



Healthy Reefs
for healthy people

2025 Annual Report



Letter From the Director

As I reflect on **2025**, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude for what our team and partners have accomplished during our first full year as an independent organization. Following our transition in **2024**—from an initiative with grants administered by the **Mesoamerican Reef Fund** and the **Smithsonian Institution** to a fully independent nonprofit—we have strengthened the foundation needed to advance our mission.

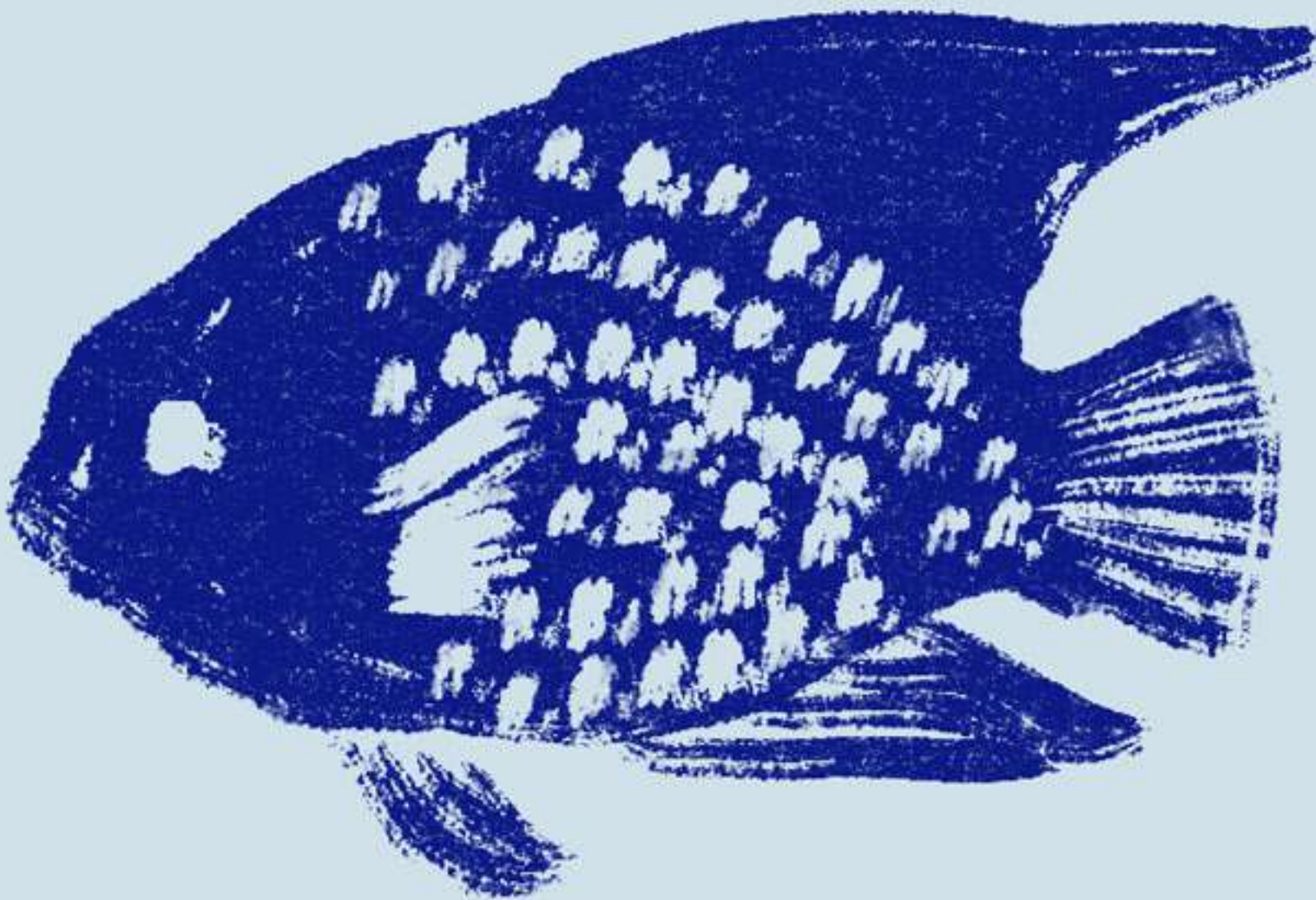
A key milestone was the successful development and implementation of our financial management system by **Outfitters4Success**, allowing our team to devote more time to strengthening our operations, communications, human resources, and fundraising capacity. At the same time, we sharpened our role in supporting impact monitoring for private-sector initiatives through **MAR+Invest** and other international partnerships. Together with our collaborators, we expanded our reef monitoring effort, further developed our innovative reef rehabilitation program centered on the **Caribbean King Crab**, advanced novel financing mechanisms for reef conservation, and strengthened our regional partnerships dedicated to safeguarding our shared marine heritage.

