



PR#177-22

PRESS RELEASE

Ministry of Blue Economy & Civil Aviation Participates in the 2022 United Nations Ocean Conference

Belmopan. July 5, 2022. 3:35 p.m.

The Ministry of Blue Economy & Civil Aviation (MBECA) participated in several side events at the United Nations 2022 Oceans Conference, which highlighted the importance of science-based innovative solutions aimed at starting a new chapter of global ocean action. The conference was held in Lisbon, Portugal, from June 27, to July 1, 2022.

Representing the Ministry were Hon. Andre Perez, Minister of Blue Economy and Civil Aviation; Kennedy Carrillo, CEO in the Ministry; Maxine Monsanto, Director of Blue Economy; and Adriel Castaneda, Senior Fisheries Officer at the Fisheries Department. Nicanor Requena, Project Director for the Environmental Defense Fund, and Paulino Rodriguez, Chairman of the National Fishermen Cooperative Society, also joined the delegation in representing small-scale fishers.

CEO Kennedy Carrillo and Maxine Monsanto joined in the discussions at the Commonwealth Blue Charter high-level breakfast meeting with other Commonwealth Blue Charter champions, member countries, and senior officials. They focused on ocean-related needs and priorities and paving the way forward to achieving ocean commitments and actions.

Maxine Monsanto presented at the *Seabed Mapping and Marine Data Multifunctional Spatial Planning* on the importance of seabed mapping and work conducted in Belize through collaboration with the Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute. The presentation focused on challenges and issues associated with the lack of hydrographic data and real-world practical uses in Belize and benefits gained from seabed mapping conducted, as well as its contribution to multifunctional spatial plan identified shared use of ocean space.

Ms. Monsanto, accompanied by Paulino Rodriguez, also participated in *A Sea Change for Small Scale Fisheries: Global Leadership Towards SDG14B: Preferential access for small-scale fishers and inshore exclusion zones*, where they discussed sustainable fisheries in Belize utilizing practical solutions such as managed access and management of marine protected areas that support small-scale fishers' access to resources and livelihood. Mr. Rodriguez also participated in a small-scale fisheries breakfast to discuss a call to action for highlighting how fishers continue to contribute to economies.

Hon. Andre Perez spoke at the *International Caribbean Efforts to Address Organized Crime in the Fishing Industry* along with Ministers of Fisheries

representing Norway, Jamaica, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The high-level event focused on fisheries enforcement and the international and regional instruments to cooperatively tackle organized crime in the global fishing industry and measures to reduce food security threats using innovative digital tools and inter-agency capacity support. <https://bluejustice.org/un-ocean-conference-2022/>

Adriel Castaneda presented an overview of Belize's coral reef protection and restoration actions as a Blue Charter Champion Country at the event *Addressing the Global Coral Crisis: Working Rapidly with National Governments*. Mr. Castaneda also participated in the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development event, *Addressing Key Challenges in Fisheries, Aquaculture, and Seafood Trade Policy for Sustainable Development*, which focused on national capacities in developing, adopting, and implementing key strategies to promote sustainable trade of marine products and services.

The Ministry of Blue Economy & Civil Aviation in conjunction with Small Island Developing States (SIDS) DOCK and GRID-Arendal hosted the side event *Small Island Developing States and Blue Carbon Market*. Maxine Monsanto, along with representatives of Palau, Indonesia, The African Union, and technical experts from Kenya and GRID-Arendal, had an open discussion on the development of blue carbon markets within SIDS at different stages of capacity, needs, experiences, challenges, and creating opportunities for a SIDS blue carbon community based on science, equity, and partnerships.

“Belize's new blue economy is already hailed globally as a model to follow. With our approach to conservation financing, sustainable fisheries and our outstanding marine protected areas system, the UN Ocean's Conference in Lisbon provided the best opportunity to showcase and engage in opportunities for further support and collaboration at the global level.” - CEO Kennedy Carrillo, Ministry of Blue Economy and Civil Aviation.

Ends

For more information, please contact:
Maxine Monsanto
Director of Blue Economy
Ministry of Blue Economy & Civil Aviation
director@blueeconomy.gov.bz