



Goff's Caye A Bastion of Belizean Heritage

by Nadia Bood, Reef Biologist

Lying in the central province of the Belize Barrier Reef System, Goff's Caye, an approximate 1.2-acre island, is a popular recreational spot for both Belizeans and foreigners alike. Its sandy beach and easily accessible reefs draw, on an average, 500 tourists per week, and its crystal clear waters and biologically diverse marine life, attract swimmers, snorkelers and divers alike. Although small in size, this island has many important attributes but recently there have been reasons to believe that the integrity of its reefs and associated marine life may be in jeopardy.

A prime attraction of Goff's Caye is its reef system, which is considered to be among some of the best



reef systems in Belize, and the main factor that lures divers and snorkelers alike. Yet, even with this innate quality, there have been some disturbing reports of pillaging ranging from boat anchors being thrown haphazardly on the reef to visitors touching, standing on and even collecting corals on the reef. The Coastal Zone Management Institute's (CZMI) Coral Reef Monitoring Unit, which has been conducting monitoring in the area since 1999, has noted an alarming change in the physical and biological condition of the reefs.

It's a well-known fact that coral reefs are among the worlds most fragile and endangered ecosystems, thus, it is very important that those, which remain, be preserved. Recognizing this importance, the CZMA&I submitted a proposal for funding to the United States' National Fish and Wildlife Foundation in 2002 to obtain funding to execute a series of conservation activities for the area, which included reducing impacts from tourism and boating

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Dear Friends,

Once again we are using this bulletin to inform you of the advances we are making in the management of Belize’s coastal resources. I would first like to thank Maria Vega and the staff for their contributions in this edition and in general for their excellent work.

The previous months have been quite active for us at CZMAI; we commenced the year with an endorsement of the National ICZM Strategy by Cabinet in February. In January we initiated the ConGREH Project intended to enable more intensive monitoring, education of visitors and installation of mooring buoys at Goff’s Caye among other things. We held our first annual Coastal Awareness week during May which was well supported by a number of donors and benefited from the stimulating discussions among our own national experts. Our national coastal planning efforts are on the fast track and when completed by end of the year will undoubtedly be a significant accomplishment for the country. The aquaculture policy development process is in its final stages but we would like to take this opportunity to invite those of you who have not commented on the proposed policy and zoning plan to do so; and we are certain that the consultancy to develop a bioprospecting policy and legislation will stimulate much debate and discussion in the upcoming months.

CZMAI with support of UNDP/GEF/EU in the upcoming months, will place greater emphasis on the sustainability of the work that we do. The CZMAI Board has tasked us with the responsibility of laying out the details of the plan for sustainable funding for the MPAs as well as ICZM, such that the recommendations can be reviewed, amended if necessary and taken to Cabinet. The process for developing these recommendations will be through very intense technical decision-making sessions tentatively scheduled for end of November.

While we appreciate sharing with you what we are doing, we would also like to include articles from your organization so that others may also become aware of the good work that you are doing. So please feel free to share with us your accomplishments. □□

Best Wishes,

Imani Fairweather Morrison
CEO



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The National Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy for Belize Cabinet Endorsement - What Next?

On February 11, 2003 cabinet endorsed the “*National Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy for Belize*” whose main objective is to facilitate improved management of our coastal resources so as to ensure that economic growth is in equilibrium with sound environmental management. This endorsement was an accomplishment not only for the staff but for the entire nation, as the model of ICZM is well admired and lauded regionally and even globally.

Belize under the Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Act of 1998 charged the Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute with the responsibility of preparing a four year Coastal Zone Management Plan for Belize. The *National Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy for Belize* was developed after three years of exten-

“a key factor in its successful implementation is maintaining the broad-based support and commitment of many ministries and departments to the process of integrated decision-making.”

sive consultations nationwide with fishers, tour operators, NGOs, CBOs, technicians and senior government officials. The spirit of the strategy document is one that integrates existing legislative, planning and policy requirements for effective coastal resources management and highlights remedial actions for critical gaps and overlaps recognized by stakeholders.

