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PRESS RELEASE

GOB Strengthens National Sargassum Preparedness

Belmopan, June 3, 2026.

The Government of Belize, through the National Sargassum Task Force (STF), continues to implement national preparedness and response efforts as Belize experiences increased regional sargassum activity. Co-chaired by the Ministry of Blue Economy and Marine Conservation and the Ministry of Tourism, Youth, Sports and Diaspora Relations, the STF continues to lead a coordinated national response focused on minimizing the environmental, economic, and social impacts of sargassum influxes in Belize's priority coastal destinations, including Ambergris Caye, Caye Caulker, Seine Bight, Hopkins, and Placencia.

To strengthen operational readiness and improve nearshore and shoreline management capacity, the Government has expanded its sargassum response fleet through the procurement of a Barber Beach Rake and a New Holland Tractor. This specialized equipment is being deployed to strengthen shoreline cleanup efforts while minimizing beach erosion in Placencia. The Placencia Village Council is grateful to the Ministry of Blue Economy and the Ministry of Tourism for their support with much-needed equipment to tackle the sargassum crisis. Mr. Warren Garbutt, Placencia Village Chairman, said, "We do realize there is no one fixed solution to this problem and stand ready to work together to find effective and efficient ways to improve the quality of our beaches and visitors' experience."

To further support affected communities and tourism stakeholders, financial assistance mechanisms continue to be implemented through multiple partners. The Belize Tourism Board has provided cleanup support allocations to municipalities in high-priority destinations. It is also leading a pilot project with new machinery being tested both at inland and island destinations. In parallel, the Belize Fund for a Sustainable Future has

awarded a special grant valued at BZ\$290,000. The grant will be used in June to support private sector stakeholders adversely impacted by sargassum influxes. The Belize Fund for a Sustainable Future is also supporting a consultancy for the finalization of a National Sargassum Response Plan for Belize.

While Belize continues to face significant regional sargassum challenges, the STF emphasizes that proactive planning, sustained coordination, strategic investments, and collaboration among government agencies, municipalities, tourism stakeholders, and coastal communities remain essential to minimizing impacts and strengthening national resilience.

The Government of Belize remains committed to advancing practical, science-based, and sustainable solutions to manage sargassum and safeguard Belize's coastal ecosystems, tourism industry, and marine resources.

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