Our independence has also made us more agile—better able to respond quickly to emerging partnerships and urgent conservation challenges. **Healthy Reefs for Healthy People** occupies a unique role: we provide the rigorous science needed to guide effective management while also joining our partners in strong, evidence-based advocacy when coral reefs face their greatest threats. In **2025**, that role proved more important than ever. Our monitoring season revealed the devastating impacts of the **2023–2024** mass coral bleaching event, with approximately half of the living coral across the **Mesoamerican Reef** lost.

While these findings underscore the scale of the challenge before us, they also reinforce the importance of our mission. **This report celebrates the milestones we achieved together while highlighting the critical work that lies ahead.** With continued collaboration, innovation, and commitment, we remain dedicated to driving science-based actions that restore the health and resilience of both the **Mesoamerican Reef** and the communities whose futures are intertwined with it.



Melanie McField
Founder & Director



About Us

Vision

We envision a **thriving and healthy marine ecosystem**, where well-informed and influential reef shareholders are actively engaged in safeguarding this valuable natural asset.

Mission

With broad partnerships, **HRHP (Healthy Reefs for Healthy People)** is committed to deepening our scientific understanding of coral reef dynamics, **improving ecosystem health through science-driven management actions and interventions**, implementing groundbreaking financial tools, and influencing a broad spectrum of shareholders in the reef - our essential natural asset.



2025 at a Glance



Science

- 310 reef sites monitored
- 94 scientists and surveyors
- 246 sites integrated into the AGRRA/HRHP database



Regional impact

- Monitoring across 4 countries
- Largest regional monitoring effort since 2006
- Support for national marine protection policies



Innovation

- First eDNA monitoring in the MAR
- Photogrammetry expanded
- Caribbean King Crab project achieved 16x higher juvenile survival



Capacity & partnership

- 51 biologists trained
- 45 AGRRA certifications
- 20+ companies evaluated through MAR+Invest



Global leadership

- 4 peer-reviewed publications
- 9 presentations at the UN Ocean Conference
- Co-chair of the GCRMN Caribbean report

