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PRESS RELEASE

MBECA Signs Co-Management Agreements with TIDE and SEA

Belize City, October 13, 2023

On October 6, the Ministry of Blue Economy and Civil Aviation (MBECA), under the newly developed Co-management Framework for Marine Protected Areas, signed co-management agreements with the Toledo Institute for Development and Environment (TIDE) and the Southern Environmental Association (SEA).

The agreement with TIDE will allow for the effective management of the Sapodilla and Port Honduras Marine Reserves. The agreement with SEA will allow for the co-management of the Gladden Spit and Silk Cayes Marine Reserve.

Mr. Asad Magaña, Executive Director, and Mr. Albert Roches, Chairman, signed on behalf of TIDE. Mrs. Elizabeth Avila-Muschamp, Executive Director, and Ms. Roneshia Williams, Finance Officer, signed on behalf of SEA. Kennedy Carrillo, CEO for MBECA, signed on behalf of the ministry, and Mr. John M. Burgos, the Marine Protected Areas Program Lead, signed as witness.

CEO Carrillo said, “MBECA and the Government of Belize, with the signing of these co-management agreements, reaffirms its commitment to our NGO community to develop a leading and progressive Blue Economy for the betterment of our Belizean people.”

The co-management agreements reflect a true partnership among the NGOs, the ministry, and the Government of Belize to focus on five critical areas for the effective management and expansion of services over the next 10 years: 1.) enforcement, 2.) conservation, 3.) community and social development, 4.) sustainable tourism and 5.) sustainable financing. This new

approach is geared towards advancing and developing a blue economy that will promote economic growth, economic opportunities, job creation and alternative revenue streams for the stakeholders and communities within the respective marine protected area. MBECA, under the leadership of the MPA Program Lead, will support and assist each co-manager by providing technical support, leadership guidance, and management oversight, and in seeking and securing financing opportunities to support the medium- and long-term investment plans.

The Ministry of Blue Economy and Civil Aviation continues to lead and expand its conservation efforts and partnerships as part of the Belize Blue Economy Development Policy, Strategy and Implementation Plan 2022. The ministry celebrates this milestone agreement signing as it continues to work towards a stronger and healthier blue economy for Belize.

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