Conflict identification and resolution in the socio-economic interrelations between the fishing industry and other stakeholders in the coastal area of the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef Systems (MBRS)

April 2007

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IUCN/ORMA

Final Report

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ACRONIMS

AFE-COHDEFOR Corporación Hondureña de Desarrollo Forestal
APESATEL Asociación de Pescadores del Puerto de Tela
APTG Asociación de Pescadores Trabajo Garífunas
ASMIPAMO Asociación de Microempresas de Pescadores Artesanales
BTIA Belize Tourism Industry Association
CALAS Centro de Acción Legal Ambiental y Social de Guatemala
CCAD Central American Commission for Environment and Development
CEID Centro de Estudios Integrales de Desarrollo de Livingston
CISP Comité Internacional para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos
COCODES Community Development Committees
CONANP Comisión Nacional de Áreas Naturales Protegidas
CONAP Consejo Nacional de Áreas Protegidas
CONAPESCA Comisión Nacional de Acuacultura y Pesca
DECA Dirección de Control Ambiental
DIGEPESCA Dirección General de Pesca
Fundaeeco Fundación para el Ecodesarrollo y la Conservación
Fundary Fundación Mario Dary Rivera
FUNDESA Fundación para el Desarrollo de Guatemala
GEF Global Environmental Fund
MARN Ministerio de Ambiente y Recursos Naturales
MBC Mesoamerican Biological Corridor
NGO Non-Governmental Organizations
OCC Cuerpos de Conservación de Omoa
OFRANEH Organización Fraternal Negra de Honduras
PRODERS Programa de Desarrollo Regional Sustentable
PROFEPA Procuraduría Federal de Protección del Ambiente
PROLANSATE Fundación para la Protección de Lancetilla, Punta Sal y Texiguat
Ramsar The Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)
RMCS La Reserva Marina de los Cayos Sapodilla
SAM Mesoamerican Reef System
SERNA Secretaría de Recursos Naturales y Ambiente
SINAEIA Sistema Nacional de Evaluación de Impacto Ambiental
TASTE Toledo Association for Sustainable Tourism and Empowerment
TIDE Toledo Institute for Development and Environment
TRIGOH Alianza Trinacional para la Conservación del Golfo de Honduras
UNESCO United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organization
UNIPESCA Unión Nacional de Pescadores Conservacionistas
WWF World Wide Fund for Nature
FOREWORD

It is widely recognized that in our global and interconnected environment, marked by multiple and contrasting interests, conflicts are part of the social dynamics and affect human relations at all levels. Conflict occurs when two or more principles, perspectives or opinions come up against and are recognized as such. To work with these interests means to deal with, inter alia, the lives of the people, their work, their children, their pride, self-concept, ego, ownership, rooting and sense of purpose and mission.

Normally, conflict is generated when the parties involved are inflexible in terms of defending their positions and arguments, and focused on winning, since victory is often valued in terms of their capacity to convince or defeat the opposing party. Such attitude of ignoring opposing interests in a conflict is a common or natural first reaction that must be overcome to move forward in conflict resolution.

The conflict resolution process implies starting with the differences, to identify points in common, and then promote a vision-building process that integrates different interests into a new proposal. Such a challenge implies addressing conflict resolution in a very serious, systematic and thorough manner. These processes entail an interdisciplinary and cross sectional approach that considers the vast theoretical and practical knowledge of different disciplines.

Consequently, this document focused on making a diagnostic study about the socio-economic interrelations between the fishing sector and other stakeholder groups, particularly tourism and protected areas, within the coastal area of the Mesoamerican Reef System (SAM), in order to identify and systematize successful conflict resolution experiences, as well as to propose solutions to existing conflictive situations.

Hopefully, these results will constitute a useful tool for local authorities, including the Mayor’s Office, Ministry of the Interior, ministries and government entities in the area, community organizations, grass-roots leaders, and non-governmental environmental and development organizations (NGOs) engaged in the fishing, tourist and environmental sectors.

We hope this may also become a useful tool for decision makers, thus contributing to the processes involving natural resource use and conservation in the SAM area, including stakeholder empowering and drafting of development proposals that overcome sectoral and excluding visions of policies and programs implemented in their regions.
INTRODUCTION

This document brings to light information about the relations between the fishing, tourist and protected area sectors within the geographic area of the Mesoamerican Reef System (SAM). It presents an analysis of the information recovered through interviews with the local stakeholders involved in these dynamics. It further provides methodological guidance about the best way to deal with conflictive relations derived from the confrontations surrounding the use of the natural resources.

Hopefully, this will assist the development projects in the Mesoamerican reef areas, to address in creative and positive manners the tensions resulting from the diverse relations established in critical environments for the sustainable development of the region.

This document is the end result of the consultancy on conflict identification and resolution in socio-economic interrelations between fishing and other stakeholders in the coastal area of the Mesoamerican Reef System (SAM), undertaken in 2006.
I. Context

a. Background

The leaders of the four bordering countries of the Mesoamerican Reef System (SAM), who acknowledge the importance of the system for the region’s economy, given the natural and cultural heritage involved, and who are fully aware of the increasing threats posed to the ecosystem’s integrity, met in Tulúm, México, in June, 1997, and agreed to protect this area of unique characteristics and of critical value to the development of the region.

The Tulúm Declaration urged the four coastal countries of SAM and their partners in the region to join in the development of an Action Plan for its Sustainable Use and Conservation. The Central American Commission for Environment and Development (CCAD), integrated by the Ministers of Environment of the seven Central American countries and México (as observer), requested the support of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), through the World Bank, for the design and implementation of an Action Plan for SAM management, which resulted in the formulation of the Project for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of the Mesoamerican Reef System (SAM).

The SAM Project is the first phase of a 15-year program; it was developed based on the regional components of the Action Plan and included a comprehensive process of consultation and participation of stakeholders from the SAM region.

SAM Objectives

The global objective of the project is to improve the protection of the ecologically unique and vulnerable ecosystems that comprise the Mesoamerican reef system. To this effect, assistance is provided to the participating countries to help them in their efforts to strengthen and coordinate national policies and institutional regulations and agreements involving the conservation and sustainable use of this global heritage.

The regional objectives of the SAM Program agreed upon by the four participating countries are:

(a) strengthening of protected marine areas;
(b) development and implementation of a standardized administration system for ecosystem data monitoring and output dissemination throughout the region;
(c) promote measures to reduce economic exploitation patterns of SAM, initially focusing on the fishing and tourist sector industries;
(d) increase local and national environmental management capacity through education, information sharing and training; and
(e) facilitate strengthening and coordination of national policies, and institutional regulations and agreements for the conservation and sustainable use of the marine ecosystem.

The project includes four components, each representing a specific area of activity, although all four are interrelated by the core strategies and topics of the project.

Component 1: Protected Marine Areas
- Sub-component A – Planning, Management and Monitoring of Protected Marine Areas (PMAs)
- Sub-component B – Institutional strengthening of PMAs

Component 2: Regional Environmental Monitoring and Environmental Information System
- Sub-component A – Creation and implementation of a Web-accessible Environmental Information System
- Sub-component B – Implementation of a Synoptic Monitoring Program for SAM

Component 3: Promotion of the Sustainable Use of SAM
- Sub-component A – Promotion of Sustainable Fishing Management
- Sub-component B – Facilitation of Sustainable Coastal and Marine Tourism

Component 4: Environmental Education and Public Awareness
- Sub-component A – Implementation of a Public Environmental Awareness Campaign
- Sub-component B – Public Formal and Informal Education

b. Initial survey: Baseline

In September, 2000, a social study was conducted on the area of influence of the Mesoamerican reef system, in order to identify the major stakeholders of the Mesoamerican reef ecosystem, particularly the sectors engaged in fishing and tourist activities, recognize the existing population and its diversity, and assess the participation strategies of the social groups, considering gender and ethnic variables. The study includes the area comprised from Chetumal Bay, in México, to the Gulf of Honduras.

The area is characterized by fragile and unequally beautiful ecosystems with little—if any—agricultural potential. Fishing and agriculture are the area's major economic activities, although these have decreased in the last few years.

In general terms, the population does not have title deeds, lives in poverty conditions, is located on the agricultural border of each country, and many have switched from productive to tourist activities.

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1 Social analysis about the SAM area of influence, September, 2000. Internal document.
The populations tend to migrate, especially to the United States of America. The area is characterized by its vulnerability to natural disasters, where coastal urban growth is accelerated and unplanned, therefore, generating high levels of contamination, particularly due to the ill management of solid and water waste.

Inasmuch as the major economic activities is concerned, fishing is the major income-generation source, and is carried out by the local populations in the traditional way, characterized by inadequate practices, which, in turn, result in water contamination, extreme climate changes, and vulnerability to natural disasters. Tourism, on the other hand, has grown in an uneven and unsustainable manner, extremely dependent upon foreign investment, which has generated serious conflicts, “not on account of environment-related pressures, but because of the social problems accentuated by tourist activities such as these”. The population fears the loss of cultural values that is unquestionably linked to mass tourism.

Fishing conditions

The most significant problems facing fishing activities and marine resources are:

- Depletion of fishing resources
- Resource over-exploitation and unrestricted and uncontrolled fishing
- Inadequate fishing practices, use of poison or explosives
- Contamination problems caused by the wastewaters generated by household and agricultural activities
- Inappropriate shipping and navigation practices
- Lack of policies, enforcement of regulatory frameworks and promotion of contingency measures

Risks and conflicts

Poverty is a major problem in the area, mainly due to the lack of alternative employment opportunities for the population. Consideration should be given, at the very least, to the following variables:

- Although tourism is growing as an economic alternative, the population should be made aware of the advantages of a sustainable tourism or ecotourism, in terms of the achievement of specific benefits for the communities and the environment. To this end, ecotourism rules and regulations should be established.

- The population’s integration and empowerment requires close and responsible coordination between the representatives of the indigenous populations, the government and the most relevant development programs promoted in the area.

- Urban growth must consider the needs of the environment and the protection of the natural resources, both essential for tourism development.
and as a livelihood means for the populations. The contamination problem should be addressed as well.

- The vulnerability and fragility of the ecosystems and communities within should be addressed through risk prevention and management programs, considering the projects promoted.

- The living conditions of the women is marked by exclusion and discrimination; hence the need for a more equitable development of the populations and mainstreaming of the gender perspective.

**Perception about the project**

Most of the population is not aware of the project; hence its low level of acceptance. The project should be linked to the area’s development proposals or programs, by involving the organizations in the project and facilitating closer monitoring and follow up of participating populations.

**Characterization of the ethnic groups identified in the area**

The investigation recovers the significant weight of the cultural diversity that should be considered in the processes promoted by the project. Each ethnic group has developed a special relationship with the resources, depending upon their history and culture and the possibility of becoming involved in the development opportunities promoted by central governments. Such condition makes it necessary to identify conflict resolution mechanisms in harmony with the power and government relations established in the area in written and non written form (customary law).
Among the main groups present in the reef region are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belize</td>
<td>Creole</td>
<td>From Placencia to Punta Gorda, (Río Hondo, Monkey River, Stann Creek, Mango Creek, Mullins River)</td>
<td>Fishing, agriculture, bureaucrats, with a high rate of mobility, disputes over fishing territories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mestizos (Indian and European)</td>
<td>North of Belize, Rio Hondo</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Garífunas</td>
<td>From Stann Creek to Toledo Sur (Punta Gorda, Barranca, Dangriga, Hopkins)</td>
<td>Agriculture (bananas, citric fruits, rice, mango, sugar cane) and fishing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ketchi-maya mopán</td>
<td>South of Belize, Toledo, border with Honduras and Guatemala. Descendants of Maya Yucatecos</td>
<td>Subsistence agriculture, sugar cane harvest, these are the poorest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Central American immigrants</td>
<td>The entire territory</td>
<td>Subsistence agriculture on the slopes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>México</td>
<td>Mixed race and Mayas</td>
<td>Majahual to Xcalak</td>
<td>Individual and cooperative fishermen (conflicts), ecotourism (foreigners)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Garífunas</td>
<td>In Honduras Masca, crossing in low tide In Guatemala in Wadimaku, Queguache, Livingston, Labuga, Puerto Barrios</td>
<td>Small-scale fishing and agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ladinos</td>
<td>East of Bahía in Guatemala, Livingston (1300), Sarstun (350)</td>
<td>Wage-earners, agriculture, longshoremen, some fishing (illegal, turtles)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Q’eqchi and ueweche</td>
<td>Sartén, Sarstun Creek, San Juan Cocoli, Guaira, Livingston (Plan Grande and Plan Grande Tain) 2000</td>
<td>Peasant origin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gariganu</td>
<td>Quewebe, Livingston, Puerto Barrios (3500)</td>
<td>Peasant origin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Recommended actions**

1. Employment opportunities are essential to deal with poverty, including opportunities for special groups such as the women, indigenous populations and ecotourism promotion. Efforts should be made to investigate, raise awareness and educate people about the history and culture of the area.

2. Another priority is the development of the regulatory framework and regulations for tourism development as a development option for the area.

3. Development and promotion of territorial zoning towards a sustainable planning of the territory and supporting the formulation of master plans.

4. A study about bordering conflicts, especially in Belize.
5. Promote women’s participation and empowerment, by mainstreaming the gender equity perspective into educational programs.

6. Capacity building in local organizations, including the ability to promote the area’s development.

7. Analysis about territorial problems; territorial insecurity has negative effects on the planning and development possibilities for the area.

8. Development of a regional vision, recognition about the scope of the resources and the importance of supranational actions.

In summary, the diagnostic carried out shows the reef area as a region of huge biological and social wealth, with populations in poverty conditions, not only because of the lack of opportunities in terms of human capacity building, but also because of the lack of stable and sustainable income-generating alternatives. In addition, there is conflict regarding the use of increasingly precarious natural resources, and the lack of a strategic development proposal based on the social conditions and the inclusion of the sectors historically discriminated, such as women and indigenous populations.

It is, therefore, essential to develop a process to identify and address the mechanisms involving conflict resolution in the area, especially in the sectors with greater presence and impact, such as tourism, fishing and conservation activities and definition of protected areas.

It is within this framework that this consultancy and the resulting products are presented.

c. Consultancy objectives

The objective of the consultancy is to undertake an analytical and systematic evaluation about the dynamics established between the fishing and other sectors across the Mesoamerican reef area, by identifying the positive relations and conflicts between the fishing industry and other groups and the identification of guidelines to increase positive relations, as well as measures tending to resolve conflicts between fishermen and the sectors competing for the same space of the coastal area.

To achieve this objective one or two sites were selected for each of the countries of the Mesoamerican Reef System (SAM), and 88 interviews were carried out, as follows: 30 in Honduras, 21 in Belize, 26 in Guatemala, and 11 in México. This process was assisted by the SAM focal point in each country, the contact persons established by IUCN in the area, as well as the references given by the identified stakeholders, to complete the lists of people interviewed.
During this process special consideration was given to the existence of conflicts between the sectors prioritized for the investigation, tourism, fishing and protected areas, the willingness of these stakeholders to provide information, and the interest to the SAM focal point in each country.