The strategy document proposes many actions to achieve its goal. Many of these actions build on previous recommendations or ongoing initiatives, and are based on existing legislation. These activities are captured under three major objectives:

1) Knowledge and sustainable coastal resource use which promotes the view that scientific understanding is essential to the setting and maintenance of targets and standards for environmental and natural resource management in the coastal and marine areas on Belize. As such it focuses on the research and monitoring aspects, as well as wildlife and coastal habitat protection, and marine protected areas. It elaborates on factors required for the sustainable development of the fishing and aquaculture industries amongst others.

2) Support for planned development as it is recognized that there is need to improve the decision making process for the use of the coastal resources to ensure that the economic potential is closely linked with equitable allocation and sustainable use. To this end the strategy considers issues related to coastal development planning, such as the cayes development policy, shoreline management, vulnerability reduction, and the endorsement of policies and guidelines for activities such as marine dredging, cruise ships, setbacks, and shoreline structures.

3) Building alliances to benefit Belizeans by facilitating the further appreciation by stakeholders and interest groups of the interdependence between all natural resources and processes, and human interventions in the coastal area of Belize. As such the strategy speaks to the need for ongoing environmental education and public awareness, and the need to foster even greater collaboration between all parties involved in the development and management of this complex yet vital national asset.

So now that Cabinet has endorsed the document, what next? Well, it’s obvious that although, the Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute is the focal point for the strategy, decision-making responsibility on develop-

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Draft Aquaculture Policy and Marine Bioprospecting Legal and Regulatory Framework

by Leandra Co Ricketts, Director, CZMI

Aquaculture Policy and Land Use Plan

Aquaculture, specifically shrimp farming, is recognized as being a rapidly expanding and very important economic activity in Belize, providing income and foreign exchange, and gainful employment for Belizeans. This industry if sustainably developed can reduce dependence on the coral reef fishery resources, which are currently overexploited.

However, there is presently no overarching policy guiding and controlling the development of the industry and ensuring that potential negative environmental impacts are addressed, nor is there a specific land use plan that targets the optimum areas for locating aquaculture farms. In recognition of these challenges, the Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute on the request of the Fisheries Department, launched the development of a draft aquaculture policy and land use plan, in collaboration with the relevant authorizing agencies.

The policy was initiated in October 2002, and is ongoing with an initial consultation of stakeholders to identify concerns and issues to be addressed, which would contribute to a competitive and sustainable industry. After a first round of consultation entailing the comments on a first draft of the aquaculture policy and land use plan, a second draft was widely disseminated to the stakeholders, including the private sector. The draft policy addresses the major factors relevant to a sustainable and productive industry, and includes such elements as: food security and poverty alleviation, capacity building, environmental management, social and economic benefits, competitive marketing and product health and safety to mention a few.

This second consultation culminated in a public consultation meeting on October 9th 2003 in Dangriga. A wide cross section of stakeholders were represented at

this meeting, including shrimp farmers, permitting and monitoring agencies, NGOs, CBOs, local government, to name a few. The consensus was that the policy is necessary for proper planning and continued development of the industry, and participants applauded the effort to date. The draft policy will be revised to reflect recommendations from the meeting and the process of consultations will continue until the target of a widely supported policy is achieved.



Signing of the Marine Bioprospecting Contract: (front) Marthinus Horak of the Council for Scientific Research (CSIR) Imani Fairweather Morrison, CEO CZMA, (back) Leandra Cho Ricketts, Director, CZMI and Francois Joubert of Edward, Nathan & Friedland Law Firm.

The finalized Aquaculture Policy will serve as the “roadmap” for implementing the necessary regulations, management mechanisms and development activities detailed within the draft policy. The aquaculture land use plan is preliminary or indicative only, and will be strengthened through the development of a comprehensive zoning plan which takes into account other land uses, to be spearheaded by the Fisheries Department and relevant government agencies.

Marine Bioprospecting Legal and Regulatory Framework

As part of its mandate in the 1998 CZM Act and the government obligations under the UNDP/GEF project “Conservation and Sustainable Use of the Belize Barrier Reef Complex”, the Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute has embarked on the preparation of a Legal and Regulatory Framework for Marine Bioprospecting for the Belize Barrier Reef and coastal zone. This will support the Government of Belize in implementing an integrated coastal zone management program by undertaking targeted interventions for biodiversity protection in a sustainable manner. The main goal of this consultancy is to strengthen existing legal frameworks and establish institutional frameworks and capacities for regulating bioprospecting.

