



## **Mexico and the OAS announce "ReefFix: An Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Ecosystem Services Valuation and Capacity Building Project for the Caribbean"**

Recognizing the priority given by the Caribbean Countries to preserve marine areas, Mexico and the OAS, within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the OAS and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico through the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (AMEXCID), announced the Project "ReefFix: An Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) Ecosystem Services Valuation and Capacity Building Project for the Caribbean".

Mexico's Permanent Representative to the OAS, Amb. Joel Hernández, highlighted that this project seeks to enhance the capacity of participating countries to value and measure ecosystem services and strengthen frameworks for coastal zone management. It will also complement initiatives for the conservation and sustainable use of the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef System.

The ReefFix project has been designed to be replicated throughout the Caribbean by providing the building blocks for stakeholder involvement, socio-economic and bio-physical analysis, and lessons learned.

This project has the objectives to complete (i) Ecosystem Services Valuation: Countries will generate data on the value of ecosystem services of selected sites utilizing ecosystem valuation methodologies, (ii) Capacity Building: Civil society, coastal communities' stakeholders, and government officials will be trained in ecosystem valuation methodologies and marine protected area management and (iii) Dissemination of Results and Lessons Learned: Conclusions and lessons learned will be disseminated to a wide audience throughout the Americas.

The Executive Secretary for Integral Development, Jorge Saggiante, noted the importance of these efforts to promote triangular cooperation and underlined that the recently signed Agreement between the OAS and Mexico is a model for these types of mechanisms. Moreover, he recognized Mexico's extensive experience on coastal management both the Caribbean and Pacific Coasts.

The representatives of the Caribbean countries celebrated Mexico's initiative and highlighted that protecting vital ecosystems in marine areas as well as coral reefs is a priority for the Caribbean region.

The project will build upon an earlier effort supported by the Government of Chile to improve technical capacity for ecosystem valuation of Caribbean countries to collect and manage data on their protected areas. This project also counts with the participation of the Princely Government of Monaco.

Mexico's Permanent Representative to the OAS, was joined by his counterparts from Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Jamaica, St Kitts Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad Tobago and by Representatives from Colombia and the United States at the OAS headquarters in Washington D.C.

Department of Sustainable Development  
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