At a methodological level, the process included the following steps:

- analytical evaluation of relations between the fishing and tourist sectors and the protected marine areas.
- threats identified in the socio-economic surveys and other investigations and existing studies about the area.
- characterization of conflicts identified.
- systematization of case studies (four sites selected).
- interviews to key players in the process and participation in stakeholder meetings, in order to identify the perspective of the different groups, their interests and mechanisms used to advance.
- elaboration of a profile about each sector within the dynamic of conflicts identified, and determination of favorable and unfavorable mechanisms for conflict negotiation and resolution.
- recommendations to provide SAM with tools for conflict negotiation and resolution, dissemination and socialization among other communities and decision making about processes involving the conservation of the reef system.

**d. Methodology applied by the consultancy**

Based on the fact that the objective of this investigation is to identify the interrelations between the fishing and tourist sectors and the protected areas, the methodology used consisted of a combination of revision of secondary information and the recovery of direct information from the stakeholders involved.

The following flow chart summarizes the main steps and sequence of the investigation.
A revision of secondary information was also conducted, especially documents produced by SAM and the interviewed partners, as well as documents relating to the work on conflict negotiation and resolution.

Visits and interviews were arranged and coordinated through SAM representatives in each country and IUCN member environmental organizations, which provided logistics support throughout the entire process. This process began with telephone conversations, e-mail communications, and determination of the requirements for site visits.

The dates scheduled were adjusted to the particular conditions of each site, including unexpected environmental situations, like in the case of México, where the visit had to be cancelled on account of weather conditions, especially the effects of hurricane Wilma.

Annex 1 includes an example of the form used for the interviews. Following is a list of the people interviewed.
### e. Participants in workshops and interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tegucigalpa</td>
<td>Oscar Pinto</td>
<td>SAM focal point in SERNA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jorge Travieso</td>
<td>SAM consultant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Ceiba</td>
<td>Denis Sierra</td>
<td>Director, Jeannette Kaguas Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sandra Pineda</td>
<td>Executive Director, Fundación Prolansate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Héctor Saúl</td>
<td>Punta Izopo Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>APESATEL (fishermen)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Unión Norte (fishermen)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cerritos San Vicente (fishermen)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>UMA de Cortez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Agrícola San Alejo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Palm tree processing company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Palm tree association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Ceiba</td>
<td>Karen Escobar</td>
<td>Technician, environmental technical unit, Municipality of Omoa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gustavo Cabrera</td>
<td>Executive Director, Cuerpos de Conservation de Omoa, Municipality of Omoa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mariela Guzmán</td>
<td>Coordinator, Tourism Unit, Municipality of Omoa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elmer Cavaría</td>
<td>Dirección General de Pesca-DIGEPESCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Noel Cavaría</td>
<td>President. Asociación Pescadores del Golfo, El Paraiso, Omoa, Cortés</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Miriam García</td>
<td>Tourist businesswoman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Francisca Ayala</td>
<td>Tourist businesswoman, Chamber of Tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hernán Molina</td>
<td>President, Asociación de micro empresarios pescadores artesanales de Omoa ASMIPAMO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pedro Pablo Hernández</td>
<td>President, Empresa Ecoturística Bahía de Omoa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carlos Jonson</td>
<td>Treasurer, Empresa Ecoturística Bahía de Omoa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emeterio López</td>
<td>Fish trader, Omoa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ovidio Arriaga</td>
<td>Fisherman, boat renting, Omoa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Francisco Jonson</td>
<td>Independent fisherman, Omoa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Miguel Matamoros</td>
<td>Local fisherman, Omoa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tela</td>
<td>Karla Jonson</td>
<td>Head, Management Unit, COHDEFOR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Francisco Escobar</td>
<td>Municipal Environmental Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vanessa Merlos</td>
<td>Municipal Tourism Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Héctor Orlando Sánchez</td>
<td>Responsible for the Punta Hisopo National Park, Fundación Prolansate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Miguel Guirola</td>
<td>President, Fishermen’s association of Tela, APESATEL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carlos Colón</td>
<td>Coordinator, Cooperativa Tonina Blanca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Máximo Efrain Aranda</td>
<td>Member, Cooperativa Tonina Blanca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ing. Luis Ariel Perdomo</td>
<td>Head of DIGEPESCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carlos Luis López C.</td>
<td>Fishing inspector, DIGEPESCA</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enrique Martínez Gómez</td>
<td>President, Cooperativa Pescadores Unión Mixta Tornabe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ansel Álvarez</td>
<td>Promoter, Cooperativa Pescadores Unión Mixta Tornabe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## COUNTRY: GUATEMALA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala City</td>
<td>Nicolás Pelico</td>
<td>CALAS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marlene Oliva</td>
<td>MARN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maite Rodríguez</td>
<td>Fundaguatemala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alba Nydia Perez</td>
<td>SAM focal point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alfonso Arivillaga</td>
<td>SAM consultant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carmen Cigarroa</td>
<td>SAM consultant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fernando Castro</td>
<td>CONAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livingston</td>
<td>Charlie Dixon,</td>
<td>Director, Project for the protection and regional management of coastal-marine resources in the Gulf of Honduras CISP (Comité Internacional para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Magnon Baltazar</td>
<td>Director, FUNDESA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Angélica Méndez</td>
<td>Coordinator, Red de Pescadores del Caribe Guatemalteco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Benedicto Corton</td>
<td>Comité pescadores artesanales de Puerto Barrios, Network Vocal 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Román Rodríguez</td>
<td>Comité pescadores artesanales de Puerto Barrios, Network Vice President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Claudia de la Cruz,</td>
<td>President, Grupo Vista-Miramar, Network Treasurer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>David E. Martínez,</td>
<td>Cooperativa Agrícola Integral de Río Dulce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hilda Rojas,</td>
<td>Asociación de Pescadores Trabajo Garífunas (APTG)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elias Valdez</td>
<td>UNIPESCA</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Jorge Ochaeta</td>
<td>Fundaeco</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Byron Villeda</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hugo Hidalgo</td>
<td>Costas-Fundaeco</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Regional meeting</td>
<td>TRIGOH</td>
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<tr>
<td>Puerto Barrios</td>
<td>Estuardo Herrera</td>
<td>Director, Fundary-Puerto Barrios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ana Dora</td>
<td>Social-Fundary, Puerto Barrios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blanca Rosa García</td>
<td>Responsible for fishing activities Fundary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lily Elias</td>
<td>Agriculture-Fundary, Puerto Barrios</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Byron Villeda</td>
<td>Technical Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jorge Amacheta</td>
<td>Operations Fundaeco Río Sartun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vilma Cristina</td>
<td>Tourism Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rodríguez</td>
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## COUNTRY BELIZE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Punta Gorda – Sapodilla Caye</td>
<td>Jack Nightingale</td>
<td>Executive Director, TASTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cristina García</td>
<td>Environmental educator, TASTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Godwin Humes</td>
<td>Design Manager SCMR, TASTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dennis Garbutt</td>
<td>Manager, Port Honduras Marine Reserve Owner Lime Caye at Sapodilla Marine Reserve TIDE</td>
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## COUNTRY BELIZE

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<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Victor Jacobs</td>
<td>Grande Fishermen’s Cooperative, Punta Gorda, Toledo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Larry Smith</td>
<td>Vice President, Toledo Branch Belize Tourism Industry Association BTIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rodwell Mackey</td>
<td>Port Authority, Hunting Caye, Sapodilla Cayes Marine Reserve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rodan Luis Cabrera</td>
<td>Fisherman, Nicolas Caye Sapodilla Cayes Marine Reserve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Placida Requena</td>
<td>TASTE tours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carl Castillo</td>
<td>Conservation Field Director, Earthwatch, Punta Gorda, Toledo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Michael Sabal</td>
<td>Twin Caye, South Water Caye Marine Reserve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alex Jones</td>
<td>Twin Caye, South Water Caye Marine Reserve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arturo Guemez</td>
<td>Manager, Tabacco Caye Lodge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rosella Zabaneh</td>
<td>President, BTIA, Dangriga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jennifer May</td>
<td>International Zoological Expedition South Water Caye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Julian Lewis</td>
<td>Friends of Gra-Gra Lagoon Conservation Group, Dangriga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Godfrey Young</td>
<td>C &amp; G Tours and Charters, Dangriga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Captain Jorge Rosado</td>
<td>CG Tours and Charters, Dangriga</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Earl David</td>
<td>Fisherman, Dangriga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Justo Reyes</td>
<td>Fisherman, Dangriga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jose Villafranco</td>
<td>Vice President, Tour Guide Association Coco Plum Caye, Dangriga</td>
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### Dangriga – South Water Caye

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jose Villafranco</td>
<td>Vice President, Tour Guide Association Coco Plum Caye, Dangriga</td>
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## COUNTRY MEXICO

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cancún</td>
<td>Marisol Vanegas</td>
<td>Tourism specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Francisco Remolina</td>
<td>Director, Yum Balam Park CONANP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>José Eduardo Peréz Catzin</td>
<td>Secretary, Federación Regional de Sociedades Cooperativas Pesqueras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jaime Gonzales</td>
<td>Director, Isla Mujeres, Cancún CONANP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Severo Góngora Barbosa</td>
<td>Instituto de Pesca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dionisio Pech Casanova</td>
<td>Head of inspection and monitoring, PROFEPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alvaro Fernández Flores</td>
<td>WWF</td>
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### Isla Mujeres

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Baltasar Catzin</td>
<td>President, Social Justice</td>
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### Holbox

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<tr>
<th>City</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ramón Gazca Cáceres</td>
<td>Agrupación Pescadores de Holbox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manuel Escamilla</td>
<td>Cooperativa Vanguardia del Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aurelio Coral Santana</td>
<td>President, Cooperativa Cabo Catoche</td>
</tr>
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</table>
II. Identification of conflict relations between sectors in the priority areas selected by SAM

The people interviewed identified many conflict relations in the priority work areas of SAM. For the purpose of this report, we selected the relations that are most representative of a certain type of conflict and grouped them by country.

A conclusion of the systematization process is that there is no generalized situation for the entire SAM area. Although the conflicts are very interrelated, the institutional context and the role of the stakeholders largely modify the conflict resolution dynamics.

In this sense, the same problem, like for example, over-exploitation of fishing resources, may assume a different dynamic, depending on the regulatory framework and, especially, the recognition of the various social stakeholders. The conflict is linked to the existing institutional level.

Conflicts revolve around the use of the space or territory where the different activities involving natural resource use are carried out. In some countries, this situation has triggered conflicts between the tourist and fishing sectors; in other contexts, the tension has been created between the protected areas and the fishing sector. In this case, the conflict is directly related to the level of development of the organizations involved and their decision-making ability.

Considering that the population has used marine resources as their most important livelihood means, any regulations on the area affect them directly. Their active and informed involvement represents the difference between generating conflict or collaboration with the protected areas. This situation calls upon civil society to change their community work proposals and establish local mechanisms to make decisions about the area’s resources.

Following are a few lessons learned from dealing with conflictive situations, in order to identify its elements and help to find, as the case may be, the best way to coordinate the different interests. It does in no way expect to seek the answer in a mechanical or simple manner, but to present the elements conforming reality, thus enabling the stakeholders to make responsible decisions about it.
a. Guatemala

Resource over-exploitation and conflicts of interest arising out of the zoning system in the Guatemalan Caribbean

Location

Guatemala’s Caribbean coast combines different situations of a historical and contextual nature. Black, indigenous, “ladinos” (white or mixed race) and other minority groups of Asian descent, share the territory. These impoverished populations combine fishing with agricultural activities.

The waters of the Gulf of Honduras are shared with Belize and Honduras, which puts even more pressure on the scarce resources, for which reason this is considered a critical network of marine reserves linked to reserves of a high productivity, which include reefs, seagrass, flooded forests, mangroves, tropical forests, and refuge for economically and ecologically important species.

The major problems are over-fishing, poor enforcement of environmental regulations, contamination, poverty, invasion of exotic species, lethal yellowing of coconut, plus the threats posed by oil exploitation and drug trafficking.

There are two areas that were recently declared protected areas.

The Protected Area of Punta de Manabi, Department of Izabal, between parallels 15° 40’ and 16° 00’ North and meridians 88° 13’ and 88° 44’. By Decree 4-89 (Protected Areas Legislation) it was declared under Special Protection, with an area of 449 km², a zone of inland waters of 220 km², and a defined marine zone towards the Caribbean sea, with an area equivalent to the area of the territorial waters of Guatemala. It was recognized by the RAMSAR Convention as a wetland of world importance.

It is a hugely important refuge for wildlife, particularly birds like the double yellow-headed Amazon (Amazona oratrix belizensis) and mammals threatened nationwide, such as the manatee (Trichechus manatus). There is a land portion covered by confra palm (Mancaría saccifera).

The Multiple Use Area of Río Sarstun, has an area of 35.202 ha in macro geographic terms, the protected area is between meridians 15° 45´ 50´´ and 15° 55´ 00´˝ of latitude North and parallels 89° 13´ 30´˝ and 88° 45´ 50´˝ of longitude West, its external boundaries are defined by points which geographic coordinates are based on the North American horizontal datum of 1927.

Four population groups are found in the Livingston area: Quetchi, Garifunas, Ladinos and Hindu, with different fishing practices that create rivalry between Populations are not homogeneous groups; recognition of their identity is essential for the definition of conservation programs.
them. Garifunas fish alone, in their small canal, with a fishing pole; they used to get their bait at the Garifunas beach (North of Livingston, but in that place the Ladinos fished using gill nets, leaving the Garifunas without any bait. An agreement was reached whereby fishing on their beach was allowed in exchange for the bait needed by the others.

The Livingston municipality is detached from this subject matter. Although the area is promoted as Garifunas, they only account for 20% of the population. The other 80% is Quetchí, like the current Mayor, who has prioritized the problems related to land activities (typical of his people). Fishing has not been an issue in Livingston’s political agenda.

There are two important NGOs working in the area, Fundaeco and Fundary, engaged in conservation activities and participating as co-managers of the protected areas. A project for the Protection and Regional Management of Marine-Coastal Resources in the Gulf of Honduras was implemented in 2003, to promote bi-national work and the creation of a fishermen’s network, to support fishermen and make visible their demands.

This network initiated an innovating process in the area, by training leaders, including women, to carry out their fishing activities in a more sustainable manner, which in a short period of time, has articulated a social base to defend the interests of the fishermen, who prior to that had no recognized social representation. Exchanges have been promoted with fishermen from Honduras and Belize, and they currently maintain a continuous working relation, which they fear will be lost at the end of the project’s life. It should be noted that the cost of transportation of the network’s members to their monthly meeting alone amounts to $500.

Also working in the area is the innovative initiative TRIGOH (Alianza Trinacional del Golfo de Honduras) formed by 16 non-governmental organizations, involved in the harmonization of environmental management in the gulf area.

The communities of Punta de Manabique live in extreme poverty conditions, lacking health care services and education; they depend on rainwater and are engaged in fishing, but the communities located farther inland combine this activity with agriculture (cantaloupe, corn). The main problem is fuel prices and fish trading, as they depend on a few middlemen who come to the area.

