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PRESS RELEASE

Belize Participates in 9th Our Ocean Conference

Belmopan, April 17, 2024.

The Office of the Prime Minister, represented by CEO Narda Garcia and Beverly Wade, Director of the Blue Bonds and Finance Permanence Unit, is participating in the 9th Our Ocean Conference in Athens, Greece, from April 15 to 17. The Conference will address four key focus areas: sustainable tourism in coastal areas and islands; reduction of marine plastic and microplastic pollution; green shipping; and green transition in the Mediterranean.

Belize continues to engage in global discussions on innovative financing for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans, with the Blue Bonds being highlighted as a successful model for addressing the financial gap. Director Wade participated alongside representatives from the U.S. State Department and Colombia on a High-Level Panel on Scaling Innovative and Inclusive Finance Solutions for the Ocean and Communities: How blue carbon, debt conversions and partnerships can help us usher in a sustainable future.

The Office of the Prime Minister also engaged in discussions with the Hon. Matthew Samuda, Jamaica's Minister of Economic Growth and Job Creation — with responsibility for Water, Environment, Climate Change, and the Blue & Green Economies — and his delegation. Discussions focused on key areas relating to the realities of Small Island Developing States and the Caribbean in meeting global ambitions for both oceans and climate change, and the approach and representation of the region at the upcoming Climate Change COP and the UN Oceans Conference.

Other meetings were held with partners working in Belize such as The Nature Conservancy, World Wildlife Fund, Wildlife Conservation Society, Blue Finance, and the World Bank.

The Our Ocean Conference was first launched in 2014 under the initiative of the U.S. Department of State and Secretary John Kerry. It sought to fill the then-existing gap in global ocean governance. The conference brings together ocean leaders and stakeholders to discuss and address the challenges our ocean faces, while demonstrating ocean conservation leadership on a path to a sustainable future.

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