We all play a role in the sustainable management of our protected areas.

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July 2013

National Protected Areas Secretariat
Ministry of Forestry, Fisheries and Sustainable Development
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Abstract

The National Protected Areas Policy and System Plan reflects the Constitution of Belize and is the Government’s guiding principle for protected areas. It is designed to ensure that biodiversity conservation becomes an integral part of social and economic development, and that the contribution of protected areas to national development and poverty alleviation is maximized. This holistic approach to protected areas management has received very limited awareness due to the wide array of challenges and conflicts that become the primary focus of resource management. The National Protected Areas Secretariat commissioned the development of a communication strategy to raise the profile of Belize’s National Protected Areas System through a consolidated and strategic effort designed to achieve greater ownership and support for protected areas. A planning and design framework ensured that communication objectives were developed through extensive involvement of project beneficiaries resulting in the most feasible and practical communication objectives. The highly-participatory validation process clarified misperceptions of protected area stakeholders and identified the underlying communication challenges affecting the National Protected Areas System. It has been identified that the main communication problem amongst all protected areas stakeholders is the limited recognition of the holistic approach to protected areas management. The general belief is that protected areas are designed solely for biodiversity conservation and become locked up resources with limited socioeconomic benefits. A National Branding Campaign has been developed as the first strategic effort to publicize and elevate the general awareness of the National Protected Areas Policy and System Plan through explicit interpretation of the holistic approach to protected areas management. The national campaign and new tagline, “Nature. Culture. Life.,” promotes protected areas as a beacon that reflects: the beauty of nature; the significant role it plays as part of our history and Belizean identity; and the contribution of protected areas to biodiversity, human well-being and the economy. It is important to consider that optimum management of protected areas is only achievable through the empowerment of protected area partners and the sustained recognition that all protected area beneficiaries play a key role in the management of the system. The concept of shared responsibility is fostered by reinforcing engagement mechanisms that facilitate public participation at all levels of protected areas management. This will ensure that the values and interest of all stakeholders are reflected in the management process resulting in greater ownership and support for the National Protected Areas System. The valuable role that communication and awareness has been demonstrated to play in the implementation of management activities has identified strategic partnerships and generated favourable momentum for the implementation of the Communication Strategy of the National Protected Areas System.
1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 Overview

The overall goal of the communication strategy is to raise the profile of Belize’s National Protected Areas System through a consolidated and strategic effort designed to achieve greater ownership and support of the National Protected Areas Policy and System Plan. The policy and system plan reflects the Constitution of Belize and is aimed to ensure that biodiversity conservation becomes an integral part of social and economic development, and that the contribution of protected areas to national development and poverty alleviation is maximized. Management of protected areas has had a variable level of success and there is much need to address management barriers. A coherent and effective framework of protected areas requires greater investment and support for the institutional, legal and operational structure of the system. The communication strategy is expected to elevate the general awareness of the need and mechanisms to integrate economic consideration in protected area management and the role of the National Protected Areas Technical Committee and the National Protected Areas Secretariat as the coordinating and implementing organs of the National Protected Areas System Plan.

The National Protected Areas Policy and System Plan is a holistic approach to protected area management that encompasses all the environmental, social and economic considerations required to address the many challenges and barriers facing the sustainable management of our natural assets. The main communication problem is that there is a need to elevate the general awareness of the National Protected Areas Policy and System Plan by interpreting and emphasizing the importance of such a holistic approach to management. The main stakeholder groups of the National Protected Areas System include:

- The Government of Belize: decision makers, policy makers, technical staff and policy implementers.
- Protected Area Managers: community co-managers and NGO co-managers.
- The Productive Sector: fisheries, forestry, agriculture, tourism and private sector industries.
- Community at large: including protected area communities and the wider civil society.

Priority action groups and strategic partners that are not involved in the direct management of protected areas but play a key role in achieving the communication objectives include: researchers; community groups; advocacy groups and educators; media; NGOs; regional partners; and established steering committees and working groups. Development of the communication strategy was a highly participatory process involving extensive consultation with protected area partners in the planning and design phase of the communication strategy. A baseline study informed the process of developing specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely communication objectives. The communication strategy and proposed activities were validated extensively with implementing partners of the National Protected Areas System and detailed in this document.

1.2 Background

The Government of Belize received funding from the Global Environment Facility via the United Nations Development Programme to finance the project entitled “Strengthening National Capacities for the Operationalization, Consolidation, and Sustainability of Belize’s Protected Areas System” (SNC.PAS Project); co-financing for the project is being provided primarily by OAK Foundation and PACT. The aim of the project is for Belize to develop legal, financial, and institutional capacities to ensure the sustainability of the existing National Protected Areas System. The National Protected Areas Secretariat has requested the design of a national communication strategy to raise the profile of Belize’s protected areas system, and to elevate the general awareness of its role, value and importance for Belize’s development by increasing the interest amongst policy makers, protected area managers, the productive sector, and the public at large. Preparation of the communication strategy is a subcomponent of the SNC.PAS project and its implementation is a key activity of the Operational Framework for the National Protected Areas System Plan. One of the main objectives of the system plan is the creation of a functional system of protected areas through the implementation of a public awareness campaign that would generate enhanced support of the system plan. A communication strategy will provide a systematic framework of strategic communication targets and validated tools to effectively elevate the awareness and support of the National Protected Areas System.
The National Protected Areas System Plan aims to create a coherent framework for the establishment and management of protected areas. It is designed to be representative of all ecosystems that provide important environmental and economic services, and to meet all obligations under international agreements to which Belize is a signatory. Implementation of the system plan is guided by an Operational Framework that outlines priority areas of action and defines strategic objectives for the effective establishment of a comprehensive protected area network. Public awareness is described as one of the key aspects of a functional protected area system and should be designed to inform the public of the National Protected Areas System and the importance of protected areas. In addition, it is very important to build support for the implementation of the National Protected Areas Policy and System Plan and to sustain the national protected area system in perpetuity.

The Operational Framework recognized that public awareness programs have already been implemented with considerable progress, but such programs are often intermittent and specific to the objectives of particular initiatives and organizations. Building effective support for the National Protected Areas System requires refinement of public awareness programs, based on progress and new information, and incorporating into a comprehensive strategy. The communication strategy consists of a thorough analysis of communication challenges and resources. A strategic communications plan has been developed using an analytical and planning method aimed to increase public and political support for protected areas, and to build awareness and acceptance for the financial sustainability of protected areas.

1.3 Designing the Strategy

The National Protected Areas Secretariat commissioned the development of a communication strategy to raise the level of awareness of the National Protected Areas System. A planning and design framework was prepared to ensure that communication objectives were developed through extensive involvement of project beneficiaries to achieve the most feasible and practical objectives.

Preliminary Assessment of the Situation is a strategic approach for communication planning and designing that ensures involvement of project staff, implementing partners and protected area stakeholders in the identification of focal problems. In this first phase the ongoing activities of the project were defined and used as a basis for communication planning. This assessment presented a framework for identifying the main issues to be assessed during the baseline study. A cause-effect analysis tool called a problem tree was used to identify the main problems, causes of the problems, and effects of the problems relevant to the implementation of the National Protected Areas System Plan. The problem tree was developed using information provided by the project management team and from a literature review of documents relevant to the National Protected Areas System. This initial problem tree was validated and ranked with input from protected area partners. Objectives of this phase included:

- Providing a common background and terminology for understanding the rationale of the baseline study
- Defining the main communication issues affecting the implementation of the National Protected Areas System Plan
- Conducting a comprehensive cause and effect analysis of the situation to prioritize and identify focal problems
- Identifying needs, opportunities, problems and solutions (NOPS) for the problems being addressed
- Stakeholder mapping of key protected area stakeholder groups

The Baseline Study is considered a validation of the NOPS identified in the previous phase. A communication strategy may be developed in the absence of a baseline study but there is a strong likelihood that such external perspective may be subject to misperceptions of certain stakeholder groups. The baseline study is designed as a highly participatory process to clarify the dynamics of the issues, and to assist in determining the most practical and realistic communication activities.

Primary protected area stakeholders, identified in the previous phase, where prioritized for consultations using one-on-one interviews. Interviews are designed to minimize the tendency of confirmation bias that is commonly prevalent when using standardized survey tools. It also encouraged an open environment for discussion without the pressure of consensus on opinions or having vocal leaders dominate the discussion, challenges that are evident in focus groups. Although consensus on communication objectives is important for the
validation phase, in the baseline study, the qualitative input on the individual experiences of protected area stakeholders was the most important consideration. Communication tools and resources relevant to the National Protected Areas System were also assessed during the baseline study. Information gathered in this phase was used to design communication objectives for the National Protected Areas System. Objectives of this baseline study included:

- Identifying underlying issues affecting implementation of the National Protected Areas System Plan
- Identifying priority action groups for strategy implementation
- Identifying the functional communication mechanisms of target focal groups
- Assessing effectiveness of communication tools and resources
- Identify synergies and partnerships for strategy implementation
- Informing the design of practical and realistic communication objectives groups

**Validation of Communication Strategy** is essential to secure ownership and support for the communication objectives and activities proposed in the strategy. The results of the previous phases informed the formulation of communication objectives with strong consideration of: the challenges and lessons learnt of protected area stakeholders; social literature of stakeholder dynamics; and social science considerations for addressing barriers to communication. Focus group sessions were carried out with key implementing partners of the National Protected Areas System Plan to refine communication objectives and validate the strategic approach of the communication strategy. This communication strategy provides a macro perspective of the state of the system and a consolidated approach for protected area communication and awareness. Analysis of stakeholder groups was dependent on available social studies (KAP - knowledge, attitudes and perception), communication literature and the input from the baseline study participants. It is evident that there is still much need to conduct in-depth social surveys for priority stakeholder groups in order to evaluate the impact of the communication objectives being proposed. The planning and design framework has been effective in developing a macro scale communication strategy and would serve as the basis for more focused awareness, knowledge, attitudes and perception studies of target communities. These additional studies are necessary to develop focused awareness campaigns that will compliment and support the overall communication strategy.

### 1.3 Strategies and Objectives

A comprehensive set of strategies was developed to guide the implementation of communication activities for the National Protected Areas System. The objectives of each of the strategies are further defined to establish a practical and strategic approach aimed to achieve the overall goal of the Communication Strategy. The rationale and guiding actions for each of the following objectives is provided in the subsequent sections of this document. Below is an overview of the strategies and objectives.

**Strategy 01:** Develop a National Campaign to Elevate the General Awareness and Support of the National Protected Areas System

**Communication Objectives:**

- Enhancing the recognition of protected areas as a National Protected Areas System.
- Develop a consolidated approach for communication and awareness of protected areas to ensure a consistent delivery of messaging that accurately reflects the holistic vision of the National Protected Areas System.
- Shifting paradigms in approaches to communication and awareness by protected area stakeholders through capacity building of technical staff on innovative and effective communication concepts.
- Establishment of a communications unit designated to coordinate and advance the communication objectives of the National Protected Areas System.

**Strategy 02:** Promulgation of Government’s Guiding Principle for Protected Areas as a Holistic Approach for Protected Area Management

**Communication Objectives:**
- Enhance recognition of the National Protected Areas System as government's guiding principle for protected areas.
- Enhance recognition of the socio-economic benefits derived from the National Protected Areas System that are compatible with maintaining biodiversity values and sustainable management.
- Create ownership and support for the governance structure of the National Protected Areas System through the recognition of the linkages between protected areas and national and regional approaches for development.

**Strategy 03: Promoting Protected Area Management as the Shared Responsibility of Protected Area Partners and Beneficiaries**

**Communication Objectives:**
- Reinforcing partnerships between protected area managers and the government of Belize.
- Promote and mainstream the relevance of protected areas by establishing direct linkages to sectors that support social and economic development.

**Strategy 04: Reinforcing Engagement Mechanisms that Support Public Participation and Transparent Management of Protected areas**

**Communication Objectives:**
- Formalize and reinforce engagement mechanisms to ensure that there is direct participation of protected area beneficiaries at all levels of management.
- Build confidence and support for transparent management of the National Protected Areas System.
2.0 NATIONAL PROTECTED AREAS SYSTEM

2.1 Historical Context

Understanding the current status of the National Protected Areas System and the challenges facing the management of protected areas requires a closer analysis of the historical process that led to the current structure of the system. The planning and design of the communication strategy addresses underlying issues of conflict that are highly relevant to the management of the National Protected Areas System. These issues and communication gaps should be acknowledged and resolved in order to reinforce protected area partnership, and the functionality of the National Protected Areas System.

