

# THE OCEAN



Policy in practice

## THE MESOAMERICAN BARRIER REEF FUND

**Countries:** [Belize](#) | [Guatemala](#) | [Honduras](#) | [Mexico](#)

**Tags:** [Fund](#) | [Marine protected area](#)

**Themes:** [Biodiversity](#) | [Finance](#)

 Sustainable cities and communities  Life below water

### Policy in practice

Several MPAs have established trust funds to help ensure a more long-term sustainable, source of finance. Three types of trust funds exist: endowment funds, which maintain a capital base while paying only interest; sinking funds, which use both capital and interest and are thus eventually extinguished; and revolving funds, which are designed to be continuously replenished.

The Mesoamerican Barrier Reef (MAR) Fund -- created in 2004 -- is an example of a pooled fund, with contributions from Belize, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico. Its central focus is on 14 Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the Mesoamerican Reef ecoregion, which contains the largest barrier reef system in the western Atlantic. The mission of the MAR fund is to "drive regional funding and partnerships for the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of the Mesoamerican Reef. As of 2017, the small grants programme ran by the MAR Fund supported 52 small projects that benefitted 24 communities, 3 academic institutions, 1 governmental organization and 21 non-governmental organisations." Some initiatives of the MAR Fund include:

- Conservation of marine resources in Central America
- Community fisheries
- Small grants
- Reef Rescue
- Regranting with the Oak Foundation for projects ran by other organisations aimed a the conservation and management of natural resources in the Mesoamerican Reef
- Global Alliance for Green and Gender Action (GAGGA)
- Mangroves

### Source report

[OECD \(2017\), Marine Protected Areas: Economics, Management and Effective Policy Mixes, p. 28 & 118](#)

## **Key policy message**

Establishing trust funds can help ensure marine protected areas (MPAs) have access to more long-term, sustainable sources of finance.

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