Productive activity diversification is promoted through the elaboration of fish products with groups of women, like for instance “ceviche”, sausage, fresh fish filets, and lobster sales; the communities have been trained and provided with basic equipment and a small plant has been built to serve as a storage facility (San Francisco del Mar community). A pilot aquaculture project was developed where they are experimenting with water tanks filled with marine species in the Cabo community (where they are currently working with Anchoa sp. (a type of sardine). Tourist activities have been promoted at the Lagardo Marsh, where the community has a very small hotel.
The women sell their products at the local market. As a matter of fact, there are several fisherwomen, and the fishermen’s network is chaired by a retired female teacher who is also engaged in fishing.

**Conflict**

The main conflict is experienced between the various fishing sectors, with varying fishing practices, definition and respect for the fishing areas, and compliance with close seasons. And on top of this, there now is the Protected Area declaration.

In 1996, the so called “Pacto de Caballeros” (gentlemen’s agreement) zoning agreement was reached, whereby the Gulf of Amatique was divided into three parts to allow the weekly rotation of stakeholder groups according to their fishing techniques.

Fishermen are convinced that this mechanism has been a great help in avoiding greater conflicts, as it brought about union and respect and precluded violence. Information about the pact was disseminated through posters, by the fishermen themselves, and in the workplaces.

This agreement represents a way of “government” between the parties, as it acknowledges the presence of the stakeholders and their interests. The conflict was resolved by dividing the area into three parts, as shown on the following drawing:

![Diagram showing three parts of the Gulf of Amatique with fishing zones](image)

However, the people interviewed feel the need for further investigations on the area's fishing resources, to justify proposed actions and improve the close season declarations to ensure these correspond to the species’ actual reproductive cycle,
and in this manner start building a tri-national agreement. This drawing is taken up again by the stakeholders involved as the starting point for new actions, including the fishing regulations for the Guatemalan Caribbean.

Yet, differences still persist between fishing sectors. Shrimp fishermen were perceived as the “enemy” because of the over-exploitation caused by their trawling practices (seafloor). This is the group with the greatest resources, fishing gear and social recognition; labor is usually hired for this activity. However, the activity is not as profitable as it would appear, some boats have been “reconstructed by them”, they have to invest around $100 per trip (gas, personnel, etc.), and must catch at least 30 lb of shrimp per day to cover costs.

The real competition is industrial fishing, considering the size of the gulf area.

When the Protected Area declaration was issued for Punta de Manabique, which includes half of the bay, the tension between stakeholders increased. In addition, not all fishermen were consulted about this, only the fishermen from the inland communities of the protected area.

Fishermen point out that NGOs do not consider the needs of the fishing sector, especially the different groups of fishermen, who have very different living conditions. They argue that these organizations, based on the needs of the communities, are able to obtain funding resources, without the communities’ adequate representation within the NGOs. They are critical of the lack of adequate communication processes involving the communities, and because of the protected area declaration, the people are afraid to talk about their productive activities and future projects.

Problems also exist in connection with boundaries. One such case is, for example, Cayos Zapatillos, which in spite of belonging to Belize, Guatemala and Honduras, it is used as a reference point for their maritime limit, thus creating confusion to the fishermen. Fishing of the *Anchoa sp.* sardine creates problems in all three countries; it is used for local consumption, especially by the indigenous populations that eat it dry; and the lower quality is used for animal feed.
### Characterization of the area’s stakeholders

#### Projects and NGOs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Project “Protection and Regional Management of Coastal-Marine Resources in the Gulf of Honduras”</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type</strong></td>
<td><strong>Situation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Includes the tri-national area of the Gulf of Honduras (Guatemala-Honduras-Belize) Implementation period: 2003-2006</td>
<td>Seeks to consolidate a regional conservation and management system for the protected and adjacent areas. Seeks the implementation of economic and legal measures to improve the quality of life of the communities that are dependent upon these resources. Participants: • 22 organized coastal communities, 1,300 families (local fishing is the main activity). • Alianza Trinacional para la Conservación del Golfo de Honduras – TRIGOH-, 16 environmental NGOs from the three countries.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Fundación para el Ecodesarrollo y la Conservación (FUNDAECO)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental NGO engaged in the conservation of the integrity, stability and beauty of nature for the benefit and well-being of present and future generations of Guatemalans. It has been operating in the area for the past seven years, and has an office in Livingston. Fundaeco promotes productive activities, land use patterns, knowledge, attitudes and behavior, as well as institutional policies to support and promote nature conservation.</td>
<td>Promotes sustainable human development, formal and informal training, small-scale production (fishing, agriculture, community ecotourism). It engages in resource conservation activities, by providing community support in connection with income-generation projects, environmental education (radio). It supports the park rangers in the area. In the Sarstum area the community consultation processes were not coordinated with the protected area’s legal approval process, which resulted in problems with the communities of this area. The situation regarding land ownership and zoning created uncertainty in the communities as a result of the Park’s declaration, although they argue that the intangible area does not oppose the communities’ interests.</td>
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The “Amantes de la Tierra” organization is interested in participating in the area’s co-management.

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Fundación Mario Dary Rivera (Fundary)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental NGO engaged in nature conservation, with a special interest on the conservation of coastal-marine ecosystems in the priority area of the Wildlife Refuge of Punta de Manabique. It has been co-managing the area since 1999.</td>
<td>The foundation works with about 11 communities in the area, has park rangers and promotes economic and social development activities for the populations (fishing, agriculture, community ecotourism, community organization, accounting, administrative and tax training). The establishment of COCODES (community development committees) is being promoted; fishing populations are also included. Basic projects have also been implemented involving investigation, reforestation, fish, game and sea turtle monitoring, as well as activities involving the control and monitoring of fauna and flora species through water and land patrolling. A conflict came up with the process relating to the declaration of the Wildlife Refuge, because when the master plan was developed, no consideration was given to the fishermen located outside of the area, as a result of which, they opposed the declaration.</td>
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### FISHING SECTOR

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Red de pescadores del Caribe Guatemalteco</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Network formed by 16 groups spread across the bay. This involves some 1000 families from the three municipalities of Livingston, Puerto Barrios, and El Stor. The Board of Directors is conformed as follows: President: Cayo Quemado Vice President: Bocas del Polochit Secretary: Livingston Treasurer: Miramar Vocal 1: Puerto Barrios Vocal 2: Estero Lagarto (Punta Manabique) Vocal 3: San Francisco del Mar (Punta Manabique)</td>
<td>Its purpose is to have an organization that represents them and protects and preserves their resources. The network fully supports and complies with the close seasons. They are not allowed to participate in tourist activities and the hotels close the shores. They are mainly involved in the coordination, submission of proposals, dissemination, and construction of a commercialization center; the major problem is middlemen. The organization has undergone training, has been involved in exchanges and a fisherwoman is the network’s manager. Their work has allowed the Close seasons do not agree with the resources and are not applied. Scientific research is required to determine close seasons. They support tourism, though the boat owners’ association does not allow them to participate, because of their lack of lifeguards. However, tourism has a negative impact on the wetland they protect. They fear that when the project comes to an end, they will be unable to keep up their coordinated work as a network. They are very critical of the NGOs for undertaking actions without consulting the fishermen and using the</td>
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Close seasons do not agree with the resources and are not applied. Scientific research is required to determine close seasons. They support tourism, though the boat owners’ association does not allow them to participate, because of their lack of lifeguards. However, tourism has a negative impact on the wetland they protect. They fear that when the project comes to an end, they will be unable to keep up their coordinated work as a network. They are very critical of the NGOs for undertaking actions without consulting the fishermen and using the
coordination of diverse fishermen’s groups of the area. communities to obtain resources.

**INSTITUTIONAL SECTOR**

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>UNIPESCA</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Government entity responsible for the fishing activities. The office consists of three employees: 1 representative, 1 boat owner, and 1 assistant.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Entity responsible for fishing licenses, supported by SEPRONA and the national civil police.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>They apply the fishing regulations approved in 2005, where the “Pacto de Caballeros” zoning plan is also integrated.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>There is a considerable over-exploitation of fishing resources. Additional resources are needed to properly carry out the work, including the revision of fishing practices and the application of relevant regulations.</td>
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**TOURIST SECTOR**

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<td></td>
<td>It is a non-governmental foundation, constituted by 40 businessmen engaged in various activities (transportation, boating, tour operation, hotels, coconut bread braiding and selling, grocers).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Its purpose is to strengthen the tourist sector through capacity building, organization, planning assistance, projections, dissemination (electronic, participation in tourist shows, exchanges). The foundation is funded by INGUAT (which has no representation in the area).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>They implement investment projects for small- and medium-scale tourist activities. Its staff consists of 3 people.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The main conflicts are caused by the lack of trust and rivalry between groups. Carriers do not respect the work shifts (most are Ladinos, Hindu, some Quetchi and 3 Garífunas).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tourism committee in Livingston: Walter Belis, Gustavo Turcios, Lisethe Velasco. Its purpose is the construction of the second story of the park for tourist offices and stores. Community or grass-root tourism is still incipient in the area; there are interesting examples, such as the one developed by the Aktenamit organization.

**Recommendations**

- Proposals involving tri-national cooperation should be developed, for the purpose of creating conditions to harmonize current legislation, allow the creation of meeting places for resource users, and the development of a comprehensive development vision for the area.
- The countries’ conditions in terms of regulation monitoring are very different, as is also the case with the fishermen’s knowledge. Hence, the importance of tri-national communication strategies.
- Environmental non-governmental organizations have modified their working practices, by increasingly including community members in their programs and work.
• The development of alternative production activities is essential to reduce the over-exploitation of fishing resources.
• Tourism does not yet constitute an important income-generation source for the area’s population. Efforts should be made towards promoting processes based on community tourism which, in turn, will trigger local economic development processes (thus, generating chaining processes for the communities), to assist them in solving their income-generation problems and the resulting poverty conditions.
• Regarding the “Pacto de Caballeros” we should point out the interest of local stakeholders in reaching a joint solution to their differences; this type of local measures contributes to overcome conflicts and instill in the stakeholders a sense of ownership, which turns them into advocates of the established terms.
• Community consultation processes relating to the definition of protected areas should include an important social communication process based on flexible coordination actions and, most importantly, the inclusion of all sectors involved and their interests.
• Environmental organizations staff should increasingly integrate community members into their conservation, monitoring, promotion and organization work.
• Women’s participation in fishing activities and board positions is essential for renewed leadership, overcoming of personal conflicts and promoting organizational strengthening.

b. Honduras

Definition about the use of beach sectors, a conflict between the fishing and tourist sectors in the municipal beach of Omoa

Location

The Omoa Municipality is located Northeast of the Cortés Department, between parallels 15° 32 and 15° 48 latitude North and meridians 87° 55 and 88° 30 longitude West. It limits to the North with the Caribbean sea, to the South with the Municipalities of Choloma, San Pedro Sula and Quimistán (Santa Bárbara), to the West with the Republic of Guatemala and to the East with the Municipality of Puerto Cortés. It has an area of 382.8 km², equivalent to 54,685.71 mz, and a population of 30,408 inhabitants and a density of 79 inhabitants per km², and 28 villages and 76 small villages.

Conflict

Conflict has always existed in the municipal beach of Omoa between the fishing and tourist sectors, given the closeness to the Fortaleza de San Fernando
historical monument, which is where tourists stay, eat and swim after visiting the monument.

Fishermen used the beach to clean the fish, which caused nauseating smells and the presence of vultures, not to mention the entrails floating all over the beaches where tourists usually swim. In addition, the fishermen’s nets and boats posed a risk hazard to tourists. As a result of this situation, visitors were decreasing, which in turn, took a toll on lodging and boarding services, and the resulting income decreases for the families engaged in tourist activities.

**Stakeholders**

Among the organizations involved are the “Cuerpos de Conservación de Omoa (CCO)”, supported by the “Alianza Trinacional para la Conservación del Golfo de Honduras (TRIGO)”, specifically with its Golfo de Honduras project, and the Mesoamerican Reef System (SAM) project, which are working together towards common solutions.

Within the fishing sector there is the “Asociación de Micro Empresarios pescadores artesanales de Omoa”.

In the institutional sector we have the Municipality of Omoa together with the Fisheries Office (DIGEPESCA).

**Actions implemented**

The local organizations that implement conservation activities with the fishermen and the tourist sector began working on developing coordinated joint efforts.

1. The organizations launched an awareness campaign by identifying and making contact with the leaders of the fishing sector. The basic idea was to recognize that tourism is an activity that produces benefits for this sector, as it is tourists who buy the fish and seafood sold by the “champas” or local facilities where they sell their products.

2. Upon obtaining the leaders’ support, a meeting was arranged with the board of directors of the association of small-scale fishermen of Omoa, whose support was also committed.

3. In the meantime, actions were coordinated by TRIGO and SAM to integrate the fishermen from the area into their environmental education and training activities on fishing. These organizations joined the region’s fishermen’s network,
which allowed them to participate in fishermen’s exchanges between Belize and Guatemala.

4. In addition to these activities, the Municipality of Omoa, together with the Fisheries Department (DIGEPESCA) entered into a partnership to train the fishing communities. The law regulating fishing activities and the fishermen’s right to undertake their fishing activities in beach areas, was presented to the tourist sector.

After two years of work by the different organizations and the promotion of meeting opportunities for all sectors involved, fishermen agreed to clean the fish out to sea, the nets were placed on the beach area at 6 p.m. and removed at 5 a.m., and during weekends and holidays fishermen agreed not to use the nets on beach areas, and their boats were placed in such a manner that they would pose no risk to the tourists. DIGEPESCA, as the responsible institution, sees to it that the nets are placed and removed from the beach as agreed.

**Lessons learned**

Among the important conflict resolution elements pointed out by the different stakeholders, are the following:

- a. Fishermen’s awareness about the impact of their actions (fish cleaning on the beach, use of nets and boats on the beach area) on the tourist sector, and how this would negatively impact their fish sales.
- b. Awareness by the tourist sector about the rights of the fishermen to use the beach for their activities.
- c. The partnership between OCC, TRIGOH and SAM supported strengthening of the fishermen’s association, and along with training, fishermen have been empowered, to the point where they are making efforts towards finding their own solutions to their problems concerning the lack of fishing equipment, and fish commercialization and processing.
- d. They have not resorted to coercive measures or violent actions to reach the agreements needed.
- e. By supporting the needs of the fishing sector, possibilities are beginning to open in terms of allowing the fishermen to commercialize their own fish, with the resulting value added which, in turn, benefits the women.