Historically, the establishment of protected areas for scenic value, wildlife protection and ecological significance were only a few. The primary purpose for the establishment of protected areas was for timber extraction, as is evident by the number of historic forest reserves (Young and Horwich 2006). Protected areas designated for ecological and scientific purposes occurred post-independence and mostly as a consequence of lobbying efforts by both local and international NGOs, communities and private individuals (Young and Horwich 2006). The young independent nation considered much of its forest and terrestrial ecosystems in relatively pristine conditions and the management to promote national development would have undoubtedly required vast resources. The Government of Belize capitalized on the lobbying efforts of international conservation agencies as a way of tapping into their financial resources and expertise to help in the management of these natural assets (Young and Horwich 2006). This was the beginning of numerous co-management partnerships and the proliferation of protected areas that are primarily focused on biodiversity conservation.

The early years of independence also saw the introduction of ecotourism as a viable new strategy to attract foreign capital and promote sustainable rural development (Horwich and Lyon 1998). Rural communities recognized the economic potential of protected areas as attractive ecotourism destinations and the Government of Belize recognized the idea of promoting nature conservation and rural development with very little government expenditure (Horwich and Lyon 1998). The concept generated considerable momentum at the time and led to the establishment of the first community-based protected area, the Community Baboon Sanctuary (Horwich and Lyon 1998). This was as an experimental technique aimed to conserve private farms for the protection of black howler monkeys and their habitat (Horwich and Lyon 1998). The success became a catalyst for the establishment of many private protected areas and the formalization of many community co-management partnerships.

In the 1990s, the Government of Belize demonstrated its commitment to protected area partners by creating an enabling environment to facilitate and enhance the management of our protected areas (Young and Horwich 2006). The Protected Areas Conservation Trust (PACT) was established as a statutory body to collect and distribute the tourism revenue allocated for protected area conservation. The early beginnings of a national plan for protected areas also began to develop. The most recent National Protected Areas Policy and System Plan was developed by an inter-ministerial Protected Areas Task Force commissioned by the Government of Belize through a highly participatory process. The extensive engagement of relevant stakeholders led to a comprehensive integration of information resulting in well-founded objectives, designed to achieve an enhanced system of protected areas. The National Protected Areas Policy and System Plan reflects the Constitution of Belize and is founded on the need to ensure that biodiversity conservation becomes an integral part of social and economic development. The policy represents an ecosystem approach aimed to create a coherent and comprehensive system that is representative of all ecosystems and one that is economically, socially and ecologically sustainable. Implementation of the policy and system plan will facilitate equitable distribution of the socio-economic benefits of protected areas and ensure that their contribution to national development and poverty alleviation is maximized.

The plan represents a concerted effort to address the historical ad hoc nature of protected area designation and to create a more systematic and cost-effective protected area system. However, this characteristic ad hoc nature of protected area designation is the fundamental issue that underlies current conflicts of protected area rationalization. Although great strides have been made to identify system gaps and rationalize protected area designation, it is ever more evident that conflicts of protected area management require resolution to ensure greater ownership and implementation of the policy and system plan.
2.2 Co-management: a partnership of goodwill and good faith.

The Government of Belize has established formal co-management agreements with non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations for the management of both national protected areas and private protected areas. It is the understanding that both the government and the co-manager equally share power and responsibility in the management of the protected area for the benefit of the communities and the national economy. This arrangement has many challenges and assumptions that should be addressed in order to ensure cordial and effective management of our natural assets. Given the historic ad hoc process leading to the current status of the National Protected Areas System, there is no doubt that co-management agreements have evolved on the same terms. In fact, co-managers tend to describe the co-management agreements as an agreement of ‘goodwill and good faith’ between the Government of Belize and the co-manager. Historic co-management agreements have been based on the idea of responsible management of protected areas and co-managers have operated within the protected areas legislative framework with little or no intervention from the Government of Belize. As one of the activities under the implementation of the National Protected Areas System Plan, the National Protected Areas Secretariat has revised and standardized formal co-management agreements for protected area partners. The revised co-management agreement has been met with a varying degree of scrutiny and ambivalence by co-managers. The shift from a cordial agreement of goodwill and good faith to an integrative, formalized agreement may have been a radical but necessary process to enhance and reinforce the shared commitment for protected area management. The Ministry of Forestry, Fisheries and Sustainable Development has proclaimed the political will to restructure the Protected Areas Conservation Trust for enhancing the financial support to protected area management. This demonstrates strong commitment of the Government of Belize to address the major challenges affecting protected areas. A strong partnership between the Government of Belize and protected area managers is considered fundamentally important to ensure effective management of the National Protected Areas System and to enhance the functionality of the system. Strategic objectives are aimed to instill a philosophy of empowerment, equity and trust, but we must first acknowledge the challenges and the underlying issues of conflict.

2.3 Ministry of Forestry, Fisheries and Sustainable Development

The Government of Belize aims to balance economic and social development with sustainable use of our natural assets to build a strong economy that meets our present and future needs. The recent designation of this Ministry includes a newly established Sustainable Development Unit that embraces the social, economic and environmental pillars of sustainable development in an effort to take on the challenges of successfully harmonizing a green economy with the broader sustainable development agenda. A recent partnership with the United Nations Department of Social and Economic Affairs (UNDESA) will facilitate an assessment of the governance structure that will subsequently inform the development of a Strategic Policy, and Operationalization Framework for Sustainable Development. A strategic plan for the overall Ministry is expected to address communications and awareness activities, with current activities coordinated through the various departments of the Ministry. Institutional support exists to formalize a consolidated communication/awareness approach to raise the profile of the overall Ministry with coordinated support from the various departments that are on the forefront of sustainable management of our natural assets. The following is a description of the programs relevant to communication and awareness that exist for each of the Ministry’s departments.

**Belize Fisheries Department** has the mandate to manage and promote the sustainability of the fisheries sector as one of the major productive sectors supporting livelihoods, food security and economic development. The legislative policies governing fisheries require strategic approaches to maintain compliance and ownership, and there is strong institutional will to tap into the expertise and technical support of fisheries partners. A formalized communication strategy does not exist for the department, but the department has strong partnerships aimed to develop national socialization campaigns that will also build institutional capacity and compliment other management activities.

The Fisheries Department is collaborating with several NGOs to develop a national plan for the expansion of no-take zones within the country’s existing marine protected areas. The success of the management measures requires securing the support of fishers and other stakeholders by demonstrating the clear socio-economic benefits of the expansion. Significant increases in replenishment zones at a national scale will only be possible through sustained engagement with fisheries stakeholders and other sectors of Belize. A targeted communications strategy is being considered as a priority action involving a collaborative effort by
实施和实现国家计划。渔业部门还与非政府组织和全球经验丰富的Rare密切合作，执行社会营销活动，为国家推广管理访问。建立了一个战略规划小组作为有效的参与机制，以开发和实施国家管理访问运动。该运动将：社会化管理访问的国家受众；教育并建立永久性机构能力，以支持实施；动员渔民和其他关键利益相关者参与并遵守实施管理访问。

沟通资源：沟通活动由渔业官员通过各种机构活动和合作伙伴协调。与渔业利益相关者的广泛沟通成为可能，通过积极的工作组和咨询委员会协调的部门。直接与保护区利益相关者的沟通由从事监测和执法活动的现场官员进行。主流意识管理活动包括农业和贸易展和Hol Chan礁周。沟通工具包括：渔业管理宣传材料、保护区标识牌、社交媒体、宣传海报、手册和技术报告。

伯利兹森林部门

伯利兹森林部门的使命是管理和协调各种政府和非政府机构的伯利兹森林资源。几年前开发了该部门的沟通策略，但尚未实施，主要是因为有限的财务资源。意识活动由各个项目的技术人员根据其需求协调。此外，森林部门通过项目和焦点来强化意识努力。在技术项目中存在开发一个统一的部门意识和沟通策略的强烈兴趣，以实施这项计划。

该部门是区域项目实施的焦点，旨在减少森林砍伐减排的REDD/CCAD项目由GIZ资助。该区域项目由一个沟通工作组组成，旨在为该计划制定一致的区域意识和传播策略，同时分享区域经验，尤其是有关沟通和意识方面的经验。该计划的一个关键组成部分是开发与森林社区，包括土著社区进行咨询和沟通的方法论框架。

国家和国际伙伴关系计划旨在协调国家履行《生物多样性公约》（CBD）、《湿地公约》、《濒危野生动植物种国际贸易公约》（CITES）和其他相关环境协议的义务。该计划识别和动员资源，支持伯利兹的主流活动，促进国家和国际网络。

沟通资源：沟通活动由林业官员通过各种机构活动和合作伙伴协调。直接与保护区利益相关者的沟通由监测和执法活动的现场官员和通过许可程序来实现。主流意识管理活动包括通过电台和电视脱口秀和新闻稿。沟通工具包括：官方网站、社交媒体、宣传海报和手册。

环境部门

环境部门由四个部门单位合作实现总体目标：环境执法和合规监测单位、项目评估和环境影响评估单位、项目执行单位、公众意识和信息管理单位和环境政策和法律发展单位。环境部门意识活动的主要目标是推广环境部门的环境项目，并管理环境信息，以确保适当的环境规划、监测和
evaluation. Annual awareness work plans are developed based on the overall objectives and strategies of the Department and great effort has been made to establish an inter-departmental awareness committee, within the Ministry, to plan and implement specific awareness activities. The department has legislated and Environmental Management Fund designed to support environmental activities across the various departments of the Ministry. The strategic focus of communication and awareness activities has been based on the overall vision of the department and there is current interest to develop an updated and consolidated approach for environmental education and awareness.

*Communication resources:* communications activities are coordinated by two designated Public Awareness Officers with technical support from other technical officers of the department. Mainstream awareness of management activities is conducted through exhibitions, competitions and departmental product placement at public events including World Water Day, Earth Day, World Environment Day and World Public Service Day. Licensing, monitoring, enforcement and other administrative procedures also ensure direct engagement with the public. Communication tools include: website; newsletters; flyers; posters; billboards; press releases; guide for developers; publications; and TV & radio ads and competitions.

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**National Climate Change Office (NCCO)** has been established to coordinate and implement national climate change activities including the development of an organizational framework that supports the integration of climate change in national governance. In strong commitment to the United Nations Framework on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Ministry provides support for the expansion and capacitation of the National Climate Change Office as a medium for economic, social and environmental expertise on climate change related activities. The UNFCCC Protocol recognizes that education, training and public awareness will drive support for actions regarding climate change; encourage support for government policies and measures; and influence change in habits of the younger generation for living in a climate-change world. A Public Outreach and Education Sub-committee has been established to develop a sustainable national climate awareness program on climate change and its effects, to ensure public access to information and to promote public participation in addressing climate change. In addition, the National Climate Change Office is in the process of developing a national communication strategy and a Climate Information Management System.

*Communication resources:* communication activities are coordinated by a newly hired Communications Officer with technical assistance from other officers. Development of a communication strategy and implementation of communication tools are still in the initial phases. Communication tools have included banners, brochures, flyers and a project website.

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**The Protected Areas Conservation Trust** is a statutory authority that provides funds for supporting conservation and promoting environmentally sound management of Belize’s natural and cultural resources to foster sustainable development. An Environmental Education Strategy Plan was developed for implementation during the 2007-2012 period but full implementation of the strategy was limited by financial resources and ownership of activities by key implementing players. PACT’s communications is currently guided by two documents: a Communications Strategy and a Communications Guidelines. The Communications Strategy was developed in response to and in compliance with PACT’s 2005-2010 Strategic Plan to increase awareness, knowledge, and perception of PACT and to position the organization as a credible fund both nationally and internationally. The Communications Guidelines was developed based on the findings and recommendations of the 2009-2013 Communications Strategy to address all aspects of internal and external communications, with due attention to the key constituents of PACT. The national recognition of the role that PACT plays in support of the National Protected Areas System is relatively high. It is expected that changes in administrative structure and strategic focus of the agency may also enhance the strategic focus of the communication and awareness activities of the organization.

*Communication resources:* a Research and Information Officer coordinates communications activities in close coordination with other staff of the agency. Direct engagement with protected area stakeholders is conducted by Grant Officers engaged in monitoring and evaluation of PACT grants. Mainstream awareness
of the institutional role of PACT includes grant ceremonies, school presentations and the media. Communication tools include: promotional merchandise, official website, social media, informative posters, brochures, flyers, videos, newspaper ads, TV ads, newsletters and annual reports.

Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute is a statutory authority that carries out the technical functions of coastal management in coordination with various departments. The main functions of the agency are to conduct marine research, maintain a data and information center, organize training courses and coordinate the development of the Belize Integrated Coastal Zone Management Plan. Education and awareness is considered an important component of the agency’s work and strategic communication work plans are developed for specific programs managed by the agency.