Coral reefs support numerous species, which possess compounds of pharmaceutical value and may potentially support many more. The discovery of this wealth of bio-medical resources on coral reefs has led to reefs
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Planning with Communities

by Gina Young, Coastal Planner

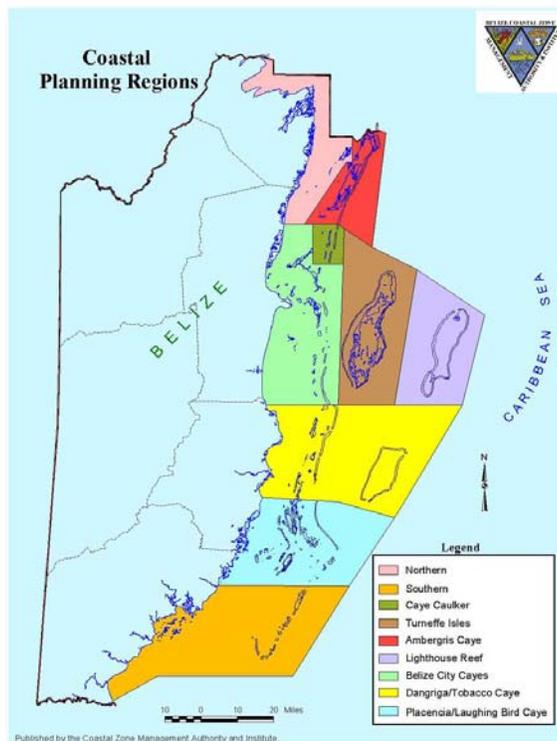
The Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute (CZMAI) is mandated under Section 23 (1) (a-f) of the Coastal Zone Management Act, Chapter 239 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, 2000 to develop a comprehensive Coastal Zone Management Plan for Belize. The plan is being developed in phases, with the first phase being the production of an Integrated Coastal Zone Management Strategy document discussed in a previous article in this newsletter. The second phase is the continuation of the regional coastal plans for eight of the nine coastal planning regions (see map).

Integrating communities into the planning process is a high priority for the CZMAI. Thus, through the establishment of Coastal Advisory Committees (CAC's) for the planning regions, the CZMAI hopes to contribute to broaden the range of stakeholders making decisions on the best use of Belize's coastal resources. As such the CAC's, range from private landowners to representatives of the implementing agencies, i.e. government officials, and are charged with the responsibility of reviewing the guidelines and monitoring its implementation.

At the inception of the Coastal Planning Programme, the CZMAI adopted a rolling programme for the preparation of planning guidelines, specifically those of the Placencia/Laughing Bird Caye, Caye Caulker, Turneffe and Belize City regions. This meant that the guidelines would be developed one by one, each being processed individually. However, through the years it was realized that the planning process could be more effective if it were less time-consuming. Therefore, it was decided

that the guidelines for the Northern, Southern, Lighthouse, and Dangriga regions would be done as part of a comprehensive initiative. The aforementioned initiative involves a series of training sessions, validation meetings, and public consultation. Through this initiative, the guidelines for the Belize City region are also being updated.

Draft Guidelines therefore already exist for all of Belize excepting Ambergris Caye and it is expected that these will be reviewed by the Coastal Zone Management Advisory Council (CZMAC) a technical advisory body (Section 6 (1), Coastal Zone Management Act, 1998) whose membership consists of a wide range of stakeholders in the government and private sectors. The council's role is to advise the CZMAI on issues pertaining to the management of coastal resources; thus, each guideline document is submitted to the members for review and further recommendation. By the end of the year a Draft set of Planning guidelines for all of Belize should be completed and will be made available for public comments prior to submission to the House of Representatives.