**Characterization of the stakeholders involved in the conflict of the municipal beach of Omoa**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Name</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Type</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Members</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Objectives</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Position/Interests</strong></td>
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</table>
SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Name</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Position/Interests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cuerpos de Conservación de Omoa</td>
<td>professionals and members of the community.</td>
<td>natural resources in light of the increasing environmental degradation of the area, initially involving the Jaloa wetlands and water sources. It supports the establishment of the Omoa National Park, given its strategic location in the protection of the coastal area. The park would extend from the Tulian river basin out to sea and up to a sea depth of 100 m. The park would have three large sections: a wildlife refuge for the protection of the manatee, the highlands for water catchment, and the reef area. In the area there are around 133 communities mainly engaged in fishing activities. The Environmental Unit of the Municipality of Omoa provides technical assistance.</td>
<td>municipality and the various sectors engaged in the Omoa region. Both, tourist organizations and the municipality, view the creation of the park as a specific product that could attract larger numbers of tourists to the area. In the case of the fishing sector, cooperatives see the benefits of establishing close seasons and other actions aimed at the conservation of the already depleted resources in the area. The creation of the park would imply certain restrictions in terms of use in the nucleus area, and as for the reefs, diving would be regulated. Diving.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

INSTITUTIONAL SECTOR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Municipality of Omoa</th>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Position/Interests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Municipal Tourism Unit</td>
<td>Responsible for the identification of the municipality's tourist potential. A municipal development master plan was elaborated based on the thesis work of architecture students of the University of San Pedro de Sula, which is under negotiation. It is also responsible for renting out the areas where restaurants or “champas” and hotels have been built to provide services to visiting tourists. The fishermen supply these facilities with fresh fish and seafood.</td>
<td>Among the concerns of the municipality is that the tenants live with their families in these areas. Fishing, which is the income-generating source for many families, is being affected by sedimentation, contamination and over-exploitation. It promotes the creation of the Omoa-Baracoa National Park, given its tourist potential, although it is well aware of the lack of resources to manage it.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Environmental Unit

Environmental businesses, as well as looking into reports on deforestation or contamination activities. It is part of the national system for environmental impact assessment (SINAEIA) and issues recommendations regarding project development in the municipality's area.

Name | Dirección General de la Pesca-(DIGEPESCA)
--- | ---
Government institution responsible for fishing activities | Among the actions carried out by this entity is following up on the Fisheries Law, regulations involving purchase and sale of seafood, application of close seasons, boat permits and small-scale fishing activities. It must also monitor fishermen’s compliance with the schedule established for net installation on the beach between 6 p.m. and 5 a.m. of the following day. The entity complains about lack of personnel and financial resources to perform its duties. They further argue that their work schedule would have to be extended to 24 hours, given the fact that many offenders come during weekends or outside office hours.

According to the information provided by DIGEPESCA's representative, from the Río Tulián area to the Río Motagua on the border with Guatemala there are approximately 460 fishermen. Over 10 years ago there was a cooperative formed by fishermen from the area and others from San Pedro and Tegucigalpa that was later dissolved.

The fishing sector is currently constituted by different groups among which we have the “Asociación de Microempresas de Pescadores Artesanales del Municipio de Omoa (ASMIPAMO)”, the “Asociación de pescadores del Golfo”, based in Paraíso, the group of independent fishermen with representatives from Omoa, Paraíso and Nasca, who occasionally use fishing poles to fish on the beach or the dock of Omoa, and finally the sports fishermen from Puerto Cortés or San Pedro Sula.

All the fish caught is sold locally or exported through middlemen. It is estimated that 70% of the area’s catch is commercialized by Alfredo Portín in Omoa, Carlos
Contreras in San Pedro and Francisco Ferry Lane in Ceiba for export purposes. The remaining 30% is sold locally.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Asociación de Microempresas de Pescadores Artesanales del Municipio de Omoa (ASMIPAMO)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Association constituted in 2001</td>
<td>The association is formed by 60 fishermen and micro businessmen. It acquired 12 boats equipped with fishing gear to improve fishing activities. The association initially tried to take over the fish processing plant that is not in use in Omoa, but a satisfactory agreement could not be reached with DIGEPESCA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Asociación de Pescadores del Golfo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is an organization formed through the support of DIGEPESCA</td>
<td>Is formed by 60 fishermen from Chachaguala to the mouth of the Motagua and is in the process of obtaining its legal identity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Independent fishermen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They are not formally organized.</td>
<td>Twenty-two fishermen in Omoa and 20 more in the Paraiso area have been accounted for. There are about 200 who fish with canoes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TOURIST SECTOR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Position/Interests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chamber of Tourism of Cortés and Omoa</td>
<td>Chaired by Máximo Parisi and integrated by businessmen from the region.</td>
<td>Promoting tourism in the area and development of their activities.</td>
<td>The major concerns of the tourist sector is the debris and waste generated in Guatemala that is carried by the Motagua river and washed on the beaches by the marine currents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecotourist company Omoa Bay</td>
<td>31 land tenants along the beach.</td>
<td>Advocating for the rights of tenants and putting up a fight for the right to acquire the land.</td>
<td>They seek to eliminate the breakwater because of beach loss, and preclude the construction of gas-storage spheres by Gas del Caribe, which account for the decrease in visitors to the area. The Bahía de Omoa ecotourist company feels the Chamber of Tourism does not represent its interests but the interests of Cortés businessmen who want to seize the area used by them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Recommendations**

1. Continue the facilitation and support of the organizations that provide training to fishermen and the tourist sector.
2. Support local fishermen in their efforts to diversity their fish and seafood market, by partnering with other organizations.
3. Continue looking for options that may generate value added to the fishing activities.
4. Training activities should be oriented towards environmental awareness (scant natural resources), improved management skills and the necessary change in attitude to improve living conditions.
5. To facilitate communication spaces between the fishermen and the tourist sector, as well as between the various organizations in the area.
6. Promote participatory and equitable consultation processes with the different sectors in the area for the development of the master plan and zoning of the area for the creation of the Park.
7. Participatory land zoning should be determined for the various uses of the beach, including a classification of the different activities carried out on this beach.

#### Remember

- Communities and groups may ignore the impact of their actions on the environment and other groups of resource users as well.
- Such ignorance affects their own development.
- Informed people can change their practices and attitude.
- Awareness raising should take place on a fisherman-to-fisherman basis.
- Strengthened, trained and organized communities can more effectively stand up to their rights as fishermen and "champeros".
Establishment of the tourist project “Los Micos Beach and Golf Resort” and its impact on the “Blanca Jeannette Kawas Fernández National Park (PNJK)”, Tela

Location

The Blanca Jeannette Kawas Fernández National Park (PNJK) was declared on November 4, 1994. It is located on the coastal-marine area Northwest of the city of the port of Tela, on the Northern region of the Republic of Honduras. It has an area of 781.45 km², conforming by a marine portion of 284.0 km² (36%) and a land portion of 497.45 km² (64%), including 6.5% of fresh water, which makes it one of the largest national parks in the country and in the Central American region. In geopolitical terms, it is located between the municipalities of Tela, department of Atlántida, and Puerto Cortés, department of Cortés.

Technical management of the Park is the responsibility of the Fundación para la Protección de Lancetilla, Punta Sal y Texiguat (PROLANSATE) by agreement signed on November 20, 1996, between the foundation and the Government of Honduras through the State’s Corporación Hondureña de Desarrollo Forestal (AFE-COHDEFOR).

In the Park creation Decree intervenes the Park’s Authority, constituted by the following institutions: the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (SERNA), which coordinates the Part Authority’s activities, the Forest Development Corporation of Honduras (AFE-COHDEFOR), Ministry of Tourism (IHT), Municipality of Tela, Fundación para la Protección de Lancetilla, Punta Sal y Texiguat (PROLANSATE), Regional Board of communities adjacent to the Park, Organización Fraternal Negra de Honduras (OFRANEH) and the Honduran Institute of Anthropology and History. Other organizations recommended to be included in the Park’s Authority are the Mayorship of Puerto Cortés and the Special Office for Environmental Affairs.

The protected area is a coastal-marine wetland included in the list of The Convention on wetlands of relative international importance (RAMSAR), on March 28, 1995\(^2\), as one of the priority protected areas for biodiversity conservation in the country. Its geographic location in the Gulf of Honduras is strategic at regional level due to its proximity to other priority protected areas, such as the Botanical Garden and the Lancetilla Research Center, Punta Izopo National Park, Texiguat Wildlife Refuge, Pico Bonito National Park, and Cuero y Salado Wildlife Refuge, and its connectivity to the Mesoamerican Reef System (SAM) and the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor (MBC).

\(^2\) Site No. 722.
The National Ecotourism Strategy identifies the Park as a priority protected area to be developed for ecotourism activities, given the quality and diversity of the ecosystems as a tourist attraction, its geographic location and level of development, etc.

The management objectives of the Park are:

- Conservation of natural, cultural, and historic-archeological resources through civil society participation and inter-institutional coordination for community benefit.
- Allowing the sustainable development of neighboring communities and contributing to the improvement of their quality of life and the conservation of the natural resources.
- Promotion of opportunities for environmental awareness and knowledge education activities for the communities surrounding the protected area, visitors, and communities in general.
- Development of the Park as an ecotourist destination at national and international levels based on active community participation.
- Setting up of a scientific research-generation facility to increase the knowledge and appreciation for the goods and services provided by the Park.

**Conflict**

The conflict surrounding the Park stems from the proposal to build the tourist, hotel and commercial complex “Los Micos Beach & Golf Resort” on 427 hectares of the buffer zone of the PNJK and the Garifonas village of Tornabé, which, given the dimensions and proposal, is not compatible with the Park’s management plan.

The organizations and local groups point out deficiencies concerning the project’s environmental impact study, as it fails to clearly determine the environmental and social impacts it will have on the area. This project was initially conceived in 1972, but development had been hindered by different political and financial factors. The project has recently reemerged with the support of Honduran and foreign investors and the Honduran Fund for Tourist Investment.

**Stakeholders**

According to PROLANSATE representatives, employment opportunities are needed in the area of the Tela bay; however, the tourist activities to be established in the areas of influence of the PNJK must take into consideration the management regulations of this protected area and the reactivation of the local economy. From their viewpoint, in addition to the fact that strengthening and promotion of
community population participation as active agents is not a project priority, it clearly violates international treaties like the Ramsar Convention.

PROLANSATE’s main criticisms to the environmental impact study are included in a technical report pointing out the lack of studies to back up the document, deficiencies in the mitigation measures proposed, and lack of information about the area, plus the fact that no answers are provided to the questions raised. For example, there is no information about solid and water waste management, or about the source of the construction materials and the resulting extraction impact, or even the source of the water supply and its impact on current demand, among other questionings.

The fishing sector fears losing their right to fish in the lagoon and use the beach for their activities. They argue not knowing anything about the project and its potential impact on their lives.

The Garífunas communities located in the Park are convinced that the tourist activities promoted by the project will have significant social impacts like increased prostitution, drugs, cultural changes, and higher AIDS incidence.

Their land will be reduced without any compensation whatsoever in exchange, and once the project is developed, there will not be sufficient land left for the people who may rightfully wish access to a piece of land in the future.

They feel they cannot possibly negotiate with the project on equal conditions, and ask for Government action to defend their rights to the land. They also demand certainty regarding future access to the land and fishing, no pressure concerning the sale of their rights, evaluations about the impact on their culture, compliance with local agreements, refraining from buying off community leaders, and ensuring access to vital resources like water.

They see it as an initiative involving enclave tourism rather than one based on ecotourism or sustainable tourism.
**Actions**

As this is an activity in process, the following is recommended:

1. Capacity-building actions should be promoted within grass-roots organizations (environmental and Garifunas) to enable them to monitor the application of mitigation measures.
2. Promotion of partnering opportunities between the various groups and educational or research organizations to enable the identification of negotiation alternatives.
3. Technical training and support should be provided to the employees of the organizations responsible for following up on mitigation actions (the Municipality’s Environmental Unit, PROLANZATE staff, etc.).
4. Taking into consideration government changes and the resulting staff rotation, to ensure that training is provided as needed.
5. An office with greater institutional presence by the EIA national system for environmental control as well as SERNA’s environmental control office (DECA).
6. Promote and facilitate grass-roots organizations and NGOs to develop communication strategies to voice their concerns about the Park’s sound management.
7. Facilitate the establishment of a trust fund through which fishermen may be able to finance fishing equipment and gear.
8. Facilitate fishermen’s training on subjects of their interest as well as on issues involving the sustainable management of fishing activities in the area.
9. Institutional strengthening of organizations to draft fund-seeking proposals.
10. Improve communication between the communities and the representatives of the organizations involved in the project, in order to ensure that communities are well informed about the repercussions of the project and ensure that their recommendations and decisions about the project are taken into consideration.
11. Create opportunities and fora where the people from the Garifunas communities may analyze the situation and where it may be clearly and accurately explained the various aspects involving the environmental impact study and its implications.

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**Actions recommended**

- Provide information to the communities
- Availability of scientific data to support community-based processes
- Institutional strengthening
- Negotiation and meeting venues
- Implementation of agreement follow up and control mechanisms
- Making visible the rights of the people

“When authorizing new tourist developments on beach areas, efforts should be made to maintain the endemic flora to the extent possible, in order to protect the sand areas (coastal dunes) and the original biodiversity, to prevent modifications to the beach area and loss of sand with the consequent future ecological and economic losses to the providers of tourist services and/or users of that area, and the community as a whole, like in the case of Cancún.”
12. Technical and financial strengthening of the Municipal Environmental Unit so that it may be better able to perform its duties.
13. Generate alliances with the country’s media to draw the politician’s attention to the importance of safeguarding the resources and promoting a tourist development that benefits all parties involved.
14. Tourist chaining should be promoted to ensure that the entire region benefits from the tourist activities and that tourist services are provided by the communities themselves.

c. Belize

Over-exploitation of the fishing resources of the Cayos Sapotillos Marine Reserve by Belizean, Honduran and Guatemalan fishermen, and reef destruction caused by the tourist activities.

Location

The Cayos Sapodilla Marine Reserve (RMCS) is located on the Southernmost area of Belize’s reef system, it consists of an area of approximately 119 km² and is formed by 12 sand cays or mangroves, representing the latter 1.6% of the reserve area (approximately 17.67 ha). In 1996, it was declared marine protected area under the responsibility of the Fisheries Department, which entity signed in 2001 a co-management agreement with the Toledo Association for Sustainable Tourism and Empowerment (TASTE), which up to now has been responsible for the area’s co-management and updating of the management plan.

Conflict

The reserve has been used for fishing, which has caused a depletion of the fishing resources of the area. Fishing is carried out by local fishermen, and on an illegal basis by Guatemalan and Honduran fishermen as well. This use-related conflict is worsened because illegal fishermen do not respect snail and lobster close seasons given the legal framework differences between all three countries.

Although the government has made efforts to stop illegal fishing in general, it is the opinion of the tourist and fishing sectors that the Fisheries Department needs far more human and financial resources, including equipment, to patrol the area and ensure the application of current legislation.

Reef destruction is also present in the area, as well as illegal fishing practices by tourists fishing in the marine reserve. Los Cayos Sapotillos is a tourist destination for visitors from Guatemala and Honduras during the Christmas and Easter seasons. In spite of the area’s potential, there are no studies available on the carrying capacity or potential impact of tourist activities.
The problems are linked to the lack of facilities for solid and water waste management on the cays and fishing practices that either are not permitted or cause damage to the coral.

There is a lack of infrastructure to provide adequate services and the people involved in the sector expect to have a marketing program for the area based on local and ecological tourism, which would have a lower impact on the marine reserve.

**Characterization of stakeholders**

**Fishing sector**

The marine reserve is used by local fishermen from Placencia and other areas located to the North of the reserve. Fishermen in the area were not associated to the Rio Grande Fishermen’s Cooperative but this organization has experienced administrative problems and is currently inactive. At the present time there are only 12 active members out of the original 60.

The fishermen’s situation has worsened on account of marine resource reduction, the high cost of fuel, lack of adequate equipment, and lack of access to credit facilities for their activities. Many fishermen have switched to other subsistence means such as diving, tour guiding, etc.