Communication resources: communications activities are coordinated by technical staff through various institutional activities. Mainstream awareness of management activities is conducted through poster competitions; school presentations; adopt a beach programs; student/teacher fieldtrips; and annual events such as World Oceans Day and Run for the Coast. Licensing, monitoring, enforcement and other administrative procedures also ensure direct engagement with sport fishers, tour operators, boaters and other protected area stakeholders. Communication tools include: website, social media, bulletins, flyers, posters and radio ads.

National Protected Areas Secretariat was instituted to coordinate the implementation of the National Protected Areas System Plan by working closely with protected areas partners. A Communications Officer coordinates the implementation of a communication strategy designed to raise the profile and level of awareness of the National Protected Areas System, National Protected Areas Technical Committee & the National Protected Areas Secretariat. A national branding campaign has been developed for protected areas and the Communications Officer is working closely with protected area partners to identify and establish functional partnerships for a consolidated and coherent communications/awareness program.

Communication resources: are in the initial phases of development in close coordination with strategic program partners to ensure a systematic, standardized and consolidated approach to awareness of the National Protected Areas System.
3.0 COMMUNICATION THEORY

3.1 Communications for Sustainability

Resource managers have had the daunting task of generating support for management activities and reducing unsustainable practices through sustained awareness programs and community engagement. For many years we have seen the extensive proliferation of awareness programs and continual attempts to effectively communicate the necessity and urgency of sustainable resource management, but rarely has the message ensured timely action. Communication tools have focused on educating people about the complexities of nature, the economic valuation of biodiversity, the ecosystem services provided by nature and the impacts of resource-use on species extinction and ecosystem degradation. These tools have primarily been developed by scientists and ‘biocentrics’ who believe that nature has value beyond or equal to human value but the truth of the matter is that the major sector of the population consist of ‘humanists’ who believe that nature has value only in relation to people and ‘egoists’ for whom nature only has value in relation to the individual (Futerra 2010). It has been globally recognized that the mainstream population and decision makers do care about diversity, but not enough to actually do something about it. Biodiversity messages require exploring the psychological evidence to find out what drives people to conserve nature and to radically change our biodiversity message to reflect the need to appeal to the mainstream population (Futerra 2010).

Branding biodiversity is a strategy designed to simplify the complexities of nature into brands representing the values of nature that directly appeal to the emotions of individuals. Communities react to emotions and values and the concept of branding biodiversity sets the message as a personal benefit rather than a rational and optional decision. Creating brands for biodiversity may be considered a radical modification to our traditional approach of informing, an approach that appeals primarily to biocentrics. However, it must be recognized that there is a great need to focus our message on engaging and inspiring if we expect to appeal to the majority of the population. Love is the most powerful message and it replaces messages of extinction and ecosystem degradation. The message is positive and people will want to protect nature because they connect to the awe, fascination and wonder of the natural world not because they feel obligated, as prescribed by messages of extinction and ecosystem degradation. Brands begin as mere logos and taglines but are filled with meaning by communicators and the target audience to represent a set of coherent values and promises that will trigger action and achieve management results. Brands are based on a brand promise and the commitment the brand makes to the audience to keep their interest and trust. The National Protected Areas Policy is government's guiding principle for protected area and the promise is the holistic design of the National Protected Areas System. The innovative approach for biodiversity communications will be used to create a national brand for protected areas. Case studies:

3.1 Case Studies

**Love Not Loss:** The IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (IUCN WCPA) and the IUCN Commission on Education and Communications (IUCN CEC) have joined forces with protected area managers and marketing experts in order to improve messages of protected areas. A collaborative effort has recognized that protected areas communications have relied heavily on factual information and messages of loss, rather than a direct appeal to the emotion of target audiences. Messages of extinction, habitat loss, ecosystem degradation and poor governance have a discouraging and disengaging effect on the audience. Marketing case studies demonstrate that emotional messaging triggers action and behavioral change much more effectively. A global awareness campaign called “Love not Loss” has been launched as a personalized and humanized happy ending for nature and people. The basis of the campaign builds on the emotional notion that the best way to rekindle a lost love is not talk about what went wrong (extinction, habitat loss) but to remember what we loved in the first place (the value of nature).

**Pride Campaign:** Rare has successfully facilitated the implementation of Pride campaigns in over 50 countries. The campaign aims to inspire communities to take pride in the species and habitats that make their community unique. The campaign evolved from the recognition that well informed tools for environmental education were not effectively motivating their target audience. Social marketing techniques
were adopted to appeal to the emotional values of people and instill pride for a particular species of local priority and importance. The campaign focuses on the notion that positive emotions, rather than messages of extinction and habitat loss, create a desirable will to be part of the social pride. The concept is called ‘speak joy, not fear’ and instills a process of change aimed to reduce threats and advance conservation goals by improving knowledge, shifting attitudes, creating community dialogue and removing barriers to behavioral change.

**Belize Fisheries Department:** A partnership between the Fisheries Department and several NGOs has developed and implemented catch shares and managed access for marine reserves in southern Belize. They are both complimentary management tools that reduce unsustainable, open access fishing and provide traditional fishers with incentives for being good stewards of marine reserves. Catch shares consists of dividing and allocating percentages, or shares, of the total allowable catch of fishing areas to individual fishers. Anecdotal information from the fisheries managers indicates that the introduction of the catch shares concept was not well received by the fishers during the initial consultations to develop the program. Catch shares implied a restricted or predetermined allocation for each fisher, and uncertainty in the mechanism to allocate catch shares created a sense of apprehension and low confidence. A key part of catch shares is managing access to the fisher by providing fishers a secure and dedicated fishing area. The concept of managed access was easily understood by the fishers and the prospect of reaping the benefits of their investment and stewardship created a greater willingness to consider the use of managed access in the marine reserve. Catch shares and managed access are intricately linked but the primary interest of the fishers was managed access. According to implementing partners of the program, a strategic messaging approach to focus on managed access resulted in widespread ownership of the program. It is doubtful if the rollout of the program would have been timely if the messaging approach had focused on the intricacies of catch shares. This case study exemplifies the positive impact of communication tactics aimed to simplify the technical details of messages and to create a direct appeal to the value and emotions of the individual. Additionally this is a clear example where an innovative communications approach has been able to secure buy-in and direct ownership for a management goal. The Fisheries Department is in the process of initiating consultations to expand the fisheries replenishment zones of marine protected areas. They have strategically adopted the term “replenishment zone” to focus on the positive and direct beneficial value of the management goal for fishers. Additionally, the Department has recently developed a 5-year enforcement strategy that includes a national fisheries education campaign as one of the major components aimed to address enforcement gaps.

### 3.3 Best Practices for Engagement

The National Protected Areas Policy emphasizes the need to ensure public participation at all levels to ensure transparent management of the system geared towards delivery of measurable benefits. Reinforcing support and ownership for the National Protected Areas System requires flexible and transparent decision-making that embraces the knowledge and values of all protected area beneficiaries. The greatest challenge of resource management is the opposition for environmental decisions caused by stakeholder disillusionment when their values are not realized in environmental decisions. Stakeholder participation can ensure effective integration of all necessary information into the decision making process to ensure that the quality of environmental decisions reflects the needs of all the affected stakeholders (Leeds, 2008). However, the success of such decisions is highly dependent on the process leading to the decisions. The National Protected Areas System Plan has been developed through a highly participatory process and there is much need to ensure that the process of engagement is maintained throughout the implementation of the National Protected Areas System. Key features of participation include:

**Empowerment, Equity, Trust and Learning:** engagement mechanisms for decisions require emphasis on empowerment, equity, trust and learning to ensure that all relevant stakeholders have the opportunity to participate as early as possible and throughout the engagement process. It is not enough to simply provide
stakeholders with the opportunity to participate but they must be empowered and given equal power of opinion.

**Stakeholder Mapping**: analysis of stakeholders is important to define the social and environmental aspects of the environmental decisions and how they affect the management process. The mapping process will also assist in identifying priority action groups that positively contribute to the engagement process.

**Clear Objectives**: should be established at the onset of the engagement process to ensure that all participants are clear on their roles and the overall vision of the environmental decisions. The National Protected Areas System Plan has clear and well-founded objectives but there is much need to interpret and reinforce the objectives as part of the implementation process.

**Highly Skilled Facilitation**: it is important to retain and build capacity for dealing with conflict situations between management and resource users. Skills require technical expertise in negotiation and consensus building. A facilitation leader should be recognized as an impartial and approachable individual, open to multiple perspectives. The facilitation process also requires maintenance of positive group dynamics and the capacity to handle dominating and offensive individuals.

**Decision Making Context**: the objectives of the engagement process should be clearly articulated at the appropriate level of stakeholders using appropriate engagement tools designed to facilitate inclusion in the process. This will enhance the quality of stakeholder participation required for the decision making objectives. The decision making context of the National Protected Areas System is represented by government’s holistic guiding principle for protected area management.

**Local and Scientific Knowledge**: the engagement process should be a combination of local knowledge with scientific knowledge aimed to inform and educate stakeholders on the rationale for proposed environmental decisions. An integrative approach will address the influence of information on biased decisions and result in a more comprehensive understanding of complex and dynamic natural systems and process.

**Institutionalization of Engagement**: participation is increasingly becoming embedded in policy, but the effectiveness of engagement mechanisms may primarily reflect the institutional goals of the implementer. If participation is considered a democratic right not just a normative goal then it should be institutionalized to avoid top down decisions that outweigh the consensus of participation processes.

Elevating the general awareness of the National Protected Areas System and addressing the many challenges of the implementation process requires greater consideration of the benefits that a streamlined engagement process has in securing buy-in for management goals. This can enhance the quality of environmental decisions possibly due to more comprehensive information outputs. However, the quality of decision is strongly dependent on the nature of the process leading to the decisions. People will always disagree on environmental decisions but not necessarily oppose the decisions if the proper process leading to the decisions is maintained. Deficiencies in the process are most commonly blamed for failures, resulting in strong opposition for the decisions and disillusionment of stakeholder participation (Leed, 2008).

### 3.4 Addressing the Complex Issues

Resource management is often faced with communication barriers that impede the ability to achieve consensus on management activities. Key individuals may consciously or subconsciously avoid the discomfort of dealing with complex issues resulting in delayed progress of the management process (McKeown, 2002). Behaviours that are characteristic of people trying to avoid resolution of conflict issues may be addressed if they are recognized. Although this is not an exhaustive list of those behaviours, it provides a list of the most easily recognized. These behaviours include:

- Excessive criticism of figures in authority and blaming others for problems, rather than looking at the ways responsibility is shared in dealing with the complex situation.
- Externalizing the enemy by placing the blame for a problem or mistake on an outside group or individual.
- Use of a scapegoat mechanism by placing the blame for a problem or mistake on an individual or group, especially one with little power.
• Clinging to past assumptions or sources of disinformation without proof of the validity of these assumptions.
• Creating assumptions by deciding something is true, with no proof of its validity.
• Denialism, the refusal to accept a verifiable reality, or refusal to acknowledge that a problem exists.
• Forming an opinion or judgment in haste, without considering all issues involved.
• Substituting an issue of lesser importance, or pursuing an unrelated goal, for the purpose of drawing attention away from the issue being discussed.
• Following established procedures even when they are not appropriate to the issue under discussion. This strategy is sometimes used to avoid designing new, more applicable approaches to the problem.
• Distancing from heated discussions related to the issue at hand. Distancing can diminish a sense of shared responsibility.
• Shifting the focus from tough issues to less challenging ones. These leaders avoid mobilizing people to tackle difficult issues and it is done most often when people suspect that progress on crucial problems will require tough adjustments on their part.
• Applying quick fixes to avoid examining the complexities of an issue.