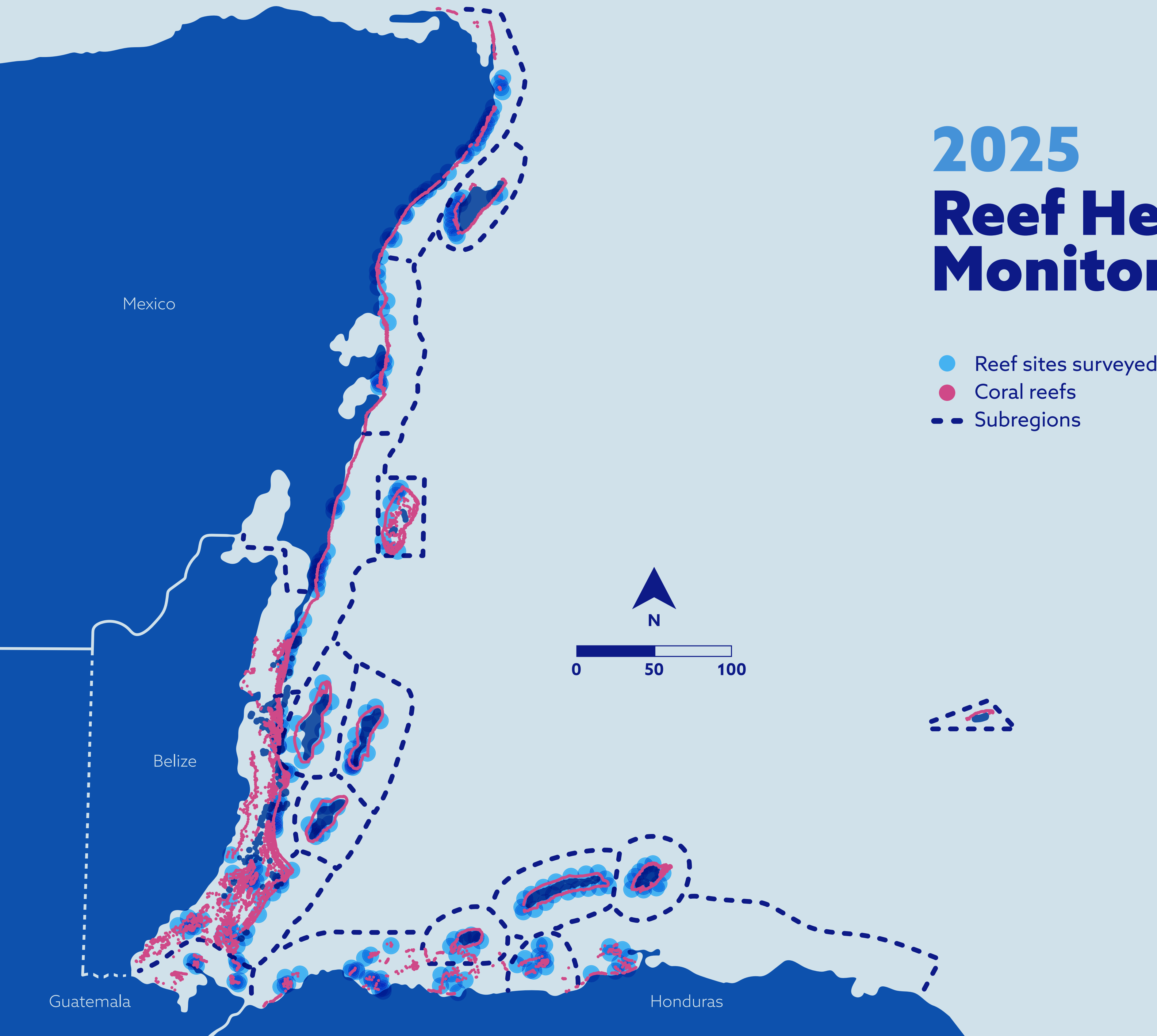


Andrea Sánchez



Maydel Pérez

2025 Reef Health Monitoring Sites



PART 1

Strengthening Our Scientific Foundation

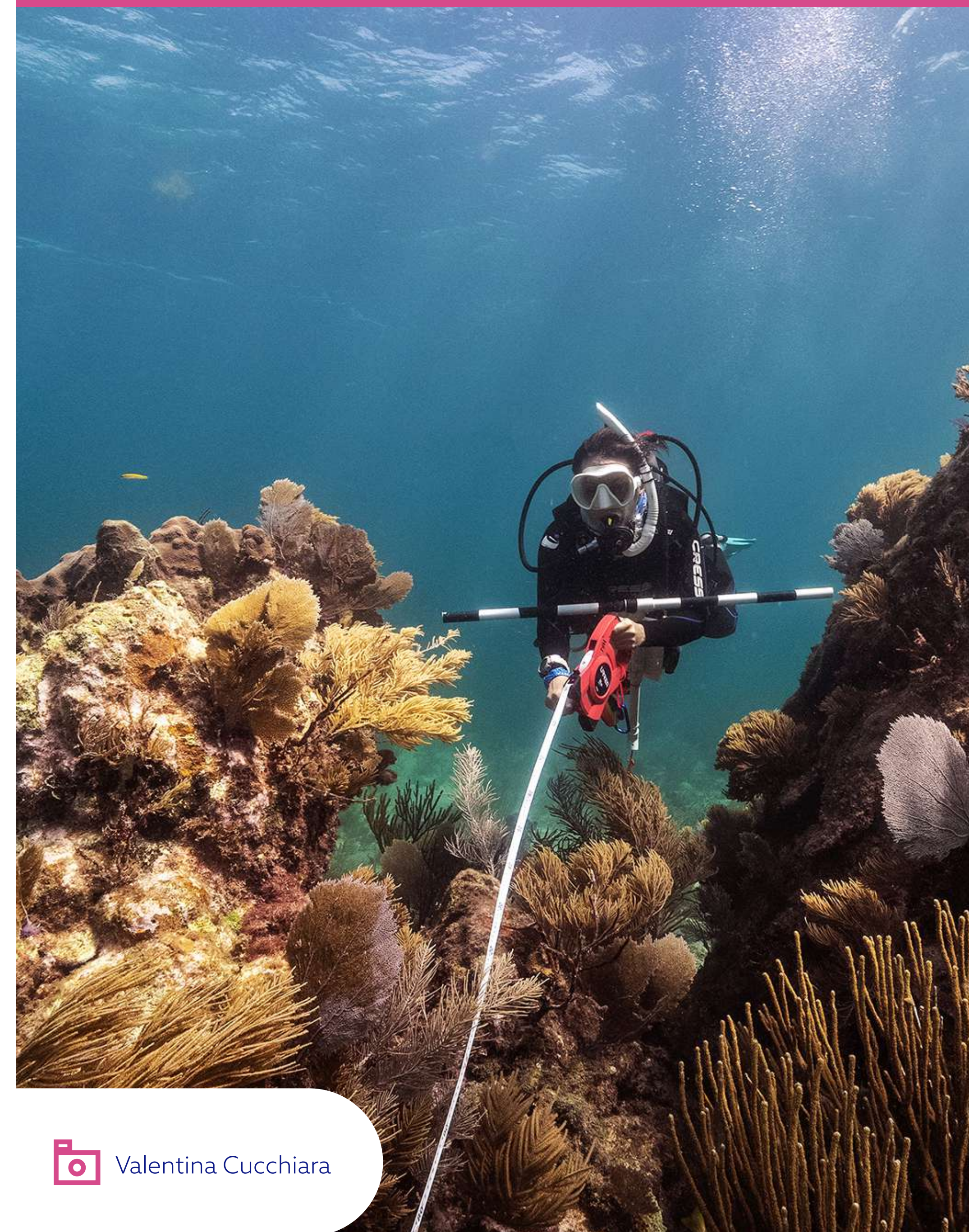
AGRRA Regional Training

In late **April** and **early May 2025**, three intensive **AGRRA** reef monitoring training courses were conducted in **Mexico**, **Belize**, and jointly in **Honduras/Guatemala**. These week-long training courses covered species identification, reef ecology, the **AGRRA** methodology and proper use of the data platform. A total of **51 participants** attended the courses (**18** in **Mexico**, **14** in **Belize**, and **19** in the **Honduras/Guatemala** training), resulting in the certification of **45 local researchers** who passed the exams (over **90 points**).

2025 Monitoring Campaign

Monitoring work started in late **May 2025**. During 2025, we successfully completed reef health monitoring across the **Mesoamerican Reef (MAR)**. A total of **310 sites** were monitored. This effort reflects not only the scale of fieldwork undertaken, but also the strength of regional collaboration, standardized methodologies, and our shared commitment to producing high-quality, comparable data. Across the **MAR**, this effort brought together **94 trained surveyors, scientists, and partner organizations**, reinforcing a collaborative monitoring network that continues to strengthen scientific capacity and consistency across countries.