Fishermen are aware of the benefits derived from protected areas, even though they also fear the pressure of the fishermen from Honduras and Guatemala, who do not abide by applicable regulations and would continue using resources that belong to them. The Fisheries Department should increase its human resource and equipment availability as well as their financial resources to properly monitor the area.

They also argue that the Fisheries Department does not stand up to their fishing interests; it is less strict with foreigners, many of whom even have fishing licenses granted by the government of Belize.

One of the fishermen’s complaint regarding tourist activities is the fact that they are unable to use the beaches for their traditional fishing activities. They request the designation of specific areas on the cays where they may have access to the beach for their activities.
Tourist sector

According to the Belize Tourism Industry Association, that assembles tourism operators, guides, hotel and restaurant owners, there are five companies involved in tourist activities and 65 tour guides.

Though the tourist activity is small at the present time, it is expected to start growing soon. Tourist operators from Guatemala and Honduras use the cays for their activities, which are concentrated on certain times of the year, with the resulting high impact on the area; hence, the need for a study on the environmental impact and the reserve's carrying capacity.

Tourist operators point out that the debris and waste coming from Guatemala and Honduras affects tourism on the cays, for which reason they demand the government’s action in this connection.

The owners of the cays that have been rented out should be integrated to ensure adequate and integral management of the area. Governmental support is required for the development of an environment-friendly tourism that will pose no threats to either the reserve or other sectors in the area.

Toledo Association for Sustainable Tourism and Empowerment (TASTE)

This organization assembled a group of people involved in the tourist sector who were interested in working towards the protection of the environment. In February, 2001, the organization signed an agreement with the Fisheries Department to co-manage 50% of the Cayo Sapotillos Marine Reserve. In the future, TASTE will take over 100% of the reserve’s management.

For the past two years they have been operating with GEF funds to help them improve their operational structure and work. They undertake environmental education in rural schools, research, synoptic monitoring and promotion of the reserve seeking the support of the populations and organizations working in the area. Since the year 2005 they have been working in updating the management plan for the marine reserve through consultations with communities and fishermen.

TASTE expects approval of the management plan, working on territorial zoning and initiating actions with the Earthwatch Institute to undertake carrying capacity surveys and promote tourist development activities that will have no impact on the resources of the reserve. In addition, it is interested in facilitating communication and creating consensus among the various sectors involved in the marine reserve.
Toledo Institute for Development and Environment (TIDE)

TIDE began operations in 1997 for manatee protection, and in the year 2000 it started co-managing protected areas. They currently are involved in several activities: an initiative on land acquisition for conservation purposes, environmental impact surveys, and training on new economic activities for the populations located in the protected areas.

Due to the depletion in fishing resources and the high price of gas, many fishermen have switched from fishing to tourist activities, but there still is a good number of the population that is totally dependent on fishing. Therefore, a zoning of the area is needed to avoid conflicts between both sectors.

The conflict surrounding illegal fishing persists on account of the fact that Guatemala and Honduras have no regulations concerning close seasons, and therefore, Guatemalan and Honduran fishermen are free to fish anytime.

They feel that the tourist sector has no idea whatsoever about the damages that can be caused to the reserve. In the specific case of the cays, these are rented out without any coordination between the governmental entities responsible for the marine reserve’s management and those responsible for the application of current regulations.

**Recommendations**

- Undertake zoning together with representatives of the tourist and fishing sectors engaged in activities within the protected area.
- Promote partnerships with NGOs or training organizations in order to develop alternative economic activities in the area and add value to marine and agricultural products.
- Promote an alliance with the governments of Guatemala and Honduras in order to harmonize close seasons and ensure their application by promoting the establishment of a tri-national marine park.
- Harmonization of the regulatory framework for marine resources for all three countries (Belize, Guatemala and Honduras).
- Promote campaigns for tourists and consumers to inform them about regulated products and encouraging the application of close seasons.
- Supporting initiatives and studies on the impact of commercial fishing and tourist activities and definition of the reserve’s carrying capacity (Earthwatch Institute initiative).

**Consider that**

- Alliances between organizations that carry out different resource management and development activities in a specific area, may provide alternatives in terms of local conflict resolution.
- Conflict solutions should include alternatives for negotiation that benefit all those involved in a given productive activity.
• Generation of communication opportunities, exchanges and mechanisms between the fishermen of Belize, Honduras and Guatemala to discuss common problems and identify joint solutions.
• Facilitate the organization of networks integrating local fishermen with communication radios and staff from local NGOs to support surveillance.
• The technical teams of co-managing organizations should be integrated by qualified people with sociological, anthropological or social work background to be able to draft more integral proposals based on community participation.
• Promote empowerment of local groups to enable them to undertake tourist activities and plan the development of the most appropriate type of tourism. For example, the possibility that Garifunas communities may develop their low impact ecotourism projects.
• Promote and support activities that provide the means to finance tourist enterprises, promotion and training, etc.
• Capacity-building activities within the organizations in the area to strengthen the ability to communicate, resolve conflicts, and promote consensus-building opportunities to maintain good relations between the groups involved.
• Promote better coordination among the different government authorities responsible for activity regulation in the marine area and on the cays.
• Establish relations with the people who rent or own the cays to promote their integration and learning about the management plan, the impact of tourist activities on the protected area, and the site’s carrying capacity.

**Over-exploitation of the marine resources of the South Water Caye Marine Reserve (RMSWC): snails, lobster and fish**

**Location**

The South Water Caye marine reserve was established in 1996, with an area of 117,878 acres, including 32 named cays that are under the jurisdiction of the Land Resource Department of the Ministry of Natural Resources. In 1998, the reserve was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List. Management of the reserve is the responsibility of the Fisheries Department, which in 1994 updated the area’s management plan.

The local fishermen from Sarteneja and Belize City fish for snail and lobster without any regard to size regulations, and the resulting impact on the resources. Fishermen argue that because of the high fuel prices, they cannot afford to not use the entire catch.

It is estimated that for the last 10 years snail production in the area ranges between 400,000 and 500,000 pounds per year and lobster production ranges between 450,000 and 600,000 pounds per year (Belize Commercial Fisheries Review 2002, 2003).
Conflict

Although a zoning and management plan exist in the area, there is conflict within the fishing sector because local fishermen, who are a minority, claim loss of their fishing space since they have to share it with fishermen from other places.

The growing tourist sector is interested in increasing patrolling activities to monitor the application of fishing regulations and ensure the activity’s sustainability and adequate diving conditions for visitors. They demand additional coordination and control by the State and its organizations. Concern also exists about the lack of information dissemination and appropriation of the area’s management plan.

The main source of dispute is in a non-participatory process involving the formulation of the management plan and constitution of the Advisory Committee (2004). Clarification is required about the role of the Advisory Committee, the binding extent of their recommendations in terms of the decisions made by the Fisheries Department. There are problems of representation, given the larger participation of the tourist sector in the Committee.
Characterization of the stakeholders involved

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<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Places</th>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Position/Interests</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fishing sector</td>
<td>Most of the fishermen are from Belize City and Sarteneja, a smaller number from the Hopkins and Dangriga area, and an even smaller number of fishermen from the reserve. They set up provisional camps in the reserve during the lobster and snail season.</td>
<td>Fishermen claim that there is no demarcation of the zoning line in the reserve, and thus they do not know where they are or not allowed to fish. They request information in Spanish and English about the zoning plan, which should include indications as to the fishing area, regulations, areas for lobster trapping, and which are the requirements they need to comply with to avoid causing damage to the coral. Fishermen from the Dangriga area have specialized in snail and lobster, but now they must fish everything to make a living. They point out that the fishermen from Sarteneja and Belize City are the ones over-exploiting the area. One of the present problems relates to the fishing licenses for fishermen and captains.</td>
<td>They suggest discussing the possibility of implementing fishing quotas to curb over-exploitation among the different sectors of fishermen and promote fish price increases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist sector</td>
<td>Mainly located in Tobacco Caye, South Water Caye, Coco Plum Caye and Ragged Caye. Because of the area's potential increased activity is expected in the coming years, for which reason information is required on the reserve and</td>
<td>Studies are required on the carrying capacity and impact of tourist activities in the area, as well as information about the zoning plan, in order to avoid superimposing tourist and fishing areas, and thus avoid, for example, shark proximity due to fish blood. They have several complaints about the Fisheries Department: they should increase patrolling and monitoring activities in the</td>
<td>They support local fishermen who supply fish to the restaurants. They claim that the fishermen from Sarteneja and Placencia do not respect the areas and fish unrestrictedly. They are interested in participating in conservation activities linked to the management plan; however claim that they do not have the necessary time. They complain about the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholders</td>
<td>Fishing sector</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Places</td>
<td>Situation</td>
<td>Position/Interests</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>applicable regulations, to ensure an environment-friendly tourist activity.</td>
<td>area, demarcation areas, buoy placement, alternatives for fishermen, and application of the Management Plan, instead of only collecting the reserve’s entrance fee.</td>
<td>Advisory Committee’s actions. There is a group within the tourist sector that demands stricter regulations to protect the reef barrier, which would allow having a diving area, plus the fact that the zoning plan does not really protect snail production. The Department has not been in favor of contributions by other sectors, which expect the revenues from the entrance fees to be reinvested in the same area.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| NGO          |
|--------------|----------------|
| Name         | GRA Lagoon Conservation Group |
| It is a community-based organization that began operations in 1994 and has been strengthened institutional-wise by UNDP funding. The organization has undergone capacity building to draft proposals, seek funds, ecotourist and training activities. It is responsible for management of an area of 3100 acres. | It is part of the Advisory Committee of the SWCMR and recognizes the need to protect the area in order to reduce fishing over-exploitation and damages to the coral reef. Protection legislation is the responsibility of governmental organizations. Aware of their budget limitations, they are demanding additional resources for conservation activities. They express the need for a study on the carrying capacity of the area, and the need for hotels and restaurants, supported by tourist guides, to provide tourists with information about the reserve and applicable regulations. They call upon government authorities to consult and listen to the local communities. |

| Institutions |
|--------------|----------------|
| Name         | Fisheries Department |
| Responsible for checking the validity of the fishing licenses, application of regulations on fishing and extraction of snails and lobster, patrolling of the area, and collection of the entrance fees to the | Most of the fishermen are Belizean citizens from Sarteneja, Hopkins and Dangriga. Many do not have a fishing license. In accordance with their estimates, they catch 400 lb of snails per boat per day, and in the area there is an average of | Fishermen cause damage to the coral because of ignorance. All tour operators are concerned about is profit, not the fragility of the ecosystem. They need to improve the living conditions of the Fisheries Department employees, and to set up a group of people who |
### Stakeholders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fishing sector</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Places</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marine reserve. This office is also responsible for informing tourists about current regulations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Situation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 boats per day that do not comply with size requirements. Due to lack of institutional resources, zoning of the reserve has not been implemented. Despite the reduction in terms of catch, studies are lacking on the impact of fishing on the reserve. They are upset because the entrance fee revenues are not reinvested in the area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Position/Interests</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>can help them manage the area, given its extension and lack of the necessary personnel and resources to protect the entire area. They feel that the Fisheries Department should be a mediating entity but those managing the area are people who live there.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Recommendations

- Provide training on team work, communications, public relations, leadership and other topics to promote good attitude and coordinated work between the employees of the Fisheries Department and local organization representatives.
- Incorporate into the Fisheries Department qualified employees to deal with the social situations of the area and experienced in the facilitation of community processes.
- Facilitate awareness processes to sensitize fishermen about conservation and its benefits, as well as to link conservation to their work opportunities (making a living and supporting their families).
- Establish alliances between fishermen, tourist guides and the Fisheries Department to monitor compliance with current legislation.
- Promote alternative livelihood means (kayaking, fly fishing, tour guiding, inter alia) for the fishermen and provide training according to local conditions of income and literacy.
- Generate alliances and work in coordination with the owners of restaurants and hotels to place buoys, have posters with information about the regulations and resources of the park, demarcation of the various use areas of the park, etc.
- Promote agreements among hotel and restaurant owners to pay fishermen reasonable prices for their catch.
- Build local capacity to promote a local tourist development model.
- Generate an environmental education process targeting fishermen.

### Notes

- Processes involving territorial zoning and the creation of protected areas should be undertaken in agreement with local populations.
- The ability to inform, communicate, and sensitize is not a simple and mechanical task.
Identification of accessible places for meetings or training activities, like for instance, meeting on the cays for tourist-related activities, and in Dangriga or Hopkins to work with the fishermen of this area.

Any protection action should be discussed with the various sectors involved who should also be invited to participate in the decision-making processes.

Support community initiatives towards the creation of an organization or entity aiming at the co-management of the area.

Improve communication with the different organizations and seek ways to foster local community participation in the area’s management activities.

Socialization of the management plan with the various groups in order to inform all sectors concerned about the recommended actions and hear out their proposals.

Promote consensus-building opportunities with representatives of the tourist and fishing sectors towards the improvement of the zoned areas of the park.

Generate alliances with local training organizations to build the skills of local groups on alternative income-generating activities.

d. México

Tourism pressure on protected areas

Location

The State of Quintana Roo is the Mexican area included in the Mesoamerican Reef System. It is characterized by the presence of extremely large protected areas, such as Sian Ka’am (528,147 ha), Yum Balam (154,000 ha), Chinchorro (144,380 ha), which show interest and political will to preserve their valuable ecosystems. This area also shows adequate planning of large-scale tourist activities, as shown by the ecological territorial zoning of Isla Mujeres, Cancún, Riviera Maya, Sian Kaán and Costa Maya, which have developed plans for the development of the hotel and tourist infrastructure along the Caribbean coast.

The fishing sector in México is well organized through state-promoted cooperatives. These organizations are actively involved in local decisions and enjoy public recognition. Fishing licenses granted by the government are collective, thus strengthening the activity as a member-based enterprise. There is one federation that groups 24 fishing cooperatives in the area.

The representatives of the fishermen’s cooperatives appreciate the links with their Central American peers, thanks to the exchanges promoted by SAM, because this has provided them with a better visualization about their sectoral demands and interests within the area’s development proposals.
During the negotiations for the declaration of protected areas in Quintana Roo, fishermen voiced their interests and are satisfied with the results obtained. Although the regulations impose restrictions on their activity because of the fact that this implies giving up a few of their traditional fishing areas, they expect the resources to recover and thus maintain the activity in the long term.

The pressure exerted on fishing resources, especially lobster, has been extensively studied and verified. Fishermen argue that they abide by established regulations but cannot do anything about the illegal fishing that takes place in some of the communities and islands. Fishermen have been trained on tourist activities and combine both activities. Even the cooperatives are actively involved in both activities.

The work of the CONANP protected area system is largely linked to the promotion of local development; there is a development conservation strategy and a sustainable regional development program (PRODERS) in place, which includes income-generation activities for the population based on temporary employment, tourist infrastructure, boat improvement, support to the production of sustainable activities like apiaries, small livestock, aquaculture, medicinal plants, etc. Their main objective is environmental conservation and the strategy is to work with the impoverished communities, which are the ones that usually live in the protected areas or the areas of influence and depend on the natural resources produced in these areas.

Both, communities and fishing sector, work well with CONANP staff, as the institution's policy is to hire people from within their area of work. In this way, they ensure a good knowledge about the problems, acceptance by the communities, and the equitable representation of its employees (women and men of different origin).