3.5 Conflict Mediation
Lessons learnt from protected area stakeholders point to the counterproductive effect that disgruntled or problematic individuals may have on a well-planned management process. Even an effective and transparent engagement and consultative process may be affected by the negative and unfounded intentions of a vocal and problematic stakeholder. Although the unfounded and biased claims of conflict individuals may be readily recognizable by other stakeholders, a consultative process or awareness program may still undergo significant setback resulting in loss of momentum to achieve management goals. Direct rebuttal may intensify the conflict and result in additional negative public opinion and loss of confidence in the management objectives. Interestingly, the most popular stance would be ignoring the conflict, but this often results in increased disinformation of the management outcomes. Conflict resolution requires capacity building of facilitators to effectively identify potential points of conflict and implement conflict mediation strategies aimed to maintain a functional engagement process.
The national branding campaign for protected areas is designed to ensure greater recognition and acknowledgment of the value and importance of protected areas as a consolidated system. Traditional approaches to awareness have generally appealed to only a small sector of the population, primarily, to biocentric individuals and to immediate protected area stakeholders. A mainstream branding campaign will establish a holistic identity for the National Protected Areas System that appeals to the values and emotions of the entire Belizean population. The logo, tagline and thematic campaigns are key components of the national branding campaign and they are intimately linked to the Government’s guiding principle for protected areas, as outlined in the National Protected Areas Policy. The new tagline, “Nature. Culture. Life.,” promotes protected areas as a beacon that reflects: the beauty of nature; the significant role it plays as part of our Belizean history and identity; and the contribution of protected areas to biodiversity, human well-being and the economy. The national campaign will be the first consolidated effort to advance and support the goals of the National Protected Areas System and will be accomplished through a highly integrative process with key stakeholders that recognize that we all play a role in achieving the maximum benefits of protected areas for nature, culture and life.

4.1.1 Communication Objective: Enhancing the recognition of protected areas as a National Protected Areas System.

Strategic actions include:

- Creation of a national brand for the National Protected Areas System including logo, tagline, targeted campaigns and campaign slogans.
- Develop branding guidelines aimed to enhance recognition of the administrative and implementing processes of the National Protected Areas System.
- Develop phased and strategic campaigns to enhance the profile of protected areas as a national system.
- Implement targeted awareness campaigns with greater consideration of social science concepts aimed to remove social, economic and political barriers to communication and to ensure effective delivery of messaging to target audiences.
- Assess target audiences and communication campaigns to produce communication tools that are most effective for information dissemination and to meet communication objectives.
- Develop succinct communication tools enhancing the profile of the National Protected Areas System.
- Develop information packages that are specifically designed for audience level of focused awareness campaigns.
- Information and product placement of the National Protected Areas System at community events.
- Information and product placement of the National Protected Areas System at events of partner agencies and Ministries.
- Create direct web linkages between the National Protected Areas System website and the work done by protected area stakeholders.
- Conduct information sessions with key groups of the productive sector on the value and role of the National Protected Areas System to Belize’s economic development.
- Conduct technical sessions with government departments to increase awareness of the National Protected Areas System and to gain support for activities implemented by the National Protected Areas Secretariat.
- Conduct press conference and talk shows on the National Protected Areas System and progress on implementation.

Rationale: The major focus of awareness initiatives relevant to the National Protected Areas System has
been on individual protected areas, and the need to consider biodiversity conservation. This has resulted in very low recognition of protected areas as a national system and their wide-ranging benefits. A direct appeal to the value and emotions of the mainstream population will build support for the National Protected Areas System so that people understand the personal, cultural and economic significance of protected areas. A sustained personal attitude and support for the system will create a widely recognized national brand for protected areas that would translate to support for the management activities and reduction of threats. This communication strategy will enhance the recognition and support for the National Protected Areas System and the understanding that each individual protected area positively contributes to the system.

4.1.2 Communication Objective: Develop a consolidated approach for communication and awareness of protected areas to ensure a consistent delivery of messaging that accurately reflects the holistic vision of the National Protected Areas System.

Strategic actions include:

- Identify functional working groups and planning committees that play a key role in the effective planning and implementation of awareness campaigns relevant to protected areas and integrate the work of the National Protected Areas System.
- Establish partnerships with NPAPSP implementing partners to ensure greater synergy in the structure, approach and rationale of activities implemented as part of the national branding campaign.
- Establish collaborative partnerships with NGOs and other community groups engaged in advocacy and awareness initiatives relevant to the National Protected Areas System.
- Establish collaborative partnerships with the media aimed to enhance the accuracy and objectivity of media coverage for protected area activities.
- Develop a monitoring and evaluation plan to conduct social assessments of protected area stakeholders and to assess the impact of communication activities on the awareness, knowledge, attitudes and perceptions of the National Protected Areas System.

Rationale: Awareness initiatives focused on the management and importance of protected areas are highly fragmented with very little consistency and coherency in the messaging and focus. There are many exceptional examples of awareness activities that positively contribute to the overall effectiveness of the National Protected Areas System but there are also examples of biased awareness programs that potentially contribute to disinformation and inaccurate portrayal of protected area activities. Biased awareness programs are not necessarily counter-productive as they may be designed to advance the mandate or special interest of the implementer. This communication objective is designed to address communication gaps and to work collaboratively with protected area partners to reinforce and compliment the current awareness initiatives across the protected area system.

4.1.3 Communication Objective: Shifting paradigms in approaches to communication and awareness by protected area stakeholders through capacity building of technical staff on innovative and effective communication concepts.

Strategic actions include:

- Validate to technical staff and implementing partners the relevance of integrating social science and marketing concepts in awareness campaigns as effective approaches that appeal to the mainstream population.
- Identify the capacity building needs and opportunities for communication/awareness/advocacy leaders that are actively implementing communication activities relevant to the National Protected Areas System.
- Develop partnerships with protected area stakeholders for benefit sharing of capacity building opportunities.
- Develop a series of national training workshops for communication/awareness/advocacy leaders to foster a coherent approach for communication and awareness of protected areas.

Rationale: The guiding principle for awareness programs across the National Protected Areas System varies
considerably and most protected area partners do not have a methodological and strategic approach for developing and implementing such programs. The communication strategy is based on the lessons learnt from the awareness activities of many protected area partners and provides an overarching framework to guide the communication and awareness activities of thematic areas. This communication objective will reinforce the communication capacity of the many communication/awareness/advocacy leaders that contribute to the overall awareness and support of the National Protected Areas System.

4.1.4 Communication Objective: Establishment of a communications unit designated to coordinate and advance the communication objectives of the National Protected Areas System.

**Strategic actions include:**

- Validate the communication strategy with protected area partners to secure buy-in and support of proposed communication activities.
- Foster institutional interest for creating a communications unit within National Protected Areas Secretariat and/or the Ministry of Forestry, Fisheries and Sustainable Development.
- Establish a mechanism of direct coordination between the communications unit and the communication/awareness activities of the various departments within the Ministry of Forestry, Fisheries and Sustainable Development.
- Establish a communications sub-committee within the National Protected Areas Technical Committee to provide technical support and advice to the communications unit.
- Infrastructure investment for a functional communication and awareness unit within the National Protected Areas Secretariat.
- Recruitment and capacity building of communication staff to develop and implement the long-term activities of the communication strategy.
- Enhance the profile of the Ministry of Forestry, Fisheries and Sustainable Development and the National Protected Areas Secretariat as the lead coordinating institutions of the National Protected Areas System.
- Develop a website for the National Protected Areas System to serve as both a centralized digital platform and referral source for all activities relevant to protected areas.
- Consolidate the communication objectives of the Project Management Units of the National Protected Areas Secretariat in yearly communication work plans.

**Rationale:** Projects finance and implement management objectives and often include a communications component to enhance the profile of the project and to publicize the impact of project deliverables. The success of a project campaign may generate great momentum but piecemeal communication/awareness campaigns may result in the inability to take advantage of long-term recognition and support of the National Protected Areas System. Communication campaigns should be designed to build on each other and require consistency in order to achieve maximum impact. In addition, it is imperative to have an established and stable communication structure to coordinate and consolidate the communication objectives of the various projects and departments. This communication objective will enhance the coordinating structure of the institution and provide sustainability to the communication strategy.
4.2 STRATEGY: PROMULGATION OF GOVERNMENT’S GUIDING PRINCIPLE FOR PROTECTED AREAS AS A HOLISTIC APPROACH FOR PROTECTED AREA MANAGEMENT

The National Protected Areas Policy and System Plan reflects the Constitution of Belize and is founded on the need to ensure that biodiversity conservation becomes an integral part of social and economic development. The policy represents an ecosystem approach aimed to create a coherent and comprehensive system that is representative of all ecosystems and one that is economically, socially and ecologically sustainable. This will be the first strategic effort to publicize and elevate the general awareness of the National Protected Areas Policy and System Plan through explicit interpretation of the holistic approach for protected area management. Emphasis on the socio-economic benefits of protected areas and their significant contribution to national development will create greater multisectoral ownership and support for the activities implemented as part of the National Protected Areas System.

4.2.1 Communication Objective: Enhance recognition of the National Protected Areas System as government’s guiding principle for protected areas.

**Strategic actions include:**

- Develop and disseminate mainstream communication tools interpreting the holistic function of the National Protected Areas System
- Sensitize decision makers and inter-ministerial technical staff on the structure and rationale of the National Protected Areas System
- Develop communication tools recognizing critical habitats of the National Protected Areas System and their direct importance to national development.
- Develop non-technical communication tools emphasizing the activities implemented as part of the National Protected Areas System Plan and recognizing their relevance to national development.
- Conduct technical sessions with protected area partners to ensure greater understanding of the National Protected Areas System Plan and to promote a consolidated approach to protected area management.

**Rationale:** Implementation of the National Protected Areas System Plan is the primary responsibility of the National Protected Areas Secretariat and is carried out in close coordination and consultation government agencies responsible for protected areas, and with members of the National Protected Areas Technical Committee. Mainstream sensitization and interpretation of the rationale and structure of government’s guiding principle for protected areas has been very low. In addition, there has been little recognition of the activities implemented as part of the Operational Framework for the National Protected Areas System Plan and their direct relevance to national development. This communication strategy will enhance the recognition and support for the National Protected Areas System as a holistic approach for protected area management designed to ensure that biodiversity conservation is an integral part of social and economic development.

4.2.2 Communication Objective: Enhance recognition of the socio-economic benefits derived from the National Protected Areas System that are compatible with maintaining biodiversity values and sustainable management.

**Strategic actions include:**

- Document the direct contributions of the National Protected Areas System to culture, tourism, fisheries, forestry, biodiversity, food security, energy, and other aspect of the national economy.
- Develop communication tools recognizing the social and economic contributions of the National Protected Areas System to the tourism, fisheries, forestry, energy and agriculture sectors.
- Identify examples of sustainable productive activities within protected areas to promote and recognize the socio-economic benefits derived from sustainable management.
- Conduct informational sessions with the productive sector to establish partnerships that enhance support for socio-economic investments within the National Protected Areas System.
- Conduct technical sessions within the Government of Belize to build capacity on the economic contribution of the National Protected Areas System to the national economy.
Produce succinct communication tools highlighting the value and role of protected areas as natural assets with the potential to support sustainable development.

Dialogue with technical team responsible for development a national strategic policy for sustainable development to ensure that the value and role of the National Protected Areas System is recognized.

Dialogue with the productive sector and government agencies to demonstrate the importance of an effectively managed National Protected Areas System in building international support for social and economic development.

**Rationale:** The National Protected Areas System provides many socio-economic benefits to protected area communities and the national economy. The holistic approach to protected area management aims to optimize these benefits, while ensuring that they are compatible with maintaining biodiversity value and sustainable resource management. In the face of increased threats affecting protected areas, there has been considerable focus to ensure that biodiversity conservation becomes an integral part of social and economic development. The recognition of the socio-economic benefits derived from protected areas has been very low and resulted in a generalized sentiment that protected areas are primarily designed for biodiversity conservation. This communication strategy will promote the positive examples of sustainable production within protected areas and recognize the many social and economic benefits derived from the National Protected Areas System.

**4.2.3 Communication Objective:** Create ownership and support for the governance structure of the National Protected Areas System through the recognition of the linkages between protected areas and national and regional approaches for development.

**Strategic actions include:**

- Conduct inter-ministerial dialogue to establish linkages between the National Protected Areas System and sector-specific policies and strategies for social and economic development.
- Enhance institutional capacity to equip Minister with strategic communication tools aimed to foster greater decision-making support for activities relevant to the National Protected Areas System.
- Develop and implement confidence-building approaches to enhance the transparent management of the National Protected Areas System.
- Produce awareness tools on the legislative framework that guides investments and sustainable management of protected areas.
- Conduct technical sessions with government agencies to collate and publish technical information relevant to national development activities within the government sector.
- Ensure product placement of the National Protected Areas System at public events to emphasize the relevance of protected areas to multiple sectors of society.
- Identify linkages between the National Protected Areas System and regional planning initiatives focused on protected area management.
- Reinforce ongoing partnerships and commitment to regional and international initiatives relevant to protected areas.
- Identify global partnerships for enhanced financial and capacity building support of the National Protected Areas System.
- Develop publications and presentations with emphasis on progress implementation of the National Protected Areas System to present at regional and international symposiums, workshops and technical working groups that are relevant to protected areas.