Our long-term reef health monitoring and regional datasets provide a critical foundation for science-based, adaptive management across the **MAR**. By translating data into actionable insights, **HRHP** supports decision-makers in identifying priority areas, evaluating management effectiveness, and implementing targeted conservation interventions.



Valentina Cucchiara

2025

Country Summaries



Mexico

80 sites were monitored
5 Mexican subregions
9 marine protected areas

A total of 60 sites directly organized by HRHP and 20 led/ owned by partners, thanks to the collaboration of 40 data collectors from 15 partner organizations and allied institutions. As a first, 9 sites were also sampled for eDNA in a collaboration with Dr. Tania Valdivia from CIBNOR.

Belize

115 sites were monitored
27 data collectors

HRHP leading surveys at 71 sites and partner organizations contributing data from an additional 44 sites. Monitoring activities involved 27 data collectors from 10 partner organizations and institutions, with all data entered into the AGRRA platform.

Guatemala

8 sites were monitored
6 data collectors

HRHP led monitoring at 8 sites, including an additional 2 sites located in the Cayman Crown area of Belize. A total of 6 data collectors from 5 partner organizations participated in the monitoring activities.

Honduras

107 sites were monitored
23 data collectors

A total of 107 sites were surveyed, including 6 marine protected areas and 5 Fisheries Recovery Zones. Monitoring activities involved 23 data collectors from 10 partner organizations and institutions.

A Growing Shared Database

A key achievement this year has been the consolidation and integration of monitoring data into the **AGRRA/HRHP** platform.

For the whole **Mesoamerican Reef** we secured **246 sites** into our shared **HRI / AGRRA** database, with an additional 64 sites contributed by partners for a total of **310 sites** surveyed for the 2026 Report Card, the largest number since the original 326 sites surveyed in 2006. While 79% of surveyed sites are now in our collective database, some sites are entered in **AGRRA** but restricted in use by the organizations that own the data or are shared as site summaries by the scientists who own the data. Still, the **HRI** Monitoring program and dataset is the largest in the Caribbean, providing an unparalleled resource for assessing impacts, reef health and resilience, as well as the effectiveness of management actions.

New Monitoring Technologies

Photogrammetry, eDNA, SCTL D Tools

We continue to innovate — incorporating new monitoring tools to support marine conservation and restoration.

In **Honduras**, a photogrammetry training course led jointly by the **Perry Institute for Marine Science (PIMS)** and **HRHP** was held immediately following the **AGRRA** training. The course trained **7 participants** from key partner organizations and received positive feedback. During the **summer of 2025**, we gathered high-quality imagery to develop photogrammetry 3D models at 2 of our core monitoring sites one in **Roatan Honduras** and one in **Cayman Crown**, complementing those previously taken at Cayman Crown in 2020 and then established with permanent markers in 2024.

By filtering just two liters of seawater, we can reconstruct fish and vertebrate communities from the genetic traces organisms leave behind — detecting sharks, rays, cryptic and nocturnal species that rarely appear in visual surveys,

all without disturbing a single organism. In 2025, we processed 27 samples across nine reefs in **northern Quintana Roo**, marking the first integration of **eDNA** monitoring into the **MAR**. Sequencing results will deliver a molecular baseline of reef biodiversity that complements **AGRRA** censuses and strengthens the scientific foundation of the Report Card.



Anthony's Key Resort

BleachWatch & Coral Disease Monitoring

Since 2015, the **Healthy Reefs Initiative (HRI)** has been at the forefront of **MAR-wide Coral BleachWatch** monitoring, mobilizing trained surveyor teams to assess coral bleaching impacts across the **MAR**. In 2023/24, the Caribbean experienced one of the most severe coral bleaching events on record, driven primarily by prolonged periods of elevated seawater temperatures. The impacts of this event extended into 2025, making continued monitoring essential to document both immediate and longer-term bleaching impacts, track coral recovery or mortality, and inform adaptive reef management and protection strategies in priority areas.

