

# Conservation and Sustainable Use of the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef Systems (MBRS)



- Heads of State - Tulum Declaration 1997
- MBRS Action Plan – November 1997
- Active Project Design April 1999 – Nov. 2001 (World Bank and CCAD)
- Declared Effective November 2001
- PCU based in Belize



# Objectives

- Support the countries of Belize, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico in the development of policies and regulations for the conservation and sustainable use of MBRS resources



# Project Approach



- Transboundary focus
- Representative System of Protected Areas
- Coral Reefs and Associated Ecosystems Health
- Alternative Livelihoods
- Formal and Informal Education
- Sustainable Tourism
- Transboundary Policies
- National & Regional Committees
- Broad stakeholder participation

# Major Challenges



- Sustainable Tourism Forum
- Regional Certification
- Exemplary Practices Tour
- Best Practices Manual
- Eco-tourism as economic alternative
- Infrastructural Support
- Exchange Program for successful tourism
- Skewed Government policy
- Limited Private Sector Ownership

# Project Indicators

- Certification achieved across region
- Tourism forum inform best practices
- First-hand experience achieved from tour
- Tourism visitation increase as a result of infrastructure support
- Best Practices Manual developed and adopted
- Number of fishers converted to eco-tourism guides
- Transboundary Tourism Policies developed and adopted



# Achievements & Lessons Learned



- Forum delivered – poor impact
- No confidence in benefits of certification
- Infrastructure support not enough to achieve increase visitation
- Alternative livelihood is feasible only with substantial capital, marketing and policy reform
- Doubts on the benefits of tour when compared to costs
- Success of exchange program is market dependent
- Transboundary policy ineffective without local instruments for its implementation

# Conclusion

- Tourism development in the MBRS region appears to be private-sector driven
- Weak and uninformed government policies
- No integrated (inter-sectoral) approach to tourism management
- Questionable political will



# For more information

Please contact:

MBRS Project

Princess Margaret Drive

P.O. Box 93

Belize City, Belize

Tel. (501)-223-3895; Fax. (501)-223-4513

E-mail: [mbrs@btl.net](mailto:mbrs@btl.net)

Website: [www.mbrs.org.bz](http://www.mbrs.org.bz)