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PRESS RELEASE

Ministry of Blue Economy and Marine Conservation Hosts Validation Workshop and Disaster Simulation to Strengthen Community Resilience

Belmopan. July 9, 2025.

The Ministry of Blue Economy and Marine Conservation, in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the San Pedro Town Council, the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO), and other key local stakeholders, successfully hosted a validation workshop and simulation exercise for the San Pedro Town Community-Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) Plan on July 4, 2025.

This important initiative is part of a broader FAO-supported project titled “Community Engagement of the Coastal Zone and Fisheries Sector of Belize Through CCA and DRM Capacity Building.” It aims to bolster disaster preparedness and build climate resilience, particularly among fisherfolk and coastal communities whose livelihoods are increasingly threatened by climate-related hazards.

A traditional fishing village, San Pedro has evolved into one of Belize’s primary tourism hubs. However, its economic reliance on tourism, coupled with its position on a low-lying island, makes it particularly vulnerable to hurricanes, sea-level rise, flooding, sargassum influxes, and storm surges.

The workshop and simulation exercise were designed to ensure that residents are not only informed about these risks but are also empowered to respond with confidence and coordination.

Key objectives of the activity included:

- Confirming and finalizing the CBDRM Plan based on prior community consultations held in April 2025.
- Strengthening collaboration among key disaster risk reduction actors at the local level.
- Conducting a live simulation exercise to test the community's preparedness, coordination, and response mechanisms.
- Empowering fisherfolk and coastal community members with the knowledge and tools necessary to take immediate and informed action in the face of disasters.

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