**Rationale:** Creation of the National Protected Areas System involved a highly participatory process with protected area stakeholders to ensure that the governance structure represented a comprehensive approach to protected area management. The system is geared towards delivery of measurable benefits that emphasize public participation at all levels of management, but this has been primarily limited to protected area communities. The direct linkage of protected areas to national and regional approaches for development may not be readily recognized resulting in limited support for the governance structure of the system. Ownership and support of protected area activities require a clear understanding of the legislative framework that guides protected area management and a high degree of confidence in the enforcement mechanisms.
that ensure transparent management of the system. This communication strategy will recognize the linkages of protected areas to national and regional development, promote synergies for development, and foster support for the governance structure of the National Protected Areas System.

4.3 STRATEGY: PROMOTING PROTECTED AREA MANAGEMENT AS THE SHARED RESPONSIBILITY OF PROTECTED AREA PARTNERS AND BENEFICIARIES

The National Protected Areas System is faced with a wide array of challenges and conflicts that become the primary focus of resource management. Protected area managers are on the forefront of these issues and the Government has the mandate to ensure the effective management of the consolidated system. The current financial gap for basic level management of the National Protected Areas System is estimated at US$10.3 million per year (Drumm et al. 2012). The optimum management of protected areas requires maximum use of the financial and human capacities that are available. It is achievable through the empowerment of protected area partners and the sustained recognition that all protected area beneficiaries play a key role in the management of the system. Effective management of the National Protected Areas System requires strong partnership between the Government of Belize, protected area managers, the productive sector and the wider civil society. It is important to consider that strong partnerships are built on a philosophy of empowerment, equity and trust. This is achievable through the acknowledgment of all protected area beneficiaries that no one entity is tasked with the mandate of building a strong and resilient system but in fact it is the shared responsibility of all.

4.3.1 Communication Objective: Reinforcing partnerships between protected area managers and the government of Belize.

Strategic actions include:

- Develop mechanisms of recognition for the significant contributions that protected area partners make towards the National Protected Areas System by capitalizing on sustainability practices within protected areas.
- Develop communication tools to increase awareness and support for the need to address basic level management issues affecting protected area managers.
- Update the Operational Framework of the National Protected Areas System and disseminate information on the completed activities of the system plan.
- Develop communication tools designed to inform and elevate awareness of the administrative and legislative structure for the National Protected Areas System.
- Conduct social surveys of target protected area stakeholder groups aimed to dispel misperceptions and generalizations that affect protected area partnerships.
- Establish partnerships with protected area partners to collaborate on awareness programs and enhance the accuracy and consolidated approach to awareness.
- Promote the need for maximum consideration of the socio-economic dynamics of protected area management as a key aspect of the National Protected Areas System.

Rationale: Protected area management partnerships have been built on informal but cordial agreements. Partnerships with the productive sector have been primarily founded on the basis of regulatory procedures governing resource-use. Formalizing co-management agreements and diversifying the financial revenue mechanisms of protected areas will undoubtedly create disagreements and challenges to the status quo. However, they are all part of the process to enhance the system-level management effectiveness. It is imperative to address social, economic and political barriers that may result in increased conflict and an atmosphere of distrust. This communication strategy aims to reinforce protected area partnerships and explore the potential of novel partnerships that would further enhance the function of the system by fostering an atmosphere of empowerment, equity and trust.

4.3.2 Communication Objective: Promote and mainstream the relevance of protected areas by establishing direct linkages to sectors that support social and economic development.
Strategic actions include:

- Establish linkages between the National Protected Areas System and the development goals of sector-specific policies.
- Identify message champions and advocates within the fisheries, forestry, tourism and agriculture sectors to promote the importance of the National Protected Areas System.
- Develop mechanisms to encourage collaboration and synergies between the goals of the National Protected Areas System and the goals of other social and economic development sectors.
- Develop private sector partnerships that promote sustainable activities aimed to enhance financial support for the effective management of the National Protected Areas System.
- Conduct product placement of protected areas at public and sector-specific events that are relevant to the protected area benefits.

Rationale: The direct linkage of the National Protected Areas System to other sectors of society is not readily recognized. The importance of the need to ensure sustainability and reduced impact on the environment is widely acknowledged but it is not considered a high priority for sectors that are not on the forefront of resource management. Additionally, mechanisms for the direct participation and support of sustainable resource management are not very clear and easily accessible. This communication strategy aims to mainstream protected area management as the role of all sectors of society and to facilitate the process of establishing direct linkages between the National Protected Areas System and other sectors.

4.4 STRATEGY: REINFORCING ENGAGEMENT MECHANISMS THAT SUPPORT PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND TRANSPARENT MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTED AREAS

The National Protected Areas System aims to create a more effective and coherent system that delivers tangible benefits to protected area communities and contributes to economic development. A key principle of the system design is to ensure that the delivery of measurable benefits emphasize public participation at all levels. Public participation ensures that the values and interests of all stakeholders are reflected in the management process resulting in comprehensive and effective management goals. A streamlined engagement process facilitates public participation resulting in enhanced quality of management decisions and greater ownership of management goals. Implementation of the National Protected Areas System will affect all protected area beneficiaries and will result in decisions that may be regarded as critical and highly sensitive. Maintaining effective engagement mechanisms will build support for management activities and create a platform for continued dialogue that reinforces the transparent management of the National Protected Areas System.

4.4.1 Communication Objective: Formalize and reinforce engagement mechanisms to ensure that there is direct participation of protected area beneficiaries at all levels of management.

Strategic actions include:

- Assess engagement mechanisms, relevant to the management objective, to determine if they effectively integrate diverse stakeholder groups.
- Conduct capacity building sessions to sensitize on the need to identify and reduce communication barriers that result in marginalized stakeholder groups.
- Establish partnerships to conduct extensive social studies of target stakeholders to inform the process of establishing new engagement mechanisms.
- Develop a guide of best practices for engaging beneficiaries of the National Protected Areas System.
- Promote the relevance of the paradox of power as an effective social strategy that shifts management from an authoritarian approach to an engaging approach.
- Conduct capacity building sessions with technical staff on conflict resolution techniques.
- Establish partnerships with the productive sector for increased dialogue and participation in activities aimed to enhance management effectiveness and diversify financial revenue mechanisms for the National Protected Areas System.

Rationale: Public engagement mechanisms have become a normative component of management
processes across all sectors of society. However, there are many instances where the engagement mechanism is merely a formality of the process and does not effectively facilitate public participation. This results in disillusionment of stakeholders because their values and interests are not addressed in management goals. Failures of engagement processes result in resistance and opposition for management activities leading to low confidence in the management authorities and limited support for the management goals. It should be recognized that people would disagree with management decisions but be willing to achieve consensus on decisions if a strong engagement process is adhered to. This communication strategy aims to reinforce engagement processes that will facilitate effective representation of diverse stakeholders groups resulting in greater support and ownership for management activities.

4.4.2 Communication Objective: Build confidence and support for transparent management of the National Protected Areas System.

Strategic actions include:

- Establish mechanisms to facilitate greater dissemination of information regarding management activities and government processes to the wider public.
- Conduct capacity building sessions with government departments to provide justification and updates on the activities implemented as part of the National Protected Areas System.
- Provide technical assistance and support to technical staff to facilitate the production of public versions of technical documents and annual reports.
- Promote the relevance of the paradox of power as an effective social strategy that shifts management from an authoritarian approach to an engaging approach.
- Develop communication tools recognizing the democratic governance of the National Protected Areas System and the effective representation of all stakeholder groups.
- Develop communication tools to inform and increase awareness of the legislative framework and administrative structure of the National Protected Areas System.
- Conduct information sessions with strong watchdog groups to facilitate dialogue on management activities and issues.
- Develop mechanism for collation and integration of opinions and ideas from the wider civil society on management activities.

Rationale: The many challenges facing protected areas and the low recognition of the holistic approach to protected area management create an atmosphere of low confidence and distrust on the management process of the National Protected Areas System. Additionally, management activities designed to enhance the effectiveness of the system may be poorly misunderstood. There is a lack of direct access to information on management activities and governance, resulting in a great need to improve the dissemination of information that justifies management activities to the wider public. This communication strategy aims to build support for management activities of the National Protected Areas System and to foster greater confidence in the governance structure.
4.5 Product Area Stakeholders

Stakeholder mapping was conducted through one-on-one interviews and focus group meetings during the planning and design of the communication strategy. Primary and secondary stakeholders of protected areas have been identified and key stakeholder groups have been prioritized for strategy design. Results of the consultative baseline study and available social studies of stakeholders have been used to develop communication objectives and targeted communication campaigns. Communication tools will be designed for each of the stakeholder group using principles of branding biodiversity and social marketing with close consideration of the communication resources available. There is much need to conduct extensive social surveys for priority stakeholder groups to evaluate the measure of progress using the existing knowledge attitudes and perception studies as a baseline of stakeholder support for the National Protected Areas System.

The Government of Belize

The National Protected Areas System Plan is coordinated by policy makers and technical staff that are directly engaged in the activities and processes of the implementation. Policy-making and coordination is only formalized after endorsement at the decision-making level and the greatest challenge faced by Ministries is securing a collective Cabinet endorsement. This may be as a result of limited familiarity with the proposed activities and varying priorities of the national agenda. In addition, decision-makers may not readily see the significance of the National Protected Areas System as a natural asset that supports social and economic development. Maximizing the contribution of protected areas to the national economy and mainstreaming the holistic approach to protected area management require strong decision-making support. It is necessary to acknowledge that greater awareness of the National Protected Areas System is required to facilitate ownership of protected area management by establishing direct linkages between protected areas and the values and priorities of decision makers. The greatest priorities of decision makers are their constituencies and the goals of their Ministerial portfolios. Although policy-makers and technical staff may be influenced through informative approaches, decision-makers require more innovative approaches that place protected areas as a strong priority of their constituents. The Government of Belize is a complex stakeholder group of protected areas and there is much need to develop targeted communication strategies that are individually crafted to address technical staff, policy-makers and decision-makers.

Protected Area Managers

Protected area managers are on the forefront of protected area management and are directly responsible for site-level management of the National Protected Areas System. The greatest challenge faced by protected area managers is the ability to secure financial resources that support management activities and sustain the management structure of their individual sites. The importance and significance of activities aimed to enhance management effectiveness of the system and diversify financial revenue mechanisms of protected areas is widely recognized. Implementation of the National Protected Areas System Plan requires greater collaboration with protected area managers to ensure that basic management challenges are addressed. This will subsequently facilitate support and ownership for system-level management activities. Communication strategies are designed to recognize the valuable contribution of protected area managers to the system and to address issues of conflict. Targeted communication strategies will build greater confidence in the transparent management of protected areas and improve the engagement mechanisms that support the work of protected area managers.

Community at Large

Protected areas are important contributors to national development and their significance as natural assets for sustainable development is becoming the major focus of development strategies. Elevating the general awareness of protected areas require the daunting task of addressing the mainstream population. Traditional approaches and popular opinion would consider it more feasible to focus on small target communities to ensure greater impact of resources invested into communications and awareness. However, the concepts of social science explored in this document justify the value and impact of targeting the mainstream population.
with carefully designed awareness campaigns aimed to instill nationalistic awareness of protected areas. The national sentiment and opinion of protected areas seems to be that protected areas are primarily designated for biodiversity conservation and for the direct benefits of protected area communities. This reflects a significant gap in recognizing the government’s holistic approach to protected area management. Traditional awareness programs within protected area communities are strongly encouraged but it should be acknowledged that protected areas should be placed into national context to reinforce that the value and benefits of the system is of national importance. Additionally, instilling a greater sense of pride and support for the National Protected Areas System will facilitate decision-making support by recognizing protected areas as a high priority agenda of the mainstream population. A national branding campaign targeting the mainstream population should be seen as a system-level effort complemented by site-level awareness programs implemented by protected area partners.

**Productive Sector**

The National Protected Areas System provides significant contribution to the economy with much potential to provide continued support to economic development in the forestry, fisheries, tourism and agriculture industries. The social and economic benefits to the tourism sector are direct and tangible, resulting in major support from the tourism industry. However, not all protected areas are viable tourism destinations and there is much need to recognize and maximize the contribution of protected areas to other sectors of production. The productive sector plays a promising role for potential investment opportunities aimed to enhance management of the system. Investment in protected areas and increased support by the productive sector requires greater dialogue and consensus building between the productive sector and protected area managers. The historical approach to minimize the impact of development on protected areas, and the momentum to integrate biodiversity conservation in protected area management has created an atmosphere of strong opposition and apprehension to productive investments in protected areas. In addition, the socio-economic benefits of forestry and fisheries activities within the National Protected Areas System has not been widely publicized resulting in the mainstream perception that protected areas are designated as preservation sites. The productive sector acknowledges the potential of protected areas to support economic growth but their major concern is the ability of the management authorities to institute and regulate stringent guidelines for protected area investments. Maintaining a positive corporate identity as responsible leaders is of utmost importance to many leaders of the productive sector and there are exceptional examples of industry led initiatives designed to address irresponsible practices. This demonstrates the level of commitment and responsibility that key players of the productive sector could provide to the National Protected Areas System. There is great potential for engagement of the productive sector but it requires greater dialogue on the holistic approach to protected area management, and the legislative and management mechanism for the system.