It should be noted that surveillance, sanctioning and application of the legislation are responsibility of the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (PROFEPA), another federal institution of the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, as well as the National Fishing Commission (CONAPESCA) which are involved in surveillance of fishing activities. CONANP provides fuel and room and board to ensure the presence of PROFEPA and CONAPESCA as required in the natural protected areas.

**Conflict**

The greatest problem is illegal fishing in protected areas and the lack of surveillance and control by responsible government entities. This situation is directly linked to the different fishing practices and techniques.

Trawling close to the shoreline is a practice that has a negative impact on finfish. In the countries where such a practice exists, a decrease has been experienced in
terms of the size and age of the first catch, without much benefit in the medium and long term for the communities that fish with bait or nets. Except for the owners of trawling boats, profits will be short lived. When catches and sizes decrease, fishermen immediately react by reducing the opening of their nets and promoting illegal fishing practices, such as dynamite explosions.

Tourism and especially sports fishing are displacing fishermen from their fishing areas. Tourism has been extending along the coast and constructions, noise, light, contamination resulting from inappropriate waste management, mangrove reduction, have a direct impact on fishing. Studies are needed to evaluate the carrying capacity of the area and the effects of massive tourist activities.

There is no question about the fact that the promotion of sustainable fishing activities and facilitation of a sustainable coastal and marine tourism, are regulated by the coastal activities of industries adjacent to SAM, as previously mentioned, In other words, there is a race in terms of the use of the natural resources, so long as their quality is sustained (e.g., the reef ecosystem). In this sense, tourist service providers and fishermen are competing for the maximum use of any species provided these do not disappear from their environment. The same is true about the users of the resources located adjacent to SAM, though with less regulations than for the providers of tourist services and fishermen.

**Stakeholders**

It should be pointed out that the staff working in the conservation and management of protected areas expressed concern about the inclusion in the analysis of other stakeholders involved in economic activities with a significant impact on the ecosystems and adjacent areas up stream (mining waste, wastewater production, unregulated coastal urban development, use of non-degradable pesticides and fertilizers, etc.) and which on occasions affect or dramatically modify the environment in the region, without proposals to preclude or modify their effects in the short or long term. It is quite likely that the greatest negative impacts within SAM ecosystems may be produced by the productive activities adjacent to this region.

Additional studies should be undertaken about the users of the natural resources and the economic value of such use; what products are reintegrated to the environment and what is the quality of such use, and the applicable laws and regulations should be amended accordingly.

The analysis and economic assessment about the actions taken by a country towards the conservation of the Reef System should be a priority. In this way, the actions established for the representative economic sectors, may have positive results on environmental conservation as a whole and the existence of SAM in the long term.
Another element mentioned was information and coordination among the countries comprised in SAM. Deficiencies are pointed out regarding the environmental information systems in terms of the provision of management elements or the facilitation of decision making at a regional level. Quite likely, there are isolated reports and specific and temporary actions in some parts of the region, but these do not favor the articulation and impact of the actions proposed.

The natural protected areas located in the Mexican SAM have developed public environmental awareness and public formal and informal campaigns (which still are not enough). This is probably one of the areas with greater impact on the different sectors of society. There still is a need to incorporate education actions in terms of specific productive proposals. The involvement of users in these environmental education campaigns should translate into higher levels of action within SAM. The public should be informed about the approach to the current problems in the region, thus promoting feedback in terms of possible solution or management proposals.

Actions should be taken towards increasing the generation of small-scale productive projects based on the use of the regions’ indigenous materials, with particular consideration to gender equity. The promotion and training of women and elderly people should be a permanent priority, for the establishment of small industries and recovery of traditional values and culture through efficient campaigns targeting marginalized ethnic groups. It is important to assess the behavioral patterns of impoverished populations and the probable economic and social impacts through the different scenarios. Based on the results of this assessment, it will be possible to consider the cost of investing in productive projects and actual or future impacts on the country’s economic and natural resources, for each group (with or without project financial support).

### Characterization of the stakeholders in the area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Position/Interests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federation of cooperatives with 24 member cooperatives, with a total of approximately 3000 fishermen.</td>
<td>Work coordination and serving as the fishermen’s spokesmen. Standing up for the rights of the fishermen before the pressure of other sectors operating in the same fishing areas.</td>
<td>Maintain fishing activities. Demand increased surveillance of illegal fishing. They feel that regulated tourism benefits them. They combine tourist and fishing activities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fishing and tourism are profitable productive activities undertaken by the communities at different scales: fishing, which has been taking place for a longer period of time, and lower profitability and personnel training; and the latter, of more recent creation and involving greater professionalization in terms of the provision of tourist services. However, as productive activities, these may be evaluated and regulated in economic terms, considering per capita income, benefit or impact on the social groups and the natural resources.
### FISHING SECTOR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Federación Regional de Sociedades Cooperativas Pesqueras</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Condition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Federación Regional de Sociedades Cooperativas Pesqueras</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>operating in all of the municipalities.</td>
<td>They feel displaced by the growing tourist activity (infrastructure).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Asociación de pescadores de Holbox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Founded in 1965, it has 82 members</td>
<td>The number of fishermen and illegal fishing activities is increasing, which facts have a direct incidence on the depletion of fishing resources, which, in turn, results in a lower profitability of the activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Cooperativa Vanguardia del Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Founded in 1989, it has 89 members</td>
<td>Participation in the discussions involving the declaration of the Yum Balan area and development of the management plan. The community is well aware of the benefits generated by the whale shark and therefore do not capture it. They have a well-coordinated relationship with CONANP, including agreements and a code of ethics. CONANP was highly supportive in the wake of hurricane Wilma.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Cooperativa de pescadores de Cabo Catoche</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Founded in 1988, it has 27 members involved in finfish, lobster and octopus fishing activities.</td>
<td>Work is carried out in coordination with CONANP to update the condition of the fishing resources. The cooperatives of the area work together.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### INSTITUTIONAL SECTOR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federally responsible for environmental and natural resource conservation, through management, monitoring and inspection.</td>
<td>Responsible for surveillance, licenses, inspections and administrative processes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Position/Interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fishing Sector</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type</strong></td>
<td><strong>Condition</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Federación Regional de Sociedades Cooperativas Pesqueras</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Commission on Protected Areas (CONANP)</strong></td>
<td>A shark code was established in 2003. They have an inclusive policy and encourage community involvement in standard setting. For three years now they have been operating within the Regional Sustainable Development Program (PRODERS), based on direct subsidies to community groups for activities that promote natural resource conservation in the region. Their personnel includes individuals from every community in the area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Federal Environmental Protection Agency (PROFEPA).</strong></td>
<td>Responsible for monitoring and inspection of the application of environmental and natural resource regulations throughout the country, and in coordination with CONAPESCA, surveillance and inspection of fishing activities in the protected natural areas. Both impose sanctions. It faces shortages in terms of budget, personnel and infrastructure to perform its duties, for which reason fishing as well as tourist cooperatives and CONANP contribute the resources needed for surveillance (boats, gas).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fisheries Institute</strong></td>
<td>At first, the cooperatives were against the creation of protected areas, but as a result of the negotiations (work meetings) carried out, they now have no problems with it. The Management Plan was developed together with the participation of fishermen, various institutions and groups. They have fishing research centers in Puerto Morelos and Isla Mujeres</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Lessons learned**

Although it was part of the National Institute as a coordinating unit, CONANP was created in 2000 as an entity decentralized from SEMARNAT.
- Fishermen can combine traditional activities and appreciate tourism-generated income.
- Other non-visible stakeholders receiving economic benefits or services from the ecosystems in the area should be identified and integrated into the analysis.
- Good communication with the stakeholders promotes community and productive sector appropriation of the measures taken for the conservation of the area’s biodiversity.
- Surveillance always generates community reaction; it is advisable for the conservation responsible institution to be considered an allied in development rather than a policeman who punishes the community that fails to apply current regulations.
- The availability of an integral information system that articulates different levels and territories will result in better decisions and contributions to conflict resolution.
- Fishermen’s cooperatives are consolidated organizations which voice is heard in the region; government support allows them to have the necessary boats and gear to properly carry out their activities.
- Conservation management makes more dynamic the relations between the fishing and tourist sectors, and may support income generation for the population. Fishermen wish to further their training on tourist activities.
- The uncontrolled urban growth of tourist infrastructure makes evident the limitations of the model.
III. Proposal to address the conflicts generated between the fishing and tourist sectors and SAM protected areas

To understand the dynamics surrounding the use of a natural resource and the confrontations caused between the diverse interests involved, it is important to recover theoretical-methodological elements relating to conflict resolution. In section II of this document several types of conflicts were described, most of which are related to the over-exploitation of resources, the use of territories and the definition of priorities about the economic activities to be promoted. The purpose of this section is to contribute a few elements to assist in dealing with these situations.

In the conflict resolution process it is important to take as the starting point the ethical and work principles, as these become a guide to address the problems identified in the previous section. The main constant factor in every conflict is the lack of information by the stakeholders involved and the need to open opportunities and participate actively and consciously in the decision-making processes involving natural resources.

When lack of information exists, the sectors’ participation is very unequal. There are many times when even information provision spaces lack the necessary conditions to enable its appropriation by the communities and users of the resources.

This is essentially a responsibility of the organizational venues and the institutions involved in conflict discussion and resolution. Such condition is related to the development of the institutions in each of the countries in the region, and the role played by them, whether local government, central government programs, ministries, NGOs, etc.

For this reason, the following recommendations emphasize the adequate identification of the participating sectors, the need to recognize the interests present and the conditions needed for a negotiation, especially in terms of ensuring adequate communication and attitude in the pursuit of consensus or satisfactory arrangements.

It is expected that the actions promoted by SAM in the region may foster the development of conflict resolution skills while generating meeting opportunities between the sectors involved. Hopefully, progress will also be made in terms of institutional capacity to seek solutions, improve communication with the communities and play a central role in the development and articulation of the interests present in the area.
a. Principles of conflict resolution

To be able to work in conflict resolution processes, one must ensure the implementation of reflection and learning mechanisms for all parties involved. The principles upon which conflict resolution is based, make reference to basic concepts of pluralism, governance, social communication, inclusion, active citizen participation, human rights, heritage, life conservation and development.

Any environmental management action must recognize the fact that natural resources are scarce and represent a point of consistency of diverse interests, which most of the times are opposing.

The organizations responsible for the protection of natural resources in protected areas must recognize that the communities, organizations, social groups and individuals have a direct interest on these resources. In some cases, the sectors will be very enthusiastic about helping in the protection of a protected area, while there will be other sectors or groups that do not view natural resource conservation as a beneficial option as they feel this will affect their interests and needs.

b. Conflict resolution in protected areas

The first step towards conflict resolution is an analysis of the different elements involved in the conflict. Such elements make reference to the background, context, stakeholders, positions, interests, values and how they are linked to each other.

It is necessary to find the answers to questions such as: what is going on in the protected area? What are the different groups of interest in the area? What are the concerns and needs of these groups? What elements have contributed to define the present situation?

1. Identification of the conflict

The first step to address conflict resolution is an analysis of the situation, or a disaggregation of the reality to enable understanding of the different elements of the problem. This will contribute to a better understanding about the situation in order to take proper actions to resolve it. In the case of the conflicts identified in the Mesoamerican Reef System, it is
necessary to undertake the analysis together with the different parties or groups involved. Efforts should be made to learn about the positions and interests of the sectors linked to the form and benefits arising out of the natural resources. This will allow the identification of interests shared between the different groups and focus on these to promote conciliation and negotiation.

The following matrix may be a useful tool for the analysis on points of convergence:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>Identification of the most important matter in dispute and related or secondary matters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Direct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indirect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Institutional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(*): Techniques may be used to help identify power relations, such as the power map, which allows stakeholder classification (allies, opponents, undecided) and provide information regarding the answers required in the section of the matrix. See annex.

2. Identification of stakeholders and their interests

In the case of group work, the stakeholder analysis may be carried out using the stakeholder map technique. This graphic and participatory technique is carried out by the stakeholders involved in the conflict under the guidance of a facilitator. A diagram is made about the main stakeholders who are classified according to the analysis matrix, in order to properly represent them and show their interrelations. Consideration may be given as to whether the map is an exact map of the area where the conflict is located, or where the conflictive resource utilization activities are located, or it may be a symbolic map showing the power and collaboration relations between the different stakeholders.

Annex 2 includes a technique to incorporate gender equity elements into a power analysis matrix, thereby contributing additional elements to the stakeholder analysis.
Example of a Stakeholder Map:

The use of the Power Interests Legitimacy technique (Chevalier, 2004) helps all sectors involved to learn about the characteristics of the social players in conflict, as well as to analyze the power relations, interests and legitimacy of each stakeholder. The steps involved in this technique are:

1. **Identification of the situation** that requires stakeholder analysis.

2. **Identification of all the stakeholders** that may be affected by the conflict, including the employees of the conservation project or program, the economic sectors, local government, communities, etc. Each stakeholder will be represented by a symbol.

3. **Identification of the level of power or resources** that the stakeholder may use. According to Chevalier, power could take four different forms: economic wealth, political authority, ability to use force and violence threats, and information access.

4. **Identification of the levels of legitimacy of each stakeholder.** This is related to the stakeholders’ recognition about the rights and responsibilities of a stakeholder, which fact places the stakeholder in a high position.
The process is as follows: The different stakeholders are located on a Venn diagram (this technique is explained in Annex 3) according to criteria of power, legitimacy and interests; then a group analysis is made on the diagram about each stakeholder’s position and levels of influence, and the objectives and future actions are defined. It is necessary to establish the collaboration or conflict links between the different stakeholders, which will help to establish alliances.

TRADUCCIÓN:

PIL DIAGRAM:
Prominence (PIL) of the Stakeholders Involved in a Conflict

P = Power
L = Legitimacy
I = Interests

Stakeholder classification according to location on the diagram

1. PIL = Determinant
2. PL = Influential
3. PI = Belligerent
4. IL = Vulnerable
5. P = Latent
6. I = Marginal
7. L = Discretionary

Adapted from the model of the Social Stakeholders Information System, developed by Jacques Chevalier
http://www.sas-prn.com/guidelines/guideline_principles_sp.htm
Upon identifying the stakeholders, it is necessary to locate them within the context of the conflict and the reality studied. This technique (PIL) Power Interests and Legitimacy allows carrying out this process jointly with the communities and the stakeholders.

The location of the different stakeholders on the diagram and group analysis allows viewing their situation with respect to other social stakeholders; identifying the stakeholders with whom alliances may be forged to improve negotiation abilities, identify opponents and their alliances, and determine each stakeholder’s weight in terms of power and legitimacy.

This technique may be applied in a more complex manner with the participation of several social stakeholders. Several stakeholder profiles are elaborated to enrich the analysis of the situation. All techniques may be adapted to the needs and working conditions.

3. Negotiation spaces

One additional principle of the proposal is the promotion of communication opportunities between the different stakeholders involved in the conflict. The purpose is the exchange of information and discussion about problems, opportunities and possibilities to take actions to work out the conflict. This social communication promotes and favors dialogue among the different groups through meeting spaces.

In this way, by promoting dialogues and direct confrontation of the different points of view on the basis of reflection, discussions and joint actions, it is possible to reduce the gaps and conflicts between legal matters (applicable) and legitimate matters (resulting from social consensus).

