

Name:	21. ADAPTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE MESOAMERICAN REEF		
Region	Latin America and the Caribbean	Country	Belize
Ecosystem	Marine and Coastal		
Nature of approach	Assessment of vulnerability; Improvement in capacity, design and policy measures (capacity building, awareness raising, promoting policy change); Implementation of EBA measures (pilot schemes)		
Description of approach	<p>Objective/Expected outcomes</p> <p>The Mesoamerican Reef (MAR) system extends over a length of approximately 1000 km's along the eastern coast of Mexico, Belize, Guatemala and Honduras. It is ecologically and socioeconomically very significant, supporting the livelihoods of over 2 million people from the neighbouring countries, a large proportion of whom live along the coasts and islands. Sea level rise and sea surface temperature increases are very likely to affect Mesoamerican coral reefs, resulting in coral bleaching, which will threaten the continued delivery of ecosystem services (fisheries) to local populations.</p> <p>As part of a broader programme of activities to enhance the viability and health of the Mesoamerican Reef's diverse ecosystems that support the livelihoods and natural disaster protection of coastal communities, the project aims to consider and incorporate potential and actual impacts of climate change into ongoing marine and coastal resource management practices. Specific objectives include to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess reef ecosystem health, predict climate change impacts to such systems and identify adaptation strategies to reduce impacts for decision support. • Increase public awareness on climate change issues. • Foster necessary networks for advocating, identification, and implementation of mitigation and adaptation strategies to build ecosystem and coastal community resilience to climate change. <p>Actions</p> <p>Activities involve development and testing of a model that will assess how to adapt marine protected area (MPA) network planning elements to encompass aspects of bleaching resistance and coral resiliency. Results will be incorporated into the design and implementation of adaptation strategies (including better management practices), to ensure the continued delivery of vital ecosystem services that support local communities.</p> <p>Results achieved</p> <p>The project has provided an important test bed for pilot adaptation approaches, raising awareness and understanding of adaptation, and building in-country networks with a wide range of stakeholders. Close collaboration with the Government of Belize and the Caribbean Climate Change Center (CCCC) offers a great opportunity for the adaptation recommendations identified under this project to be integrated into national climate change policy, relevant sectoral policies and local development plans</p> <p>Lessons learned (particularly highlighting the benefits and challenges related with ecosystem-based approach)</p> <p>The project illustrates the need for collaborative partnerships.</p>		
Type of organisation	NGO	Name of organisation:	WWF
Further information and contact details	http://wwf.panda.org/about_our_earth/aboutcc/problems/rising_temperatures/hotspot_map/belize.cfm http://www.worldwildlife.org/what/wherewework/mesoamericanreef/WWFBinaryitem14670.pdf Ms Nadia Bood, nbood@wwfca.org		