**NGOs and Advocacy Groups/Educators**

The National Protected Areas System requires maximum use of available resources to ensure that the goals of protected areas are met. NGOs have provided invaluable contributions to the design and current progress of the protected areas system. They have supported and sustained the concept of co-management as an effective approach to protected area management that supports biodiversity conservation and socio-economic benefits to protected area communities. Management of protected areas has seen variable level of success with a few protected areas showing a relatively good degree of management. NGOs are key partners that positively contribute to the management effectiveness of the National Protected Areas System, but there is much need to strengthen partnerships with NGOs and to minimize conflicts of management that exist. Additionally, there is need to foster an atmosphere of shared responsibility and transparent management. There are many NGOs in Belize with varying mandates and levels of contribution to the protected areas system. NGOs with co-management agreements are directly involved in the implementation process of the system plan and there is much need to engage with other NGOs that are focused on conservation and advocacy initiatives that are relevant to protected areas. Awareness programs and conservation activities within protected area should be designed to complement each other and to minimize
issues of conflict and disinformation. It is important to ensure that there is mutual understanding of the holistic approach to protected area management and for greater recognition of the roles that they all play in the effective management of the system.

Media
The media is a critical stakeholder of protected areas because of the strong influence they have on the mainstream population. There are many examples that demonstrate the ability of the media to instill national attention on issues relevant to protected areas. However, awareness programs focused on resource management have struggled to effectively establish media partnerships that bring attention to aspects that are of high priority and specific interest to resource management. The greatest barrier to elevating awareness of the positive contributions of protected areas and implementation progress is the popular assumption that negative issues are the most newsworthy stories. This results in the dominance of media content that is counterproductive to the mainstream confidence of management activities within protected areas. Additionally, the positive contributions of protected areas are not emphasized. Research indicates that media coverage of negative and aggressive content increases aggression and antisocial behaviors (Greitemeyer 2011). However, recent studies indicate that the media may also increase prosocial behaviors by instilling a sense of empathy and helping behavior that also decreasing antisocial behaviors (Greitemeyer 2011). It is important to consider that there is much need to establish cordial partnerships with the media to develop mechanisms that create greater recognition of the positive accomplishments of protected area management. This would also reduce barriers to communication and foster greater confidence and support for the National Protected Areas System. In 2006, the Belize Environmental Reporters Network (BERN) was established to build capacity of journalists on environmental techniques for reporting and investigating and to better understand the dynamics of the environmental and human dimensions. A series of trainings were coordinated, with financing from the OAK Foundation and PACT, and an award for biodiversity reporting was developed to give journalist professional incentives to pursue environmental stories. Although the availability of funding resources limited the continuity of the network activities, there is recognition from journalists of the value of the network, and interest in reenergizing the initiative.

Stakeholder Networks
Every sector has a mandate to promote collaboration and synergies that advance management goals and foster buy-in for management activities. Steering committees and working groups provide a formalized platform for discussion, information exchange and networking. It is tempting to propose the establishment of a national committee for the National Protected Areas System but special consideration should be given to the feasibility of successfully instituting a functional committee. PACT’s Environmental Education Strategy had proposed the establishment of an Environmental Education Advisory Committee to develop a national environmental education strategy a few years ago, but the resources to effectively support such initiative were limited. In addition, a problem faced by most overarching groups is the commitment and time availability of participants to sustain regular participation. A strategic approach for the National Protected Areas System is to engage in established and active planning groups to promote collaboration and synergies for activities relevant to protected areas. It is important to consider that true collaborations ensure that the interest and mandate of all participants is reflected in the planning objectives and to highly value the key role that these platforms play in building camaraderie.

Association of Protected Area Management Organizations (APAMO) is the largest network of protected areas management organizations and is comprised of 12 co-managers that collectively manage several terrestrial and marine protected areas. APAMO was established as a non-governmental organization aimed to foster greater coordination among protected area management organizations. The network is designed to address management challenges in a concerted manner through consistent lobbying to government and international agencies for stronger support and commitment for the conservation and management of protected areas. APAMO has recently developed a 5-year strategic plan and is currently developing a national marketing plan for protected areas. The national marketing plan will be complimented by the work
of each individual member and is expected to raise the profile of members and to strengthen the network. Members include: Belize Audubon Society (BAS); Community Baboon Sanctuary Women's Conservation Group (CBSWCS); Forest and Marine Reserve Association of Caye Caulker (FAMRACC); Friends of Mayflower and Bocawina National Park (FMBNP); Friends of Swallow Caye Wildlife Sanctuary (FSCWS); Programme for Belize (PIB); Rancho Dolores Environmental and Development Group (RDEDG); Sarstoon Temash Institute for Indigenous Management (SATIIM); Southern Environmental Association (SEA); Steadfast Tourism and Conservation Association (STACA); Toledo Institute for Development and Environment (TIDE); Ya’axché Conservation Trust (YCT).

**Education and Outreach Alliance Working Group** was formed by various protected area co-managers and NGOs of southern Belize to plan and coordinate awareness activities. The participants recognized that they promoted activities in some of the same communities and there was much value for a strategic alliance that makes maximum use of the limited awareness resources they have available. Members include: TIDE, Ya’axché, SEA, PLENTY, SATIIM, Sustainable Harvest International.

**Belize National Coral Reef Monitoring Network** is chaired by the Fisheries Department and includes membership from NGOs and research agencies involved in coral reef monitoring activities across Belize. The group promotes collaboration on monitoring activities and serves as a discussion platform for issues and challenges relevant to the marine environment. Members include: Fisheries Department, CZMAI, BAS, Ecomar, HCMR, BCNP MR, ERI, Green Reef, HRI, SEA, TNC, TIDE, CCMR, GRMR, WCS, WWF, SWCMR and Lisa Carne as an individual member.

**Spawning Aggregation Monitoring Working Group** is comprised of NGOs and protected areas co-managers, and has been established to develop management strategies for spawning sites across Belize. The group manages a spawning aggregation database and disseminates information to build support for the management, conservation, protection and sustainable use of the spawning aggregation sites. Members include: Fisheries Department, Belize Fishermen Cooperative Association, CZMAI, BAS, Green Reef, Hopkins Fishermen Association, Placencia Fishermen Cooperative, SEA, TNC, TIDE, ERI, WCS and WWF.

**Hol Chan Marine Reserve** coordinates awareness activities for the Northern Regional Reserve Network by providing technical support and financing for awareness activities across the northern marine reserves. Hol Chan coordinates the planning and implementation of awareness activities with the Fisheries Department, protected area managers and community groups. The northern marine reserves include: Bacalar Chico National Park and Marine Reserve, Hol Chan Marine Reserve and Caye Caulker Forest and Marine Reserve.

**Public Awareness Committee of the Department of Environment** is an ad hoc committee designed to promote the collaborative discussion and planning of awareness activities of the various departments of the Ministry of Forestry, Fisheries and Sustainable Development. The committee has good institutional support and is poised to develop into a formalized coordinating awareness/communication committee for the Ministry. The committee has representation from: Department of Environment, Forest Department, National Protected Areas Secretariat and National Climate Change Office.

**Public Outreach and Education Sub-Committee** of the National Climate Change Office has been established in compliance to the UNFCCC and is in charge of developing and implementing educational and public awareness programs on climate change in an effort to ensure public access to information and to promote public participation in addressing the climate change issue. The committee has representation from: Ministry of Education; Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and NEMO; Ministry of Tourism and Culture; Belize Red Cross; ERI; APAMO; Government Press Office; CCCCC; Ministry of Forestry, Fisheries and Sustainable Development;
and requests have been made to include representation from the media and the Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Regional Partnerships
Regional partnerships place protected areas within the regional development plans that promote enhanced biological connectivity. They also serve as a platform to showcase the country’s commitment to protected area management and success stories. This will result in the forging of new partnerships and access to more financial resources that would demonstrate the maximum return for investments. Communications with regional partners require a strategic focus to highlight the National Protected Areas System and to reinforce the need to sustain the management activities.

La Comisión Centroamericana de Ambiente y Desarrollo (CCAD): is an organ of the Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana (SICA) responsible for facilitating regional cooperation for the integration of the environment in the regional agenda for sustainable development. CCAD has been promoting the development of environmental policies and coordinating mechanisms in Central American countries. The direct involvement with the decision-making level of regional governments make this regional partnership a valuable platform to promote the agenda of the National Protected Areas System.

GIZ Selva Maya Project: is a regional project of the tropical rainforest region shared by Mexico, Guatemala and Belize. The project is working closely with countries of the region to foster cooperation between government agencies, non-governmental agencies and civil society organizations for the sustainable management of the forest resources in the region. The project supports national institutions to improve the legal framework governing management of nature conservation areas and identifies means for combining resource conservation with sustainable use. The project also fosters local and transnational cooperation between the countries of the region.

Alliance Trinational Para la Conseracion del Golfo de Honduras (TRIGOH): is an association of regional entities from Belize, Guatemala and Honduras, established to promote biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of coastal resources for the benefit of coastal communities. The association fosters regional cooperation for management of resources in the Gulf of Honduras. Participating members indicate that the alliance has positively contributed to the management and enforcement processes of protected areas near the borders of the region.

MAR Fund: is a participatory and privately managed regional funding and coordinating institution of the Mesoamerican region. The MAR Fund is designed to provide meaningful, long-term financial support and trustworthy reef management advice to maintain healthy reef systems in the region. The fund strengthens alliance of the participating countries; and consolidates and allocates donor contributions to common and strategic objectives in the region. The MAR Fund provides significant financial resources to the management of the National Protected Areas System.

Belize–Guatemala Bi-national Alliance: Friends for Conservation and Development (FCD) has been working with 18 primary communities of the northern Maya Mountain Massif to establish a bi-national alliance for cooperation. The 18 communities from Belize and Guatemala have signed an agreement that serves as a platform where alcaldes from each of the communities are involved in a collaborative effort to address the challenges that affect protected area management in the region. Each of the communities bring their leadership and regional expertise to develop a yearly plan of action for awareness activities and community activities aimed to address challenges of resource-use.

Funders
Funders are key partners of protected areas because they provide access to much needed funding that
supports the management activities of the National Protected Areas System. Their technical and financial support empowers protected area partners to implement management activities that ensure a functional and effective system of protected areas. It is acknowledged that there is need to provide recognition of funding partners and to raise the profile of funders as major contributors to protected area management. Increased awareness of management activities will ensure that funders are able to prioritize funding that builds on the ongoing work of protected area managers.

4.6 Product Placement

Product placement is a marketing strategy aimed to expose audiences to a brand in clever and effective ways that boost brand awareness and recognition. Conventional advertisement targets the mainstream population, but the challenges lie in the non-specific nature of mainstream advertising and the audience’s ability to skip advertisements. The purposeful incorporation of commercial content into non-commercial is becoming common practice to place products and brands into mainstream media. It is a marketing practice to expose targeted audiences to the brand and achieve prominent audience exposure (Williams et al. 2011). Product placement is a highly relevant strategy for the National Protected Areas System and can be used as an effective and innovative way of elevating the mainstream recognition and awareness of protected areas. Research shows that product placement boosts brand awareness; results in greater brand recognition; and promotes positive attitude and stronger intention to support the brand (Williams et al. 2011). Although the film and media industry in Belize is very small, there are many public events that may be used as ideal settings for product placement of the National Protected Areas System. The approach is also consistent with the concept of branding biodiversity and careful consideration should be placed in identifying strategic events for product placements. It is important to promote protected areas within the context of the proposed event and to ensure that the messaging makes a strong appeal between the direct value of protected areas and the overall theme of the event.

