developed and launched April 2023. Implementation will run up to March 2025 - Resilient Reefs Initiative



Belize Update - Implementation of Voluntary Commitments



Theme	Voluntary Commitments	
3.	a) Support the adoption of a fisheries sustainability certification program (e.g. Fish Right, Eat Right)	Delivered: Fish Right, Eat Right in Belize - Oceana Belize Fish Right Eat Right Forum - Closing Data Gaps with Technology - Oceana Belize Belize's First FIP Brings a Fresh Approach Future Of Fish
	b) Develop new fisheries products/value added products	The TC under the IDB will conduct market studies for Spiny Lobster and Queen conch
	c) Support access to new and higher value markets	Sustainable Fishing Operations, Practices and Technologies: Value Chain assessment in Belize City, Caye Caulker Village and Dangriga Town
	d) Develop policy for sustainable seaweed aquaculture	March 2022, the National Mariculture Policy was approved by Cabinet. Presently, consultancy to develop the mariculture regulations. There has also been an active Seaweed Advisory Working Group.
	e) Develop and implement best practices for sustainable seaweed farming	1 st Edition of the Sustainable Seaweed Cultivation Best Management Practices was developed in December 2018. In 2024, this BMP Manual will be revised with support from TNC.



Ministry of Blue Economy
& Civil Aviation



DEPARTMENT
Sustainable Fisheries
For Our Future

Thank You!