To achieve a space for the exchange and analysis of the environmental situation, the population must have adequate information. Real participatory processes recognize the importance of the social stakeholders’ access to information. Principle 10 of the 1992 Declaration of Rio de Janeiro (Agenda XXI), stipulates the fundamental importance of having access to information, public participation and access to environmental justice, as the only way towards building environmental governance.

For example, in cases where the communities feel integrated into the definition of a restriction standard, whether related to territorial zoning, close seasons, or limitations to the productive activity, etc., the response to its observance is
different. The cases pointed out in Guatemala and México clearly illustrate this matter.

Within information sharing spaces between the different stakeholders, conditions should be developed to ensure a clear and respectful communication. To this effect, the communication process should promote listening with understanding and assertive expression. Each stakeholder linked to or involved in the conflict must not only be able to express its own needs and feelings in a constructive way, but also to understand the interests and aspirations of the other stakeholders. It is necessary to use methodologies that will help the different stakeholders to identify a legitimate process of communication and expression of different interests.

### 4. Communication skills

There are different exercises to help build communication skills, but it is only through practice that such ability is improved. One can use the technique involving “Dealing with Messages that are Hard Listening to”, which includes a few sentences expressed in non-assertive terms (judgments, accusations, offenses, etc.) that generally entail a certain degree of difficulty to a stakeholder with different interests.

When utilizing this technique it is necessary to follow the empathy-related steps and listen respectfully to these sentences. The second step involves working with these sentences to turn them into assertive expressions.

As the assertive expression seeks to use very specific observations, imagine a situation where you could feel the urge to express yourself in this manner, then express your assertiveness using the four steps: observation, feeling, need and petition.

Following is a detailed explanation about the technique “Dealing with Messages that are Hard Listening to”.

How should communication be established with the other sectors involved in a negotiation?

How does an organization contribute to stakeholder communication?
DEALING WITH THE “MESSAGES THAT ARE HARD LISTENING TO”  
BY OURSELVES AND THE OTHERS  


a. Exercise about Empathic Listening

Taking the sentences shown on the table “phrases to be used in the exercise”, you can practice about the empathic way to listen to messages that are hard listening to. As it is often the case, there are times when these messages do not include all the information about a person’s situation, but based on what the person says, how it is said, and the context, we are able to make an assumption about the feelings and needs of the person concerned. Such assumption may be raised to the other person by way of a question, for this person to confirm whether or not these are his/her true feelings and needs. The purpose is not to “guess correctly”, but to show our interest in what is happening to the other person.

For each phrase in this exercise, imagine a context within which a person would say that message, and try to identify his/her possible needs and interests.

Example:
Message that is hard listening to:
“Why attend the meeting, if politicians come only to tell lies and make false promises”.

Possible empathic responses:
• “Mr./Ms., are you upset because for you it is very important to trust the people in public office?”
• “It seems to me that you are distrustful and would like to be treated with respect and honesty, is that so?”

b. Exercise about Respectful and Assertive Expression

Using the same phrases, imagine yourself in a situation that would drive you to express yourself in this manner. Try to identify which would be the situation?, which would be your feelings and needs? If there is not sufficient information to describe the situation, use your imagination to add the necessary details.

Using the communication principles express your observation, feelings and needs. If you wish, you may also try to end by making a petition to the other person that is precise, positive and focused on the present.

Example: (based on the phrase of the previous example)
Message that is hard listening to:
“Why attend the meeting, if politicians come only to tell lies and make false promises”.

Possible assertive expressions:
• “When I recall that two years ago this congressman came and promised us the facilities for the fishermen’s cooperative, and I see that to this date the construction has not started, I feel angry, because I want to be treated with respect and honesty”.

• “When I hear the Minister say that they will build the dock, I feel very distrustful and need more clarity and certainty. Would they be willing to devote twenty minutes at the end of the meeting to explain to us how long it will take them to complete the work, and how they will keep the community informed about its progress?”
5. Mediation

The third principle of the proposal is negotiation and mediation towards conflict resolution. To ensure a good negotiation process, the parties involved must have a clear understanding about their needs, the motivations of the sector they are negotiating with, and which are the aspects that are likely to obstruct a solution. In case the conflict precludes the parties from negotiating, it will then be necessary to call upon a third party who, from a neutral position, may support the parties in conflict in order to facilitate their understanding and enabling the creation of opportunities where the parties may feel comfortable to negotiate.

External facilitation should be:

- Recognized as an independent body
- Respected by all concerned
- Capable of relating with all under the terms of its negotiators
- Capable of listening and asking key questions
- Capable of extracting the best of the parties in conflict and help them see a better future for themselves and their communities

(Borrini, G., et. al., 2001)
When opportunities are promoted for the various stakeholders to meet, consideration should be given to the fact that differences may exist in the stakeholders’ power relations, which makes the stakeholders feel uncomfortable, or unsure to express their viewpoint, interests and concerns. In such cases, a proactive role should be played in order to establish a schedule for meetings, and participation rules and procedures, and even to offer support to facilitate the negotiation. It is important to secure the stakeholders’ trust and take the initiative about a detailed organization of the first meetings between the parties.

The negotiation between stakeholders should be based on their interests, so that each party may understand the interests of the other, and try to find joint solutions to meet the interests of both parties. To undertake a negotiation based on interests it is necessary to:

- a. Separate the persons from the problem
- b. Focus on the interests, not on the positions
- c. Generate mutually beneficial options
- d. Use objective criteria

Following are some of the recommendations that should be taken into consideration when preparing a negotiation:

- The stakeholders involved should be well informed and organized.
- Consideration should be given to the matters to be discussed, including clarification about each party’s position and interests.
- Negotiators should have decision-making power to do as agreed.
- A clear understanding should exist regarding the causes and triggering factors involving conflicts.
- Definition about the expectations and different scenarios agreeable and minimum conditions acceptable to each party.
- A determination should be made about a discussion space, a set of proposed rules and procedures, and a preliminary agenda for meetings and events.
- If necessary, professional support should be sought to facilitate negotiation meetings and, if required, mediate in the conflicts.
- The purpose of the meetings is to reach an agreement about conflict resolution, the short- and long-term strategy to reach a solution, and how the parties will be organized to implement the strategy and redefine it as needed.

---

Different techniques may be used to facilitate negotiations or for capacity building between stakeholders. Following is an example of such a tool:

EXERCISING VARIOUS NEGOTIATION STYLES

Source: Arias Foundation for Peace and Human Progress. 2006

**Procedure**

The group is divided into two small groups

The groups are asked to carry out a negotiation exercise about: how to use the beach area. It is a situation where there are two groups of stakeholders and a conflict of interests between both. In addition, the group is divided; some support one sector and others another sector. It has been decided that attempts should be made to reach an agreement prior to voting.

The exercise is undertaken based on the table shown below, trying out different negotiation styles: hard (devastating the other group); soft (yielding); and the negotiation based on interests.

Both groups start by applying the “hard” style of negotiation. At this moment, the facilitator observes and takes notes.

The exercise is repeated but this time using the “soft” style, and finally, the style based on “interests”, where each party attempts the best solution.

Finally, in a plenary session participants share how they felt about the exercise.

What are the lessons learned? Consideration is given to the need to practice the negotiation.
### Table to work on the above exercise:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Image 1" /></td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Image 2" /></td>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Image 3" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The participants are enemies.</td>
<td>The participants are friends.</td>
<td>The participants are people who wish to solve the problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victory is the goal.</td>
<td>Agreement is the goal.</td>
<td>The goal is a realistic result, reached on the basis of efficiency and in a friendly manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demand concessions as a prerequisite of the relation.</td>
<td>Make concessions to further the relation.</td>
<td>Separate the persons from the problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be tough on the problem.</td>
<td>Be soft on the people and the problem.</td>
<td>Be friendly with the people and assertive with the problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not trust the others.</td>
<td>Base the negotiation on trust.</td>
<td>Separate yourself from the feelings of trust.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deepen your position.</td>
<td>Change your position easily.</td>
<td>Focus on the interests of both parties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make threats.</td>
<td>Show the minimum acceptable to you.</td>
<td>Avoid revealing the minimum acceptable to you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lie about the minimum that would be acceptable to you.</td>
<td>Take losses only from your side.</td>
<td>Bring forward common-benefit alternatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demand unilateral benefits as the price to pay for the agreement.</td>
<td>Look for an answer: one they will accept.</td>
<td>Develop multiple options for both parties to choose from.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look for a single answer: only one acceptable to you.</td>
<td>Insist on an agreement.</td>
<td>Insist on using objective criteria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Try to get away with your position.</td>
<td>Try to avoid a confrontation of wills.</td>
<td>Try to win a result based on factors separated from the will.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Try to win a dispute of wills.</td>
<td>Yield to the pressure.</td>
<td>Reason and keep an open mind to reasoning: do not yield to pressure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exert pressure.</td>
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</table>
In the case of disagreements between the parties over objective matters, it is advisable to seek expert advice (for instance, someone with biology expertise to explain the characteristics of a habitat or a marine species, or with hydrology expertise to calculate the amount of water that may be sustainably extracted, or an elderly person to recall traditional fishing practices, *inter alia*). This in no way means that the opinion of the specialist should prevail, but if that person is able to give an opinion above economic or political considerations, it may help to elucidate a controversy.

Mediation is yet another helpful mechanism in conflict resolution. Mediation is an assisted negotiation process, where the mediator facilitates the process and the parties involved determine the outcome. Mediation is based on the fact that it is much more likely that an agreement reached by all concerned will be far more lasting than one where one of the parties wins and the other loses.

**The role of the mediator**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SHOULD</th>
<th>SHOULD NOT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide information</td>
<td>Does not act with justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generate trust</td>
<td>Does not advise the parties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer an efficient communication model</td>
<td>Does not need to be convinced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administer the process</td>
<td>Does not allow the parties to beat about the bush</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help the parties to arrange their ideas and feelings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulate the balance of power</td>
<td>Does not allow the parties to bend the rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assist the parties in order to reach satisfactory agreements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legitimize the process</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Be a reality screener</td>
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</table>

The mediation process entails the following stages:

- In the first stage, which involves screening and evaluation, the mediator meets with each party separately, to determine whether they feel that the situation deems mediation.
- The next stage, introduction, involves a process with both parties, to explain the characteristics of the process, the mediator’s role, and the basic communication and respect rules are agreed upon.
- The process continues with the identification of interests, where each party is assigned time and space to clearly explain their viewpoints and position.
Through the communication facilitated by the mediator, interests are clarified and the conflict is delimited.

- Subsequently, alternatives are developed to meet all interests, a space is opened to discuss the alternatives and the final choice, to finally seek either the definition of a total or partial agreement, viable and satisfactory to both parties, or come to the conclusion that an agreement cannot be reached.

For an effective mediation, it is important to recognize that some of the functions to be carried out in the mediation process, are related to the clarification and improvement of the understanding, the differentiation between values and interests, promoting the search for options, building the capacity of the parties to solve the problem, promoting the parties’ understanding about each other’s perspective, moving towards dialogue and contributing to identify common grounds. The effective result of these functions is based on how well the mediator will deal with communication.

### 6. Agreement follow up

The last principle of this proposal relates to the elaboration and follow up of agreements by the stakeholders following conflict resolution. The understanding reached is expected to be realistic and lasting. It should, furthermore, consider unforeseen or new circumstances that may change the conditions, for which reason, mechanisms should be implemented to allow the parties to return to the negotiation table to renegotiate as required.

When the parties reach an agreement, it is necessary to draft a document indicating the solutions reached. The document should include not only the solutions but also the agreements reached by the parties, including if resources are needed to carry out the agreements and how long it will take to implement the decisions made. The document should be elaborated on a participatory basis to ensure it is satisfactory to all parties concerned and thus avoid future conflicts. It should be prepared in a clear and precise language.

Example of a few basic elements necessary to draft the document:

- Presentation of the parties involved, including witnesses and mediators, if any
- Matter or problem addressed
- Place, date and time of drafting
- List of agreements reached by the parties, making reference to the execution and delivery of each, persons responsible for agreement follow up, and the basis for renegotiation or revision
- Signature and legal capacity of the parties’ representatives
During agreement drafting, the following question should be asked: how and who will verify the application of the decisions agreed upon? The answer may be included as a clause, paragraph or annex to the document. It is essential to include a revision and renegotiation clause, involving agreement revision as well as penalties applicable in case of non-compliance.

A time period is normally considered in the revision process; this may be every six months, or annually, or as deemed appropriate by the parties. The place and participants should be clearly established, as well as the necessary information to discuss and verify agreement compliance, and the date for such revision. With respect to the renegotiation, the parties should clearly establish the procedure to be followed in case of failure by one of the parties to comply with the agreement, or in the event of an unforeseen circumstance precluding the execution of the agreements negotiated.

The negotiation process should end with a meeting where stakeholders are informed about the outcome of the process. This meeting should be attended by the top authorities of the negotiating parties. The meeting should serve to set out the common vision reached and inform about the document and agreements reached. This opportunity may also serve for the parties involved to publicly commit themselves to respect and guarantee their compliance with the agreement reached.

Finally, it is important to recognize that during the negotiation phase it is possible to obtain such results as those pointed by Borrelli, et al., 2001:

- A vision about the future expected drawn up by all parties involved.
- An analysis about the situation and matters or problems involved, and a strategy to reach the common vision, subdivided into components with clear objectives.
- Joint management plans and agreements for specific actions negotiated between the parties involved.
- One or more organizations established to follow up on the agreements reached.
- An agreement legitimized by the different stakeholders.
- Follow-up documents to control and learn about the agreements made, which may include indicators, timetables, and responsible organizations, etc.
- A shared experience on analysis, planning and decision making for a number of stakeholders involved in the resolution of the conflict.
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Zaldaña, Claudia. La Unión hace el poder: Procesos de participación y empoderamiento. (“Towards Equity” Series No. 5), San José, Costa Rica. 1999


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www.mbrs.org.bz, 4 years promoting conservation and sustainable use, September, 2005.
ANNEX 1

Interview for Conflict Resolution – SAM

Information about the organization

Date: ___________
Place of the interview:________________________________________________

Name of person interviewed:__________________________________________
Name of organization:_______________________________________________
Location of the organization:__________________________________________
Purpose of the organization:__________________________________________

How is the organization integrated?

Number ______________    Residence_________________

Major activities of the organization:
  a. 
  b. 
  c. 

In the case of a productive activity, please complete

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>quantity</th>
<th>resource</th>
<th>sales</th>
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Total sales

Conflict resolution

What are the major problems in the area (fishing-tourism-protected areas)
  a. 
  b. 
  c. 
  c.
What are the major conflicts experienced by your organization (fishing-tourism-protected areas)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conflict</th>
<th>Cause</th>
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<td></td>
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Conflict 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Involved</th>
<th>What is your interest? (common-different-opposing)</th>
<th>What actions were taken?</th>
<th>What were the demands?</th>
<th>What was the outcome?</th>
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In what socio-economic-environmental context did the conflict arise?

What are other important or relevant elements about the conflict’s background?

Was the demand made by each sector fair?

By whom and where were the decisions made to resolve the conflict or make visible the demands of the group?

Were alliances forged between the groups involved in the conflict?

What were the alliances?