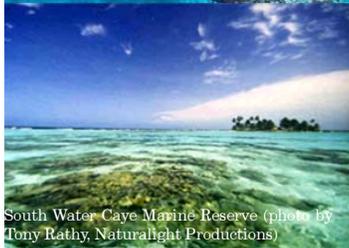


The council now awaits the presentation of the Caye Caulker Planning Guidelines and the Placencia/Laughing Bird Caye guidelines, both in their final editing stages. The validation process has now begun for the remaining regions, i.e. Belize City, Lighthouse, Northern, Dangriga/Tobacco Cayes, and Southern, through the form of public consultations. □

The Magnificent Seven

Belize's World Heritage Site

By Maria Vega, Chairman WHS Sub-committee



The Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System is recognized internationally for its importance to global humanity. Within this system the following seven (7) specific natural areas are highly ranked for their tremendous intrinsic value:

- Bacalar Chico National Park
- Blue Hole Natural Monument
- Halfmoon Caye Natural Monument
- Glovers Reef
- Laughing Bird Caye
- South Water Caye
- Sapodilla Cayes

The 30th Anniversary of the World Heritage Convention was observed in November 2002 under the theme of “Natural Heritage in the Digital Age.” In Belize, the anniversary was observed with a special expedition to the Belize Barrier Reef. A special ceremony was held on San Pedro, Ambergris Caye to open the anniversary observation with an address by Dr. Sylvia Earle, National Geographic’s explorer in residence. This expedition can be viewed on <http://www.nationalgeographic.com>.

Over the last 3 years, the World Heritage Site Sub-committee (WHS) has had a busy time laying the groundwork with coastal communities and industries for the appropriate use of the sites in application of the UNESCO Convention. This has involved interviews, site visits and surveys of needs and aspirations with 20 coastal villages, preparation of a strategic and action plan based on these findings, and collaboration with site managers, government, NGO’s and donor agencies to realize the plan. One of the initiatives that has been implemented from this planning process is the COMPACT Project (Community Management of Protected Areas Conservation Project) which seeks to strengthen the management of the World Heritage Site through involvement of community groups and NGOs working within and around the Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System.

With the help of UNDP’s United Nations Foundation’s COMPACT grant, the WHS Sub-committee assumed a new responsibility of Local Consultative Body (LCB) for the technical vetting of proposals to receive funding to reduce threats to the world heritage sites by innovative activities. Over two dozen proposals were received from non-governmental organizations and about a dozen of these initiatives were funded. Investment in this first phase of the COMPACT Project totaled \$450,000 US.

Through these projects, Belize World Heritage Sites and the opportunities arising
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(The Magnificent Seven...continued from page 7)

from this prestigious international designation were communicated to hundreds of students, fishers, tourism workers and community leaders along the entire length of the Belizean coast. Great strides were taken in training students and re-training fishers to tour guides, and specialized tour guides. The training also included familiarization visits to WHS. In addition, new fishing equipment and new practices were acquired through exchange visits by fishers to regional marine protected areas. This also resulted in fishers learning new technologies, management and research techniques.

As the second to last effort under Phase I, WHS has launched its Communications Strategy. Radio announcements have been introduced and can be heard on local stations. A televised infomercial will soon be aired. International communications will continue through the CZMA/I website, the National Geo-



graphic Website and a feature story in the 2004 issue of Destination Belize. Additionally, the CZMA/I Information Specialist will supply international travel media with periodic updates. The efforts under Phase I was successful in securing an extension to COMPACT. This has been enabled with additional funds of \$300,000 US to be made available to coastal community groups on a matching funds basis for disbursement in the remainder of 2003.

The World Heritage Sites Sub-committee exists under the auspices of the Belize Barrier Reef Committee (BBRC) the official liaison for UNESCO Belize World Heritage Sites. In Belize, UNESCO operates out of the Ministry of Education. The Secretariat of the BBRC and WHS is the Coastal Zone Management Authority/Institute. Much appreciation is hereby extended to all individuals, communities, organizations, funding agencies, and the Government of Belize for their valuable participation in WHS activities. □

In Honor of Service

Ian Gillett, Data Analyst of the CZM Institute was voted as employee of the year for 2002-2003. He was presented with a sculpture in recognition of his outstanding contributions to CZMAI by the Institute Director Leandra Cho-Ricketts at the Coastal Awards Dinner held in May.

Ian has been with the CZM Institute since August 1999. During the last four years he has significantly expanded and developed the Institute's GIS capabilities and has been integral in forming critical networks with regional and international agencies. Furthermore he has shown true dedication in carrying out his work.

Along with his commendable work ethic, Ian's good-natured spirit, excellent listening skills and leadership qualities has earned him the respect and admiration of his colleagues as well as a close professional and personal relationship.

Congrats Ian, on a well-deserved honor!

