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PRESS RELEASE

Belize Advances Science-Based, Collaborative Pathway for Sustainable Fisheries Management

Belmopan, November 21, 2025.

The Ministry of Blue Economy and Marine Conservation, together with the Belize Fisheries Department, reaffirmed the central role of healthy fisheries as a cornerstone of Belize's Blue Economy. Fisheries remain vital to national food security, cultural identity, and the livelihoods of thousands of Belizeans, making their sustainable management an essential pillar in the country's pathway to a resilient, nature-positive Blue Economy.

In recognition of the need for fisheries management to be anchored in rigorous and accessible science, the Ministry and the Fisheries Department hosted a one-day technical workshop on November 20, 2025, led by distinguished fisheries scientist Dr. Kendra Karr. The session presented the results of comprehensive multi-indicator baseline assessments for lobster, conch, and finfish, Belize's most commercially significant marine species, drawing on an extensive dataset spanning 1977 to 2024 from both fishery-dependent and fisheries-independent sources.

The workshop brought together co-management partners, fishers' representatives, academia, and other key national stakeholders, such as the Belize Fund for a Sustainable Future and government agencies. Their participation ensured that local experience, scientific research, and management expertise were collectively harnessed to inform decision-making and strengthen Belize's fisheries governance. The event culminated with the presentation of updated draft management plans for lobster, conch, and finfish, critical steps toward securing resilient and economically viable fisheries.

The Ministry emphasized that achieving sustainable fisheries requires a unified national effort grounded in robust science, transparent processes, and strong inter-agency collaboration. The workshop served as a crucial platform for gathering on-the-ground perspectives, aligning partners around shared goals, and reinforcing the importance of joint action among government agencies, research institutions, civil society, and fishing communities.

As Belize continues to build a thriving Blue Economy, the Ministry and the Belize Fisheries Department remain committed to ensuring that the sustainable management of marine resources is inclusive, evidence-based, and representative of the people and communities who depend on them. The insights and contributions gathered through this workshop will directly inform the finalization of equitable, science-based management strategies that secure the long-term sustainability of Belize's fisheries.

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