Did the people know about what was going on in connection with the conflict?
Conflict 2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Involved</th>
<th>What is your interest?</th>
<th>What actions were taken?</th>
<th>What was the outcome?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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</table>

Why did the sectors involved in the conflict act as they did?

Was the conflict resolved?

How was the conflict resolved?

Did the resolution of the conflict improve the condition of the resources or the conditions of the people who use them?

What were the most successful measures taken to resolve the conflict in a beneficial manner for your sector?

What were the weak points of your organization in the negotiation of the conflict?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Involved</th>
<th>What is your interest?</th>
<th>What actions were taken?</th>
<th>What was the outcome?</th>
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What were the most successful measures taken to resolve the conflict in a beneficial manner for your sector?

What were the weak points of your organization in the negotiation of the conflict?
ANNEX 2

The Matrix of Power

“Los gráficos”, Módulo de enfoque REFLECT, CIAZO, El Salvador, 1998

**Objective:** Representation and analysis about the participation of women and men in the decision-making processes of an organization, community or project.

**Duration:** 2 hours

**Resources:** Flat surface: board, flipcharts, markers, color pencils, cardboard cards, tape.

**Procedure:**

1. The facilitator prepares a matrix in advance (like the attached example).

2. Participants are divided into two groups to respond the following question: Which were the most important decisions made by the project, organization or community during the last year?

3. The answers are written (or drawn) on the cards (one answer per card).

4. The cards of each group are presented to the plenary, and a selection is made of the most common and most significant to the participants.

5. These cards are placed one by one on the rows of the matrix.

6. Two groups are integrated: one with women and another with men. Each group should identify the decisions in which they were involved.
7. In the plenary each group indicates on the matrix its participation, by coloring the corresponding box (one color may be assigned to each sex).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DECISIONS</th>
<th>SEX</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WOMEN</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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</table>

8. Upon completion, the matrix is “studied” and reflection is guided with questions like:

- In which decisions were only women involved, in which were only men, and in which were both of them?
- What effects did this participation have on the project, organization or community?
- How have these decisions affected women?
- Which decisions caused conflict between men and women?

9. To conclude, the facilitator may guide the elaboration of some conclusions.

5 Source: Zaldaña, Claudia. In unity there is power: Process of participation and empowerment. (“Towards Equity” Series No. 5, pp. 64-65).
ANNEX 3 – Venn Diagram

* The dots represent community members

Organizational / institutional analysis: Venn diagram
Purpose of the exercise: Learning about the organizations and groups in the community, and how their members visualize these; understanding the interactions between these organizations. It may help to determine planning responsibilities.

Duration: 1-2 hours

Resources: board or flipchart and markers. Paper circles of different sizes (at least 20 of 3 different sizes).

Methodology:

The meeting should include representatives of the different sectors present in the community. It may be advisable to divide participants into smaller work groups.

Step 1: initiate a discussion about institutional aspects. Propose the diagram as a visualization instrument.

Step 2: ask participants to name all the organizations and institutions that affect community life. The discussion may start with the question: Which institution is most important for the community’s development? Let participants decide what is important.

Step 3: write the names of the “most important” organizations on the larger circles (1 per circle), and place these on the board; do the same with the other institutions, in order of importance, using smaller circles each time.

Step 4: ask participants which relationships exist between organizations. Place the paper circles in such a manner that the institutions that relate to each other touch each other on the board, or if too complicated, show the relations with dates. This step may require considerable discussion.

Step 5: at the end, a diagram is obtained about the inter-institutional relations in the community. If the work was carried out in groups, compare the results of the different groups.

NOTE: the validity of the exercise lies on triangulation (compare the views of the different players).  

6 Source: Frans Geilfus 80 Herramientas para el desarrollo participativo: diagnóstico, planificación, monitoreo, evaluación. Pages 40-41.
ANNEX 4

Chetumal Declaration: I Congress of Mesoamerican Fishermen

There is great concern regarding the depletion of the fishing resources and while the causes are known, it is recognized that the Mesoamerican Reef System represents a wealth of marine natural resources with no political boundaries, and that many of the threats posed to this productive activity cannot be confronted through national unilateral actions, but require effective answers by the four countries involved.

Fishermen feel that there is an urgent need to join efforts towards improving management and the application of a transboundary policy to foster sustainable fishing practices.

Fishermen demand involvement in the development of legal frameworks, management plans and investigation. Fishing activities should be assessed from an economic, social and environmental point of view and investigations should be undertaken in connection with snail and lobster production, *inter alia*. In addition, training should be practical and respond to the needs of the sector. The regulatory framework should be stricter and actions should be taken to ensure application and harmonization with the legislation of all four countries. Damaging practices should be regulated and current legislation revised, and actions should also be taken to ensure the protection of the fishermen’s rights.

**Evaluation:**

One of the subjects repeatedly brought up during the meetings was the need to focus on alternative livelihood means far beyond training programs. As pointed out by the TIDE Director, continued follow up is required in terms of the availability of equipment and dealing with infrastructure limitations, capital investment and marketing. Community members pointed out that they already have a good number of trained tour operators, but what they need is loans for equipment purchase, internet access to markets, and accounting and bookkeeping training for small economic activity development.

Discussions with community groups are essential to determine how livelihood activities based on SAM may be developed based on previous livelihood activities. For example, the discussions carried out in Punta Gorda pointed to the fact that instead of focusing on additional training, efforts should be made towards the development of a **revolving fund** and training on small-scale business administration.

Consideration should also be given to non-tourist alternatives, such as aquaculture (ornamental reef fish, coral cultivation, mangrove oysters, etc.).
Two of the most successful activities in the region were the workshop on co-management of fishing activities and information sharing among fishermen.

Tourism

Concern exists regarding the exponential growth of tourism in the region; for instance, between 2002 and 2003, the cruise industry has experienced an increase of over 500% in Belize; and in México, the growth projections for the Maya Riviera are threefold, from 1.2 millions in the metropolitan area of Cancún to more than 3 millions in the Maya Riviera between Cancún and Chetumal. This activity is also growing at a fast pace around the Islas de la Bahía.

Such rapid growth, along with development investment and the resulting migration from the mainland, are exerting an unsustainable pressure over the fragile ecosystems of the islands. The actions to deal with solid and water waste is inadequate and the coastal areas are experiencing degradation.

Concern also exists about the fact that infrastructure investment to cope with the accelerated tourist development in the Maya Riviera, which includes several PMAs and a Biosphere Reserve, may proceed without adequate environmental planning (for example, Strategic Environmental Evaluations), or without the application of existing regulations, adequate licenses and payments for contamination. Such tendencies may undermine the actions undertaken in the region by the SAM Project and its partners towards the conservation of SAM and the delivery of the benefits arising out of its sustainable use to a large group of stakeholders. In addition, the Free Trade Agreement recently signed between Central America and the United States, which includes Guatemala and Honduras, increases the possibility of increased economic and agricultural activities in the region. This, in turn, may lead to further increasing the pressure on the environmental and natural resources. In general terms, these threats point out the need for good governance and transparent policies in the region, consistent with the principles of sustainable use and conservation of ecosystem goods and services, upon which are dependent tourism, fishing activities, maritime transportation and other sectors of the coastal area.

The environmental and social impacts of the cruise industry has generated great concern. While recognizing the importance of the cruise industry as a significant source of new income for the region, in discussions held with stakeholders, concern has been voiced regarding the need for a sustainable cruise policy based on reliable scientific data and the allocation of the revenues generated by this activity to the affected communities. A new Cruise Policy was implemented in Belize, as a result of which the number of cruise visitors allowed has increased by 100%, from 4000 to 8000 tourists per day, which in the high season could well double the regular population of Belize City.
Despite the environmental and social impacts that such an increase may cause, there is no evidence that this is an informed policy based on studies involving the carrying capacity and/or acceptable levels of change. Evidence about systematic stakeholder consultations is also lacking, as is also the case in terms of making reference to industrial or good practice standards in other parts of the region, or even reparation/compensation policies in case of accidents or oil spills.

In spite of the importance of this sector, tourism activities under Component 3 were ignored. This sub-component needs strengthening, and steps have been taken to hire a tourism advisor to modernize and revitalize the sequence of activities comprising this increasingly important Project sub-component. The conversations with personnel from the Honduran Tourism Institute (IHT) stressed the need for the implementation of the tourism component.

This includes publication and dissemination of a manual with information on good practices of coastal and marine tourism, based on case studies presented at the last Tourism Forum held in San Pedro Sula, and the initiation of the Exemplary Practices Study Tour(s). The latter will put tour operators of the region in contact with outstanding examples of sustainable tourism, from adventure and ecotourism (including diving, catch and release sports fishing, and sea kayaking) to cruise and beach tourism.

The subject involving the certification of tour operations outside of the hotel industry is currently at a standstill, pending new surveys on consumer demand for such certification (for example: the demand for a Blue Flag beach certification program in the region) and the feasibility of implementing certification programs throughout the region. In the meantime, the project is promoting the voluntary adoption of codes of conduct based on good international practices through Exemplary Practices Study Tours and dissemination of the good practices manual.

Recommendations:

- CCAD should increase to the highest level possible the development of the Sustainable Tourism strategy for SAM.
- CCAD should request SICA’s intervention to seek the Tourism Ministries commitment in subsequent elaborations of the MBC Strategy, as it has done with the Ministries of Agriculture in its own Commissions.
- UCP should partner with CORAL/ICRAN/UNEP regarding the publications of codes of conduct to ensure complementarity rather than duplication.
- UCP should undertake a feasibility study to determine the appropriateness of the Blue Flag Program based on consumer demand for such certification (for example: demand for a Blue Flag Program certification for the beaches in the region) and the feasibility of implementing the certification programs on a regional basis.
- UCP should work with SEMARNAT and state authorities to secure the Quintana Roo government’s commitment as new partner in the
implementation of SAM activities involving tourism, fishing, ecosystem monitoring and environmental awareness campaigns in México.

- The World Bank should pursue a possible association with Bonaire as a location for an information sharing site.
- The World Bank should facilitate discussions between NGOs, government and private institutions relating to the sustainability of the cruise industry.
- The National Coordinator of Belize and the National Committee for the Coral Reef Barrier, should investigate the tourist development plans in Punta Gorda, including the determination about which environmental/carrying capacity impact studies are planned. It should further be determined how SAM may be more closely involved in the Tourism Board of Belize for tourist development plan monitoring purposes. The potential threats posed by forest activities to the reefs should also be assessed.

Reconciliation of Fishing Regulations

Illegal fishing is yet another concern raised by fishermen from transboundary areas (for example: between Belize and México and in the Gulf of Honduras). This illegal activity is carried out largely by independent boats, not registered with the cooperatives, which take advantage of the close seasons of neighboring countries, where local fishing boat fleets are subject to close season limitations and patrolling is inadequate to ensure law enforcement along the coast. **Illegal fishing has prompted the need for uniform fishing regulations, covering at the very least transboundary reserves between neighboring countries, and the need for joint application of such regulations in order to unify the field of action and ensure compliance with close seasons and the so very important non-extraction areas.** Adequate coordination at regional level is needed, including coordination between sectors, especially between the fishing and tourist sectors. **This shows the need to harmonize sectoral policies that affect SAM with the need for sound management based on the ecosystem concept and good sustainable development options.** As described above, the Chair of the Fishermen’s Association of Quintana Roo, México, proposed a Regional Fishermen’s Congress, where the fishing cooperatives of the four countries would discuss current regional problems and agree on codes of conduct for sustainable fishing activities.

Recommendation:

- UCP should support and help coordinate the Fishermen’s Congress together with the fishing cooperatives and conservation organizations of the four countries, and related organizations as well.
- At the next meeting of the Advisory Group, UCP should bring to the table the subject of regulation application as a matter of potential joint investment in the near future.
Project reports

Progress reports, June, 2005.

Fishing sector

- Studies on fish addition
- The three sections that comprise the Training Manual, elaborated by the Fisheries Department of Belize, Green Reef and TNC, have been completed for final edition.
- The course on regional training on Co-management Techniques for Fishing Resources was conducted.
- Twenty delegates (fishermen, cooperative representatives, policy and fishing regulation makers) from the four countries were trained.
- English and Spanish versions of the Training Manual on Co-management Techniques for Fishing Resources in the SAM region, were edited, published and distributed.
- The Terms of Reference for Training on Sustainable Forms of Life were approved and disseminated.
- A coordination process was initiated with PROARCA, to undertake joint training on Ecosystem Management for Fishing Resource Use.
- Fishermen from Belize and México were trained on open-water diving, canoeing and snorkeling, sports fishing and nature tour guiding, which training also included the business administration course.
- In June, 2004, TIDE provided nature tour guiding and diving training for Honduras, Guatemala and Belize.
- A fishermen’s exchange between México and Belize (Punta Gorda and Punta Allen) was organized to share experiences on lobster and snail (“concha reina”) fishing, including fishing techniques. This exchange has strengthened their interest in promoting a Regional Fishermen’s Congress in the SAM region.
- The first phase of fishermen’s exchange activities took place in August 10-13, where an average of 12 fishermen from Quintana Roo visited the Fishermen’s Cooperatives in Belize. The visit was coordinated by the Fisheries Department and conducted by BFCA (Association of Fishermen’s Cooperatives from Belize). The participants learned about different organization models and were familiarized with fishing techniques, especially lobster and snail.
- New diving, sports fishing and canoeing equipment was acquired for the training program on Alternative Livelihoods, which was satisfactorily completed in the Northern region, organized by Green Reef, and in the Southern region, carried out by TIDE, with a total of 165 fishermen trained on diving, snorkeling, canoeing, nature tour guiding, sports fishing, and business administration.
- The Regional Fishermen’s Workshop was conducted during March 7-10, 2005, in Puerto Barrios Izabal, Guatemala, for the purpose of identifying new training topics on alternative livelihoods, with the participation of more than 80 delegates from the four countries. The workshop’s memoir was subsequently distributed for participant comments. Diving, sports
fishing and nature tour guiding were selected again, in addition to new topics such as boat and outboard motor repair.

Tourism sector
- Organization of a regional tourism forum. Through this first forum it has been possible to clarify the mechanisms for its successful implementation, as well as the initiation of a Best Practices Manual, which should be concluded at the beginning of the third year.
- The second tourism forum was conducted in San Pedro Sula.
- Analysis of tourist operations with certification potential and the implementation of accreditation and certification mechanisms.
- Two versions of the Training Manual on Environmental Impact Evaluations and Environmental Audits in Coastal-Marine Tourist Infrastructure and Operations, were revised.
- The Terms of Reference for the formulation of the Regional Cruise Policy were elaborated and submitted to CCT-SICA, Rain Forest Alliance and the Sub-Component’s Technical Assistant, for comments. The World Bank made no objections to the terms, which were thus announced in January, 2005.

Project planning, 2006

Publication of the Document on Conflict Identification:

Diagnostics are currently underway on socio-economic interrelations between fishermen and other stakeholder groups, such as PMAs personnel and tourist operators, in the coastal area of the SAM region, in order to identify positive and conflictive relations, and guidelines will be recommended towards strengthening positive and mutually beneficial relations, as well as measures on conflict resolution.

The final draft will be edited for publication and distribution prior to a meeting with key stakeholders for presentation and validation purposes.