Coastal Awareness Week

Making the Connection between Healthy Coastal & Marine Resources & Economic Development

By Tanya Williams-Thompson

Getting people to make the connection between maintaining high biodiversity and the economic development of their country is an ongoing challenge. In the past this was a much more difficult task with resource users viewing any conservation efforts as taking “bread off their tables.” However, the view has been slowly changing as users, particularly in the fishing and tourism industries, realize that the resources are in fact not infinite, and there is need to balance use and development with conservation.



Highlights from Coastal Awareness Week: (top left) coast cruise; (top right) inauguration of library by Hon. Servulo Baeza, Imani Fairweather-Morrison, CEO, CZMAI, (bottom left) CEO Sergio Garcia presents media award to Alfonso Noble; (bottom right) 1st National Symposium.

To further cultivate this culture of sustainable development as well as increase public awareness of the critical coordinating and scientific research role of the Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute (CZMAI) in coastal and marine resources management, the organization hosted Coastal Awareness Week from May 25 – June 1. The week was held under the theme of “Healthy Coastal and Marine Resources + Healthy Communities = A Healthy Belizean Economy.” Activities for the week were designed to target specific segments of the population including decision-makers, resources users and managers, youth, media, policy makers, industry and the general public.

Kicking off the week was a Coast Cruise hosted by Hon. Servulo Baeza, Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and CZMAI. Decision-makers viewed the reefs off Goff’s Caye via glass-bottom boat for a picturesque view of the marvels of Belize’s marine life. Following this breath-taking trip, a presentation was delivered on proposed management plans for Goff’s Caye by the CEO, Imani Fairweather Morrison. At the end of the day, the overall objective of building awareness of some of the resource use issues

which impact sustainable use and development amongst decision-makers and policy-makers had been achieved.

The week’s official Opening Ceremonies were held on Monday, May 26 with the keynote address being delivered by Hon. Servulo Baeza. Immediately following the ceremonies, the CZMAI Reference and Research Library was inaugurated by Hon. Baeza along with CEO Morrison with the cutting of the ribbon signaling the opening of the library to the general public.

Coastal Awareness Week activities continued with a week long photo and art exhibition, showcasing entries into the Coastal Art and

Photo competitions which had been opened to primary and secondary schools, and the general public. On Tuesday, May 27, over 60 decision-makers, policy-makers, technicians, community leaders, students and the general public participated in the first National Coastal Symposium at the Belize Biltmore Plaza. The Symposium provided an arena whereby all parties could discuss critical issues affecting the coastal and marine resources. At the end of the Symposium several resolutions had been discussed and drafted by the participants.

The discussions continued on Wednesday, May 28 with a panel discussion featuring policy makers and resource users speaking on the topic of “Are the economic benefits gained from the use of the coastal resources being equally transferred to the cost of managing the coastal and marine resources?.” This dynamic dialogue drew not only an in studio audience, but also captured television viewers as it was aired live on local Channel 5.

The panelists also fielded questions from the in studio and television audiences.

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Goff's Caye...continued from page 3

and increasing community awareness through education and stewardship activities. The project was entitled the Conservation of Goff's Caye and Reef Habitat Program (ConGREH). The CZMA&I was successful in its bidding and was awarded funding in the amount of US\$25,000. With this funding, additional studies are being conducted on the reefs to monitor changes in reef condition and initiatives to promote sensitization of the public have commenced. Such initiatives include the construction of six educational signs for placement on the Caye, the development of a brochure on the area, preparation for the implementation of a tour guide-training program, among others. Parameters under monitoring include:

- 1.) Living benthic cover (hard and soft corals, algae, sponge, etc.)
- 2.) Coral health (bleaching, disease, mortality (including mechanical damages), etc.)
- 3.) Fish abundance and diversity

To assess the impact of visitors on both the terrestrial and marine areas of Goff's Caye, observational surveys were initiated in January 2003. The surveys identified activities being carried out within the areas as well as their impact(s) on the resources. This study has aided in identifying issues to support management and implementation of policies regarding usage of the area.

Past and Current Reef Status

In mid 2001, Goff's Caye back reef (area that is highly visited) exhibited a mean percent live coral cover of 11.8%. By 2003, it displayed a mean of 7.7%, an actual change of 4.1% and relative of 34.7%. Although this change seems small, it is significant. According to Connell 1997, a decrease in cover by at least 33% of the initial cover would be considered ecologically significant.

