



PR#114

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Training in the Application of Biodiversity Related Laws of Belize**

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During this week, the National Biodiversity Office and the Belize Audubon Society were engaged in a Green Laws training facilitated by the Legal Counsel within the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management.

The training is a part of an ongoing series of initiatives being implemented by the Ministry with financial support provided by the Protected Areas Conservation Trust. It was designed to inform its participants of the application of the National Protected Areas Systems Act and other related legislation. Other training in the series will include training in use of SMART Technologies and field navigation.

Generally, protected areas are maintaining their ecosystem functions. However, incursions and illegal extraction of resources are a continuous threat to the integrity of protected areas across the country resulting in loss not only of resources, but also much-needed revenues. There has been a notable increase in illegal activities occurring in those protected areas which lie primarily against Belize's porous borders and communities such as the Chiquibul National Park and Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary. Managing this trend requires a specialized and equipped body to strategically apply Belize's environmental laws.

The Ministry, through strategic partnerships and skilled use of intelligence, will continue to work to reduce and curb these offenses. The Ministry will be implementing additional initiatives within the coming weeks.

#### **Ends**

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