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Conserving Coastal Ecosystems Project

Coastal wetland ecosystems—including mangroves, marshes, mud flats, estuaries, lagoons, and coastal fisheries—extend along Honduras' Pacific and Caribbean coasts and the Bay Islands. Despite their benefits, Honduras' coastal wetlands are being lost due to a number of challenges: climate change, mangrove habitat loss, coastal development, land-based pollution (e.g., plastics, agrochemicals, soil erosion, nutrients, sewage, etc.), overfishing and inadequate fishing practices, agriculture and ranching, logging, aquaculture, and evasive species. The loss of coastal wetlands is leading to biodiversity loss, increasing vulnerability to climate change, and threatening livelihoods, collectively pushing Hondurans to irregularly migrate to the United States.

PURPOSE

The USAID/Honduras Conserving Coastal Ecosystems Activity (CCE) will improve coastal resource management to protect biodiversity, promote climate change adaptation and mitigation, and generate economic opportunity and resilience for local communities.

APPROACH

- Strengthening capacity for coastal wetlands management—both within and outside protected areas—by enhancing policy, economic and financial incentives for such management
- Improving and expanding sustainable commodity production within coastal wetlands and upland areas by enhancing economic inclusion, market function, and strategic alliances with the private sector

EXPECTED RESULTS

- 150,000 hectares along Honduras' Pacific and Caribbean coasts and Bay Islands under improved natural resources management
- 10,000 women, men and youth with new or better jobs

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
Foundation for Rural Business Development (FUNDER)

PERIOD OF IMPLEMENTATION

September 2022—September 2027

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

Cortes, Atlantida, Colon, Bay Islands, Valle and Choluteca

Coastal wetlands support important benefits—called ecosystem services—that are essential to people and the environment:

- **Commercial and artisanal fisheries:** Commercial and artisanal fish and shellfish species rely on coastal wetlands.
- **Tourism and recreation:** Tourism and recreational opportunities in coastal wetlands include canoeing, kayaking, wildlife viewing and photography, and recreational fishing.
- **Flood protection:** Coastal wetlands protect upland areas, including productive, residential, and commercial property, from flooding due to sea level rise and storms.
- **Erosion control:** Coastal wetlands can prevent coastline erosion due to their ability to absorb the energy created by ocean currents which would otherwise degrade a shoreline and associated development.
- **Wildlife food and habitat:** Coastal wetlands provide habitat for threatened and endangered species.
- **Water quality:** Wetlands filter chemicals and sediment out of water before it is discharged into the ocean.
- **Carbon capture:** Certain coastal wetland ecosystems (such as salt marshes and mangroves) can sequester and store large amounts of carbon due to their rapid growth rates and slow decomposition rates.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
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October 2022

IUCN