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PRESS RELEASE

Ministry of Sustainable Development Hosts Second Annual Belize National Climate Change Week

Belmopan, November 15, 2023.

The Ministry of Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management, through the National Climate Change Office, hosted its second annual Belize National Climate Change Week under the theme, "Climate Action: One Goal, A Shared Responsibility".

The week commenced with a National Youth Forum on November 12, which provided a platform for youth, youth leaders and organizations to discuss issues related to climate change. The session fostered dialogue and knowledge-sharing among participants, highlighting and promoting climate actions being implemented by young people in Belize. Youths were also engaged in discussions pertaining to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Conferences of Parties (UNFCCC COP) as the Belize prepares its national positions on thematic areas of negotiations for COP28.

Participants included representatives of child advisory boards, the National Garifuna Council, Julian Cho Society, Young Leaders Alliance of Belize, TIDE's Environmental Group, Galen University, University of Belize environmental clubs, Delille Academy High School, and youths from across the country.

Following the Youth Forum, the ministry hosted a two-day capacity building session on Multilateral Environmental Agreements for young negotiators entitled, "*Navigating the Global Climate and Development Regime*". The session was facilitated by Ms. UnaMay Gordon, Senior Climate Change & Negotiations Expert from Jamaica, and focused on training participants to effectively and cooperatively engage in negotiations and discussions on

implementation actions of multilateral environmental agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, among others.

Echoing the words of a Samoan activist Brianna Fruean, Dr. Kenrick Williams, Chief Executive Officer in the ministry, reminded the young negotiators that “It is a lesson in how switching one word or number could reframe worlds, how climate action can be vastly different from climate justice, how 2 degrees could mean the end, and 1.5 could mean a fighting chance.”

The overall objective of Belize’s National Climate Change Week is to contribute to the improved knowledge of and engagement with stakeholders so planners, decisionmakers, indigenous people, youth, women, and children become aware of the impacts of climate change and can jointly address its impacts. Furthermore, Belize National Climate Change Week is vital to the Government of Belize’s commitment to responding to climate change and engaging all relevant stakeholders in propelling climate action on a national and global level.

The Belize National Climate Week was held as part of the UNDP’s Promise II Project, in collaboration with the Department of the Environment, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Science & Technology, and the UN System in Belize.

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