Total fish density since mid 2001 has also decreased. A total density of 49/100m² was observed in 2001 compared to 34/100m² in 2003.

New Emerging Initiatives

The Conservation of Goff's Caye and Reef Habitat project has had great success in influencing innovative studies and management efforts for the island and surrounding marine area. Due to the high visitation rates and threats from the increasing mass tourism industry that utilizes the easily accessed Caye and its environs, the CZM Institute initiated a carrying capacity survey. The first component of this is a socioeconomic survey on user perceptions and preference relating to visitation, use and management activities. An ecological assessment to determine the "limits of acceptable change" will commence shortly, with the expectation that at the end of the study

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Overview of the Aquaculture Policy...continued from page 4

becoming the target for pharmaceutical companies globally. Belize has the second largest barrier reef and one of the few remaining healthy and viable coral reef systems. It is no surprise then that Belize is receiving an increasing number of applications from the private sector and research institutions to conduct bioprospecting activities in the marine area, primarily in connection with identifying potentially active pharmaceutical compounds.

The Fisheries (Amendment) Regulations 1999, No. 13, Section 39 addresses aspects of marine bioprospecting, mainly the permitting and regulating process. However there is no comprehensive legal framework governing bioprospecting or technical experience in drafting contracts that are fully binding to ensure that adequate benefits accrue to Belize. Procedures also need to be put in place to protect indigenous knowledge and

intellectual property rights and to channel any profits towards offsetting management costs and assisting coastal communities. These deficiencies must be adequately addressed, before any bioprospecting agreements and exploration is established. Only then can marine bioprospecting provide an innovative means of sustainably financing and conserving the country's marine biodiversity, as well as providing social and economic benefits.

The legal, regulatory framework and institutional arrangements for marine bioprospecting will be prepared over the next three months and will include extensive review of Belize legislation, international conventions and bioprospecting agreements for other countries. A major part of the project will entail consultations with various regulating agencies, NGOs, CBOs and coastal

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Looking Beyond to the Deep Blue for Sustainable Fisheries

by Ramon Carcamo Jr., Belize Fisheries Department

The Belize Fisheries Department in collaboration with the Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute (CZMAI) and the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) embarked on a Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) pilot project in late 2002.

Traditionally, the fishing industry in Belize has been centered on the lobster and conch fisheries. The exploitation of these commercial species has been recognized as being exploited at near maximum sustainable yield (MSY). Production in the fisheries sector has been unchanging over time even though there have been significant increase in fishing effort over the last ten years.

In an effort to diversify the National Fishing Industry, the Belize Fisheries Department and its partners have launched this pilot project. More specifically the implementation of the FADs pilot project was developed to provide possible alternatives to fisher-folks to increase production and reduce fishing pressures on the traditional commercial species. This undertaking was identified as a goal in the 2002-2003 work plan of the Department.



The design of the FADs project has been based on the targeting of pelagic stocks. Its long-term objectives are:

- To determine the practicality of developing a pelagic fishery;
- To provide commercial fishers with an alternative source of income;
- To enhance the tourism sector by providing a greater abundance and range of sport fishing species;

- To increase finfish production locally or nationally;
- To relieve fishing pressures on traditionally fished species.

The initial phase of the pilot project is based on the deployment of two FADs. The design and construction on the device is rather uncomplicated and is in effect a floating bamboo raft attached to chain and

rope, which is then, attached to two (2) cement slabs anchors. To ensure that the bamboo raft remains afloat, two drums are attached to the sides to act as floatation devices.

An alternative FAD design was adopted by the Fisheries Department which entailed two drums enclosed in a rectangular wooden frame. The frame is made of 2" X 4" treated pinewood and anchored to the sea floor by a chain and subsequently rope, which is then attached to two cement slabs.

In December 2002, the two (2) FADs were deployed south-east off Turneffe Atoll at a depth of approximately 1,600 feet and about five (5) miles apart. Monitoring of the FADs project was implemented in March 2003.

Preliminary results indicate the species attracted to the FADs included snapper (*Lutjanus spp*), jack (*Carangidae spp*), Dolphin fish (*Coryphaenidae spp*), Wahoo (*Scombridae spp*) Triple tail (*Lobotidae spp*) and others aggregate at the site.

