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PRESS RELEASE

Ministry of Sustainable Development Hosts Stakeholder Consultation in Placencia

Belmopan. September 4, 2022. 9:00 a.m.

The Ministry of Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management held a stakeholder consultation with the Placencia Village Council, the Placencia Tour Guide Association, and the Southern Environmental Association (SEA) on strengthening cooperation for improved management of the Laughing Bird Caye National Park.

The Government of Belize and SEA co-manage the Laughing Bird Caye National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Sub-Site that provides a habitat to an abundance of marine life and bird colonies, such as the Laughing Gull from which this caye gets its name. Of recent, this site has suffered from increased threats as well as the impacts of climate change including increased erosion of its shoreline.

This stakeholder consultation was a part of the ministry's initiative to improve protected areas management via the formalization of co-management agreements. It is also focused on enhancing community engagement, enforcement, and benefits to local communities and stakeholders from buffering sites.

Joining Minister Habet were teams from the National Biodiversity Office and the Forest Department, which are charged with rolling out these initiatives and identifying opportunities to scale up protected areas management in Belize.

Minister Habet expressed his commitment to ensuring that the current impacts of climate change on the island are alleviated by utilizing a proactive multi-agency approach to halt the current rate of loss to this prime tourism destination within the southern district.

Ends