The following table is an outline of the yearly public events in Belize. This is not an exhaustive list of events and priority for participation should be strongly influenced by the objectives of targeted awareness campaigns. The table defines the target audience that may be reached for each of the event and the potential benefits that may be expected for product placement of the National Protected Areas System.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>PA</th>
<th>PL</th>
<th>PS</th>
<th>RS</th>
<th>NGO</th>
<th>MD</th>
<th>IA</th>
<th>GOB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protected Area Managers</td>
<td></td>
<td>Public at Large</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non Governmental Organization</td>
<td>Media</td>
<td>International Audience</td>
<td>Government of Belize</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: No activities have been identified for the months of January and December

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Organizers</th>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Participation Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Wetlands Day</td>
<td>BAS, ACCSD</td>
<td>GOB, PA, PL, PS, RS, NGO, MD, IA</td>
<td>NPAS product placement; targeted awareness building; fostering stakeholder alliances; improving communication linkages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placencia Sidewalk Festival</td>
<td>PPAA, P-BTIA</td>
<td>PL, PS, MD, IA</td>
<td>NPAS product placement; mainstream awareness building; exploring novel partnerships and opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>La Ruta Maya Belize River Challenge</td>
<td>Competition Committee</td>
<td>GOB, PA, PL, PS, MD, IA</td>
<td>NPAS product placement; mainstream awareness building; exploring novel partnerships and opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reef Week (Belize City)</td>
<td>HRI, Oceana</td>
<td>PA, PL, NGO, MD, IA</td>
<td>NPAS product placement; mainstream awareness building; fostering stakeholder alliances; improving communication linkages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Forest Day</td>
<td>FD</td>
<td>GOB, PA, PL, PS, RS, NGO, MD, IA</td>
<td>NPAS product placement; targeted awareness building; fostering stakeholder alliances; improving communication linkages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Planning Committee, Date</td>
<td>GOB, PA, PL, PS, RS, NGO, MD, IA</td>
<td>NPAS product placement; targeted awareness building; fostering stakeholder alliances; improving communication linkages; exploring novel partnerships and opportunities</td>
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<tr>
<td>World Water Day</td>
<td>Planning Committee, PUC</td>
<td>PL, PS, NGO, MD, IA</td>
<td>Targeted awareness building; fostering stakeholder alliances; improving communication linkages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth Hour</td>
<td>Planning Committees, WWF</td>
<td>PL, PS, NGO, MD, IA</td>
<td>NPAS product placement; mainstream awareness building; exploring novel partnerships and opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Band Fest</td>
<td>Love FM</td>
<td>PL, PS, MD</td>
<td>NPAS product placement; mainstream awareness building; exploring novel partnerships and opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Saturday Cross Country</td>
<td>Belize Cycling Association</td>
<td>PL, PS, MD</td>
<td>NPAS product placement; mainstream awareness building; exploring novel partnerships and opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth Day</td>
<td>UB-ERI</td>
<td>GOB, PA, PL, PS, RS, MD, IA</td>
<td>NPAS product placement; targeted awareness building; fostering stakeholder alliances; improving communication linkages</td>
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<tr>
<td>Earth Day</td>
<td>UB-ERI</td>
<td>GOB, PA, PL, PS, RS, MD, IA</td>
<td>NPAS product placement; targeted awareness building; fostering stakeholder alliances; improving communication linkages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belize Tourism Expo</td>
<td>BTIA</td>
<td>PL, PS, MD</td>
<td>NPAS product placement; targeted awareness building; fostering stakeholder alliances; improving communication linkages</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tres Pescados Grand Slam</td>
<td>Tres Pescados Fly Shop</td>
<td>PA, PL, PS, RS, NGO, MD, IA</td>
<td>Targeted awareness building; fostering stakeholder alliances; improving communication linkages; exploring novel partnerships and opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Agriculture and</td>
<td>NATS Committee</td>
<td>GOB, PL, PS, MD</td>
<td>NPAS product placement; targeted awareness building; mainstream awareness building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade Show</td>
<td>PA, PL, PS, MD</td>
<td>NPAS product placement; mainstream awareness building; targeted awareness building; fostering stakeholder alliances; improving communication linkages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chocolate Festival of Belize</td>
<td>Festival Committee</td>
<td>PA, PL, PS, MD, IA</td>
<td>Mainstream awareness building; targeted awareness building; fostering stakeholder alliances; improving communication linkages; exploring novel partnerships and opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Belize Tourism Awards</td>
<td>BTB</td>
<td>GOB, PL, PS, MD, IA</td>
<td>NPAS product placement; mainstream awareness building; fostering stakeholder alliances; improving communication linkages; exploring novel partnerships and opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Reef Week, San Pedro</td>
<td>HCMR</td>
<td>PA, PL, RS, NGO, MD, IA</td>
<td>NPAS product placement targeted awareness building; fostering stakeholder alliances; improving communication linkages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flower’s Bank Kriel Festival</td>
<td>Community Committee</td>
<td>PA, PL, MD</td>
<td>Targeted awareness building; fostering stakeholder alliances; improving communication linkages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Ocean’s Day</td>
<td>CZMAI</td>
<td>GOB, PA, PL, PS, RS, NGO, MD, IA</td>
<td>NPAS product placement; mainstream awareness building; fostering stakeholder alliances; improving communication linkages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Pedro Lobster Festival</td>
<td>Festival Committee</td>
<td>PL, PS, MD, IA</td>
<td>NPAS product placement; mainstream awareness building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placencia Lobster Festival</td>
<td>P-BTIA</td>
<td>PL, PS, MD, IA</td>
<td>NPAS product placement; mainstream awareness building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caye Caulker Lobster Fest</td>
<td>Festival Committee</td>
<td>PL, PS, MD, IA</td>
<td>NPAS product placement; mainstream awareness building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Benque Viejo Festival</td>
<td>Community Committee</td>
<td>PL, PS, MD</td>
<td>NPAS product placement; mainstream awareness building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deer Dance Festival</td>
<td>Festival Communities</td>
<td>PA, PL, RS, NGO, MD</td>
<td>NPAS product placement; mainstream awareness building; targeted awareness building; fostering stakeholder alliances; improving communication linkages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Costa Maya</td>
<td>Festival Committee</td>
<td>PL, PS, MD, IA</td>
<td>NPAS product placement; mainstream awareness building</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mesoamerican Society for Biology and Conservation (MSBC): is a natural resource management symposium held every year. It is considered one of the largest regional science symposiums designed to facilitate information sharing among researchers, managers and others involved in natural resource management and research. The symposium features presentations from scientists across the Mesoamerican region and serves as a suitable platform for product placement of the National Protected Areas System within the regional context of resource management.

IUCN World Parks Congress: is a landmark global forum on protected areas held every ten years. As the world’s most influential gathering of people involved in protected area management, it sets the global agenda for the following decade. As challenges in sustainable development and sustainable use of the earth’s natural resources accelerate, the 2014 IUCN World Parks Congress will play a key role in ensuring that protected areas can contribute towards addressing them. The ultimate aim of the Congress is to position parks and protected areas firmly within broader goals of economic and community wellbeing. The theme of the Congress has therefore been selected as Parks, People Planet: Inspiring Solutions. The event serves as a suitable platform to showcase Belize’s holistic approach to protected area management and to build on the lessons learnt from the international arena. Additionally, it would facilitate the development of potential global partnerships for the National Protected Areas System.

4.7 Mainstreaming the National Protected Areas System

A key component of the National Protected Areas Policy is to ensure that protected areas are integrated with regional and national approaches that promote biological connectedness and socio-economic development. Mainstream awareness and support of the National Protected Areas System builds ownership for protected areas but generating the interest for the formal adoption of the National Protected Areas System into the strategic plans and policies of other sectors is a challenging undertaking. Social, political and economic barriers pose the greatest challenges in fostering collaboration and creating inter-sector synergies. However, it is important to consider that the social concepts used to address awareness of the mainstream population are still relevant in removing these barriers to communication. It is highly necessary to appeal directly to the value and emotions of decision makers and technical leaders if it is expected to establish linkages between the National Protected Areas System and the work that they do.

Recent social science research considers the paradox of power to understand barriers that leaders face in achieving management success. Effective collaborations and ultimate power of success is negatively affected when leaders take an authoritarian approach towards other individuals and groups (Keltner 2010). When certain interests dominate the overall collaboration it becomes difficult to achieve consensus on interests and approaches. Most often management partners are engaged in competition for recognition and financial resources. Social science concepts encourage leaders to dispel barriers to collaboration by: being able to engage the needs and interests of
others; being able to understand varying points of views; advancing the goals of focus groups; and reconciling conflicts through stakeholder negotiation. The ultimate power of leaders lies in the ability to successfully foster cooperation and shared responsibility to achieving the desired results of the management situation (Keltner 2010). The following exercise builds on social science concepts to identify priority areas of action in the policies of other Ministries that are relevant to the National Protected Areas System. Leaders consider of utmost importance the objectives of their specific mandate and integration of other aspects is a task that is not easily achievable. The exercise aims to make a direct appeal to the values and interest of their specific mandate and to establish an explicit linkage to the objectives of the National Protected Areas System. The opportunities for synergies and integration demonstrate that advancement of the National Protected Areas System plays a significant role in getting them to achieve their objectives. In the process, we are able to demonstrate the ability to advance the goals of their sectors and create greater buy-in and support for the National Protected Areas System. Removal of social, political and economic barriers will enable leaders to foster synergies and build on the opportunities for collaboration that are identified. This exercise presents a strategic approach for extensive engagement of various sectors and Ministries in an effort to catalyze the mainstreaming of protected areas and to build institutional and decision-making support for the National Protected Areas System. This is not an exhaustive list of sectors that have high relevance to the goals of the National Protected Areas System.

### National Sustainable Tourism Master Plan of Belize (NSTMP) – highlights the strategic approach that will subsequently inform sector-specific policies and operational frameworks to lead Belize into 2030 as a dynamic, competitive and sustainable tourism destination.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects Relevant to the NPAS</th>
<th>Opportunities for Synergy and Integration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Product development of the Belize tourism product is a key strategy to maximize the tourism asset potential that meets the expectation of the international tourism market while minimizing the environmental footprint. The sustainability and competitiveness of the tourism product requires an integrated destination development approach for prioritized destinations. This will maximize return on investment and multiplier effect of resource allocation. In addition, the approach will allow better management of the risk of running out of resources for enhancing the tourism destinations and being left with and offering of multiple unfinished products. The tourism plan aims to increase visitor satisfaction and confidence in Belize as a tourist destination that will ultimately result in increased customer loyalty and competitive positioning. Stakeholder participation for maximum impact of tourism benefits and profitability will increase the chances of management success and local economic growth. A proactive mechanism of identifying and accessing funding solution for industry development of priority and concentrated efforts will be established.</td>
<td>• Development of the tourism sector focuses on supporting the cultural heritage and local community development. The tourism product portfolio will make possible the effective allocation of resources based on strategic alliances with industry partners and target markets supported by natural and economic resources. Priority destinations directly supported by the NPAS include: nature-based tourism founded on well managed sustainable development guidelines; cultural tourism aimed to develop the cultural heritage; and nautical tourism that promote pristine and popular natural areas. Protected areas are widely recognized as the most popular tourism destinations and resources to develop tourism destinations should be intimately linked to the NPAS. The NPAS is highly relevant to destination planning as they may become a key safeguarding mechanism for investments with full consideration of the social, environmental and economic aspects of protected area communities. Additionally, protected areas are administered by a complex management structure supported by a multitude of diverse protected area partners. Investments in the NPAS as priority destinations will ensure maximum return on investment for the tourism product and support the sustainability of the NPAS as priority tourism destinations. Growth of the tourism sector focused on maximizing the local economic growth of priority sites is expected to build support and ownership of management activities. Prioritization of the NPAS for greater synergy will ensure maximum impact of partnership resources for economic growth and poverty alleviation. In addition, diversification of financial resources for the effective management of the NPAS will create a stronger system of protected areas and increased opportunities for protected area communities and economic development.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Agricultural Development Management and Operational Strategy (ADMOS) – is an operational strategy developed by the Ministry of Agriculture in partnership with FAO as a means to increase food security, reduce poverty and promote dynamic processes of rural and agricultural development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects Relevant to the NPAS</th>
<th>Opportunities for Synergy and Integration with NPAS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The strategy recognizes the need for sustainability in the pursuit of achieving a transformed agricultural sector that is fully competitive and diversified. Long-term sustainable productivity and viability in the agricultural sector will be achieved through the improvement and conservation of the natural and productive resource base.</td>
<td>• A potential opportunity to further develop rural areas across Belize is the diversification of the traditional sector as a means to produce different and greater value-added products. Current infrastructure and other resources can be used to expand the current production activity and to enhance production. Long-term timber concessions in forest reserves are designed to ensure long-term sustainable productivity and can benefit from strategies aimed to enhance the primary production of value-added forestry and agricultural products. Further integration of NPAS considerations is required to maximize</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The strategy proposes to reduce crop losses from pests and disease and to make more efficient use of farm labor. The development of an organic agriculture industry is a highly rated opportunity. The Government of Belize has been supporting the development and strengthening of the organic industry in Belize. The potential local and international market opportunity for organic produce is also based on small-scale farm production in areas that are poorest. Both the Vaca Forest Reserve and the Maya Mountain Forest Reserve have been supporting the production of organic honey and cacao, showing the potential role that protected areas play in the agricultural sector and development of rural communities.