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Looking Beyond to the Deep ...cont'd from page 10

The FADs project has experienced some setbacks. One of the main constraints has been the impact of poor weather conditions. This has resulted in the physical displacement of one of the FADs and has inhibited the ability of the Fisheries Department to monitor the devices.

The Fisheries Department plans to construct two more FADs, which are to be deployed at strategic location.

An evaluation of the performance of the FADs is expected at the end of 2003. Once the FADs project proves to be feasible, it will be expanded nationally to other areas in Belizeans waters. □□

Goff's Caye...continued from page 9

the CZMI will be able to decisively present a limit to visitation for the area.

Based on the importance of the island and its associated marine habitats to the ecological integrity of the area, the cultural heritage of Belize and the significant contribution it makes to the national economy, the CZMA&I has also embarked on an intensive initiative to declare the area as a marine protected area. This is critical in order to manage the high level of activities currently taking place in a sustainable manner, while ensuring the mitigation of impacts to the area. A proposed management strategy has been prepared for the area and intensive discussions are underway to solicit the necessary stakeholder support and commitment, and the final government approval for designation status.

Acknowledging the fact that the proposed area is historically very important to the fisheries sector, functioning as productive ground for numerous species of lobster, conch and finfish, the CZMA&I has realized the critical need to acquire support from this sector. Consultation meetings have already commenced with cooperatives of the fisheries sector with some preliminary comments and recommendations obtained. Consultations will be continued to ensure that fishers' interest are considered.

The CZMA&I is seeking co-management of the MPA to continue its commitment to the wise use and management of the resources of Goff's Caye and its environs. □□

The National Integrated Coastal Zone...continued from page 3

ment and natural resources management is vested in many other agencies of government. Thus a key factor in its successful implementation is maintaining the broad-based support and commitment of many ministries and departments to the process of integrated decision-making, which requires sustained dialogue on all the strategic areas defined in the document.

Undoubtedly, financing is also of utmost importance. Financing for the strategy is built into the budget for the Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute until the year 2004 through the support of the Global Environmental Facility, the United Nations Development Programme, the European Union and the Government of Belize. As this assistance is rapidly drawing to an end CZMAI current efforts are focused at fine-tuning plans for implementing various mechanisms for sustainable financing early next year.

So, CZMAI will continue to direct its efforts at ensuring the successful implementation of the strategy by bringing government and non-governmental agencies as well as the myriad users of the coastal resources to the decision-making table to consider the best use of resources and minimization of direct and indirect impacts on our coastal and marine resources. □□

Overview of Aquaculture Policy...continued from page 9

communities that rely on the coastal resources of Belize.

It is anticipated that the completed legal, regulatory and institutional arrangements will adequately address the conduct of marine bioprospecting in Belize. The legislation, agreements and institutional arrangements will then be forwarded to Cabinet and the House of Representatives for formal adoption by mid 2004. This would provide Belize with a major bargaining power with pharmaceutical industries and ensure the effective management necessary to sustainably address issues of marine bioprospecting. □□

Coastal Awareness Week...continued from page 8

On Friday, May 30, a Coastal Awards Night was held to publicly recognize organizations, businesses, agencies, community groups, media houses and individuals who have played an outstanding role in sustainable development and use of Belize's coastal and marine resources. Awards were given to Friends of Nature for Tourism Development, Lionel "Chocolate" Heredia for Species Protection, Anna Hoare for Education, Melanie McField for Research, Alfonso Noble of News 7 for Media Awareness, Carlton "Jack" Young for Fisheries Research, The Jacobs and Garbutt Families of Punta Negra for Coastal Conservation and Protection by a Community Group and the Outstanding Individual Achievement Award was given to Janet Gibson for her long-service to conservation efforts.

While plans to end the week with a two-day Coast Fair had to be postponed until August due to inclement weather, Coast Fair 2003 was a great success. CZMAI is grateful to donor agencies, UNDP/GEF, the European Union, Government of Belize and the Inter-American Development Bank, and all the sponsors for Coastal Awareness Week including the Protected Areas Conservation Trust (PACT), the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the Nature Conservancy (TNC), World Conservation Society (WCS), the Ministry of Economic Development, Hon. Eamon Courtenay and UNESCO.



Editor

Tanya Williams-Thompson

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