

January 20th, 2021

Ms. Maritza Rodriquez,
Fisheries & Livelihoods Manager,
Blue Ventures,
Belize

Dear Ms. Maritza,

Through this letter we hereby provide the following updates on the work the Turneffe Atoll Sustainability Association's (TASA's) have conducted and are planning to carry out at TAMR in line with the FIP for Belize.

Turneffe Lobster Inventory Pilot- The project is referred to as the Lobster Camp Fishery Inventory Program, primarily focused on traps.

1. Launch and scale Turneffe Pilot on lobster inventory, tagging, and registry program:
 - a. This was initiated, and reports have been produced and submitted to fishery progress in the last progress report in 2020.
 - b. The Project Purpose was as follows:
 1. Verify, update and map Lobster Fishing Camps
 2. Verify, update and map Lobster Fishing Grounds
 3. Quantify and describe the current number of lobster traps and lobster shades
 4. Pilot project to tag and register lobster traps for 4 fishers
 5. Explore possibility of catch data collection directly from harvested lobster traps
 - c. GEF-Small Grants Program and the Belize Marine Fund grant secured to continue inventory work and integrate a fishery catch component for 2021-2022.
2. Research conducted – An inventory of lobster fishing gear was conducted to ascertain an estimation of traps and shades deployed at Turneffe. This included the descriptions and dimensions of the gear. A tagging pilot was also undertaken with approximately 15% percent of the estimated gear deployed in Turneffe tagged or just over 2000 traps in total. The project tool lessons learnt from tagging work in other places. Belize Fisheries Department provided technical support for the research to align project efforts to meet and track OPSPESCA requirements.

3. Socialize project with fishers and identify which fishers are part of lobster fishery: This was completed.
4. Identify fishers by fishing area for lobster fishery: For the Turneffe Lobster Inventory Pilot project, fishers were identified, and a matrix was produced in the report.
5. Recruit fishers to participate in trap tagging and registry pilot- create incentive program: For the Turneffe Pilot project, fishers were identified and recruited for participation. Their collaboration is to be commended. These fishers have a good working relationship with TASA rangers and had been supportive in TASA initiative. They have a trust and good/open communication with TASA as this work takes a tremendous amount of logistical work with the fishers.
6. Determine and map the location of fishing camps, quantify the number of traps and shades used in each fishing area: This was completed, and reports submitted to fishery progress. Due to the sensitive nature of the mapping and the stakeholder's names, at this point we are unable to publicly release mapping. At a further date, we will compile a report that is appropriate for public consumption.
7. Design and implement tagging and registry system, determine tag type, calculate level of effort: This was completed. Over 2000 traps have been tagged to date.
8. Identify materials and design of gear and dimensions: This was completed.
9. Record Bycatch- through interview surveys: This has been initiated and will continue in the future projects (2021-2022).
10. Deploy tagging system and verify inventory data through cross-reference with VMS pilot: This has not been initiated as it requires the pilot to be expanded to a greater number of fishers and the VMS system is more widely deployed.
11. Align with OSPESCA regional requirements and legal aspects: This was completed prior to executing the pilot. The Belize Fisheries Department provided technical support for the research to align project efforts to meet OPSPECA requirements. Some field verification was conducted.
12. Carry out a verification (physical survey): This has been completed.
13. Carry out a verification process: This has been completed.
14. Develop long-term verification process for registry and effort data: This has not been initiated, we are working towards this: We are still in the pilot phase to strengthen the projects and eventually develop a comprehensive program for Turneffe.
15. Link to Adaptive Management Plan, use effort data to inform stock assessment and HCRs: This has not been initiated.



Turneffe Atoll Sustainability Association

1216 Blue Marlin Blvd

P.O. Box 556

Belize City, Belize

(501) 670-8272

(501) 223-1927

www.turneffeatollmarinereserve.com

16. Develop scaling strategy including outreach and expansion of incentive programs to other coop members: This has not been initiated.

We thank you in advance for the consideration of TASA's contributions towards the FIP. Kindly provide a letter stating how this has contributed to the overall achievement of the FIP in order that we can provide this to our donors. Please feel free to reach out to us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Valdemar Andrade", is written over a horizontal line.

Valdemar Andrade,
Executive Director