• Tourism market is seen as a direct way to partially overcome the small population and low population density that are major constraints to food and agriculture development. Tourism arrivals also represent the demand for imported fruits/vegetables and processed food products that are not currently produced in Belize. Investment in tourism as the major revenue source for protected areas will not only increase the demand for imported products but also create the opportunity for small farmers to become better organized in the distribution, marketing and production of products that meets price and quality demands of tourists. There is need for greater synergy in understanding the implications of tourism and agricultural production to protected area communities.

Aspects Relevant to the NPAS

• The document recognizes that the legislation for environmental protection and preservation of natural and rural areas is a characteristic strength of Belize’s rural areas. In addition, there is the existence of a strong cadre of organizations promoting environmental protection and advocacy.
• The strategy acknowledges the need to enhance the integration of rural communities and to seek partnerships with relevant agencies for the implementation of the national strategy.
• Capacity building for sustainable development of natural and rural areas is a key objective to address land-use, watershed and environmental management of rural areas.
• Unsustainable development is addressed by promoting sustainable productive systems and practices; protection of the environment; and research for appropriate technology use in the area.
• Ensuring that rural communities obtain maximum socio-economic benefits will be addressed by the formulation of a strategic development plan through the establishment of a Participatory Planning Committee.

Opportunities for Synergy and Integration

• Organizations currently working on conservation and development projects are ready to build capacity for sustainable development of natural and rural areas. A strategic approach to establish synergies will ensure that NPAS can be integrated to maximize use of resources for rural development.
• Legislation and land management approaches are not always appropriate to the livelihoods of the rural areas. Promotion of rural participation will ensure that communities obtain maximum benefit from development projects and protected area management.
• Synergies should be encouraged to establish rural communities to develop community projects aimed at protecting the environment and promoting sustainable agricultural practices.
• Collaborative incentives can be developed to encourage communities to adopt superior environmental performance and to establish reforestation areas. Protected areas have good potential to indirectly support carbon markets as important sources of carbon sequestration.
• Good agricultural practices also promote rural development and opportunities for biodiversity offset programs. A private enterprise is already promoting a cacao agro-forestry venture in the Maya Mountain Forest Reserve that supports the capital financing of rural farmers and has the potential to benefit from carbon markets.
• Ecotourism was the flagship concept to promote rural development post-independence and protected areas are an integral catalyst for rural development. There is great potential for the integration of the NPAS in rural development and opportunities for synergies should be explored in greater detail.

Aspects Relevant to the NPAPSP

• Maintaining biodiversity and guarding the environment against further degradation that threatens economic sustainability is one of the major priorities of the document and is consistent with both the NPAS and the MDG goal of environmental sustainability.

Opportunities for Synergy and Integration

• Poorest people and communities in Belize are predominantly rural and their livelihood depends largely on access to land and natural resources. This is a notable issue of protected areas near rural communities. As part of their struggle to cope with their poverty, poor people encroach on forest reserves and national lands for housing materials, food supplements and for land cultivation. Eliminating poverty may not necessarily solve the enforcement.
• Improvement of land and natural resource management framework and practices for sustainability through the modernization and consolidation of existing environmental, land and protected areas legislation is a direct consideration of the NPAS.

• The strategy addresses issues of access to natural resources required for land-use, food security and drinking water. Specific relevance to protected areas is the issue of balancing land-use for agriculture with tourism and protected areas.

NPAS Communication Strategy

Aspects Relevant to the NPAPSP

| National Environmental Policy and Strategy – outlines the role of the Department of the Environment in the protection, conservation and sustainable use of the natural environment of Belize. DOE is the lead agency dealing with environmental management and focuses on enabling and facilitating multi-sector partnerships to realize the goals and objectives of the strategy. |
|---|---|
| The need to promote financial sustainability in environmental management is recognized to determine the effectiveness of existing instruments and incentives to encourage payment for ecosystem services by users. Improved and diversified revenue mechanisms should be designed to benefit both the Government of Belize and partner agencies. The Environmental Management Fund is an example of such mechanism that could enhance financial support for the NPAS. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities for Synergy and Integration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Department aims to secure funding to properly design and implement a National Environmental Awareness and Advocacy Plan focused on promoting the concept of environmental stewardship and understanding environmental terminology as it relates to climate change and poverty alleviation. Protected areas are an integral part of this strategy and there is need for further integration of NPAS with this strategy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Secure funding through public-private sector partnerships to develop specific awareness and advocacy messages. There is also opportunity for synergy here, as the NPAS aims to encourage private sector investments in protected areas to enhance the financial sustainability of the system. |

| The Department aims to maintain partnerships with regional and global environmental institutions and organization to share information and to foster collaboration. Synergy and integration would ensure maximum use of resources for both environmental and protected area management. |

challenges of protected areas but NPAS aims to maximize the benefits that protected areas provide for such communities. Achieving a balance between enforcement and resource competition may only be achieved through greater synergy of strategies.

• Land use assessments show biodiversity levels to be the lowest in the north and highest in the south. These are the same areas indicative of high poverty and indigence. The high poverty in both biodiversity extremes may be due to lack of access to land, as most forested areas have already been converted to agriculture in the north, and the land tenure insecurity of the south. The action plan seeks to address these two natural resources related issues by improving the land management framework for natural resources. Protected areas could play a key role in ensuring sustainability of land-use for the benefit of poor marginalized communities.

• The impact of natural resource-use on the availability of water is another factor of critical importance to the living conditions of poor. Measures to ensure water resources are protected in the context of rapid development are crucial and protected areas play a critical function to establish protection of critical areas that provide essential ecosystem services such as water security.

• Promotion of alternative energy is being promoted for rural communities to have access to affordable electricity. Protected areas currently provide renewable energy and there is much potential for greater provision of renewable energy.

• It is being proposed to develop and implement community-based plans for the specific needs of the poorest and rural urban areas to ensure improved allocation of resources to the poorest rural and urban communities. This strategy reflects the vision of the NPAS and is a good opportunity for integration.

• Integration of disaster risk management for environmental projects are aimed to promote effective mitigation against the effects of climate change and reduction in vulnerability to catastrophic disasters. Further consideration should be taken on the contribution of protected areas to disaster risk management.

• Sustainable land management aimed at reducing land degradation and the reduction in rate of biodiversity loss should have a strong focus on the NPAS.

• There is need to pursue effective monetary, fiscal and external debt management policies, and better access to financial services for poor and marginalized persons for micro enterprises. Integration of NPAS in poverty alleviation should explore mechanisms such as the Debt for Nature Swap and carbon market ventures for poverty alleviation in protected area communities.

The document recognizes that the NPAS contributes positively to environmental management and addresses the identified gaps of the Belize environment. It supports efforts to establish a regional network of protected areas.
### 4.8 Implementation Matrix and Budget

#### DEVELOPING A NATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO ELEVATE THE GENERAL AWARENESS AND SUPPORT OF THE NATIONAL PROTECTED AREAS SYSTEM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Q1</th>
<th>Q2</th>
<th>Q3</th>
<th>Q4</th>
<th>Yr 2</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Design and development of branding tools</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8000</td>
<td>16,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of video and information pieces</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>5000</td>
<td>9000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing promotional materials for campaigns</td>
<td>6000</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td>8000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development and hosting of website</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design and development of information packages</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td></td>
<td>4000</td>
<td>6000</td>
<td>14,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile display and presentation setup</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5000</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td>9000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of photo and video tools</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>3500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sourcing communication aids for events</td>
<td>3500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4000</td>
<td>7500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio and video ads</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5000</td>
<td>9000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio and TV talk shows</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td></td>
<td>4500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations and forums with key stakeholder groups</td>
<td>3500</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>8000</td>
<td>14,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical sessions with government departments</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product placement at public events</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td></td>
<td>18,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media press conferences</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>3500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct capacity needs assessment for communications</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop national training workshop series for communications</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8000</td>
<td>9000</td>
<td>17,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishment of communications unit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4000</td>
<td>4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment and capacity building of communications staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop communication tools to enhance profile of Ministry</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidate communication objectives of PMUs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinate sessions of NPATC communications sub-committee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>1500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### PROMULGATION OF GOVERNMENT’S GUIDING PRINCIPLE FOR PROTECTED AREAS AS A HOLISTIC APPROACH FOR PROTECTED AREA MANAGEMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Q1</th>
<th>Q2</th>
<th>Q3</th>
<th>Q4</th>
<th>Yr 2</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conduct planning sessions with partners for consolidated approach to awareness</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td></td>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop communication tools focused on protected areas contribution to national development</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
<td>5500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document contributions of protected areas to various sector of economy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build capacity of government department on structure of protected area system</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue with various Ministries and departments to facilitate mainstreaming of protected areas in sector policies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue with private and productive sector to identify opportunities for protected area investments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop communication tools for Ministerial purposes</td>
<td></td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td></td>
<td>4500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop and implement confidence building activities to reinforce transparent management</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produce awareness tools on legislative framework for investments and administrative structure</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td></td>
<td>6000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publish technical information relevant to protected areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3500</td>
<td>3500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify and develop global protected areas partnerships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publication of system plan at national and regional workshops, symposiums and working groups</td>
<td></td>
<td>4000</td>
<td>8000</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### PROMOTING PROTECTED AREA MANAGEMENT AS THE SHARED RESPONSIBILITY OF PROTECTED AREA PARTNERS AND BENEFICIARIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Q1</th>
<th>Q2</th>
<th>Q3</th>
<th>Q4</th>
<th>Yr 2</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop mechanisms for recognition of work by protected area partners</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop communication tools to support basic level management of protected areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>4000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Update the Operational Framework and design communication tools for dissemination</td>
<td></td>
<td>1500</td>
<td></td>
<td>500</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct social surveys of target protected area stakeholder groups</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td></td>
<td>8000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster collaboration on awareness programs with protected area partners</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>3000</td>
<td></td>
<td>4000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop message champions to support awareness tools</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td></td>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Acknowlegdements
The planning and design of this communication strategy involved extensive consultation with protected area partners, community leaders and representatives of the productive sector. Interviews and planning sessions served as both an inspiration and a source for much of the information in this document. Recognition is given to leaders and technical staff of: Friends for Conservation and Development, Toledo Institute for Development and Environment, Ya’axché Conservation Trust, Southern Environmental Association, Belize Audubon Society, Community Baboon Sanctuary, Hol Chan Marine Reserve, Association of Protected Areas Management Organizations, University of Belize-Environmental Research Institute, Protected Areas Conservation Trust, Belize Fisheries Department, Belize Forest Department, Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute and the Department of Environment for sharing their extensive experiences on the implementation of awareness programs.
Representatives of the Northern Fishermen Cooperative Ltd., Placencia Producers Cooperative Ltd., Bull Ridge Company Ltd., Maya Mountain Cacao Ltd., Belize Natural Energy Ltd., Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry provided meaningful input on strategies for engaging the wider population.
Invaluable contribution to the consultative and review process of the strategy was provided by the San Pedro Tourist Guide Association, Crooked Tree Action Committee, Belize Fisheries Department, Belize Forest Department, National Climate Change Office, Department of the Environment and Association of Protected Area Management Organizations.
Further validation and consultative review was provided by the Wildlife Conservation Society, Ecomar, Healthy Reefs Initiative and the Belize Coalition to Save our Natural Heritage.
A special recognition is made to the Hon. Lisel Alamilla, Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and Sustainable Development; Dr. Wendel Parham, CEO in the Ministry of Forestry, Fisheries and Sustainable Development; Mr. Wilbur Sabido, Chief Forest Officer; Ms. Beverly Wade, Fisheries Administrator; Martha Hendrix, UNDP Communication Associate; members of the National Protected Areas Technical Committee; and staff of the National Protected Areas Secretariat. Any omission of recognition is not intentional and I apologize and thank you for your contribution.

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Trust for Sustainable Livelihoods (SUSTRUST). 2009. *Protected Areas Management in the Caribbean: Core Themes for Education, Awareness and Communication Programmes.* Report by the Trust for Sustainable Livelihoods (SUSTRUST), World Commission on Protected Areas Caribbean (WCPA) and IUCN.