With support from the **Reef Rescue Initiative (RRI)** of the **MAR Fund**, **HRHP** and partners implemented BleachWatch monitoring across multiple reefs during the second half of the devastating **4th Global Bleaching Event** in order to evaluate the impacts of this prolonged regional bleaching event. As marine heatwaves become more frequent and intense, sustained regional monitoring is

indispensable to fully understand the growing impacts of global climate change and provide evidence for justifying more extreme climate-actions.

Mexico Monitoring was conducted at **35 sites** in 2024, followed by surveys at **34 sites** in early 2025 and an additional **20 sites** in late 2025. These efforts were carried out through 3 monitoring field trips, complemented by 1 targeted additional expedition to **Limones, Puerto Morelos**.

Belize Surveys covered **12 sites** in 2024, including 6 in the **Port Honduras Marine Reserve** and 6 in the **Glover's Reef Atoll**, each surveyed twice. In 2025, surveys expanded to **52 sites** and were conducted once as part of the **AGRRA** assessments, incorporating both bar-drop and coral belt transects.

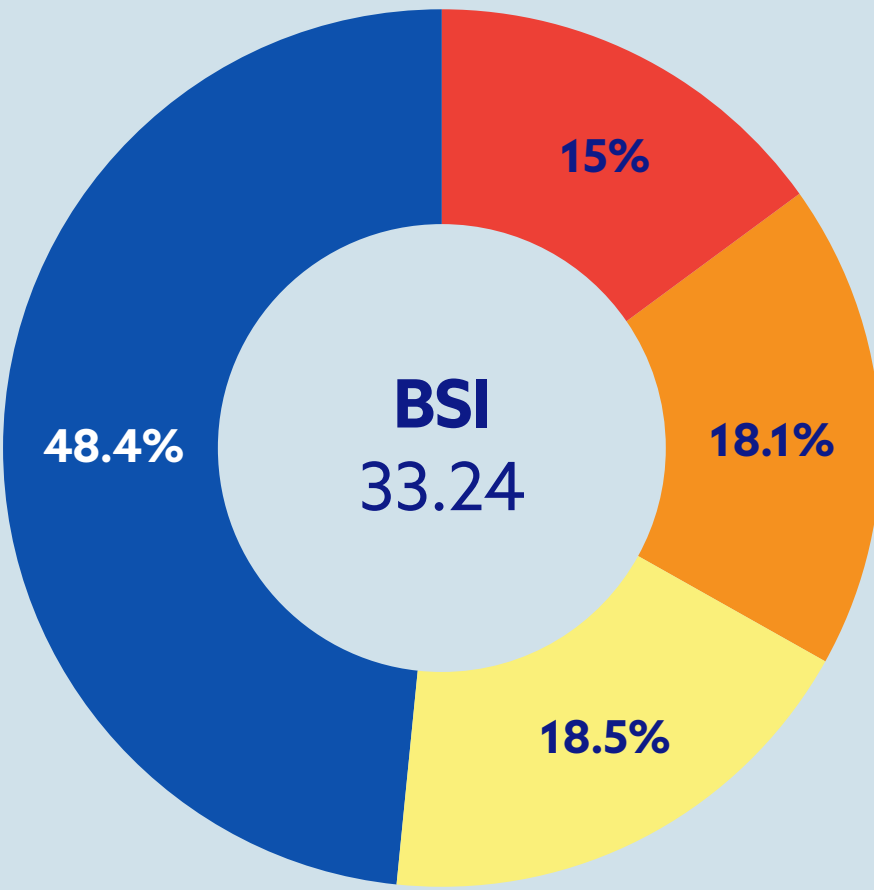
Guatemala Surveys were conducted at **7 sites** during the 2024 expedition and the first 2025 field trip, followed by monitoring at **7 sites** during the second 2025 field trip. In total, **3 monitoring field trips** were completed, including 1 in 2024 and 2 in 2025.

Honduras BleachWatch data were collected in 2024 at a total of **9 sites**. Follow-up monitoring was conducted in February 2025 at **5 sites** in Cayos Cochinos, while **13 sites** in Roatan were monitored between January and March 2025.

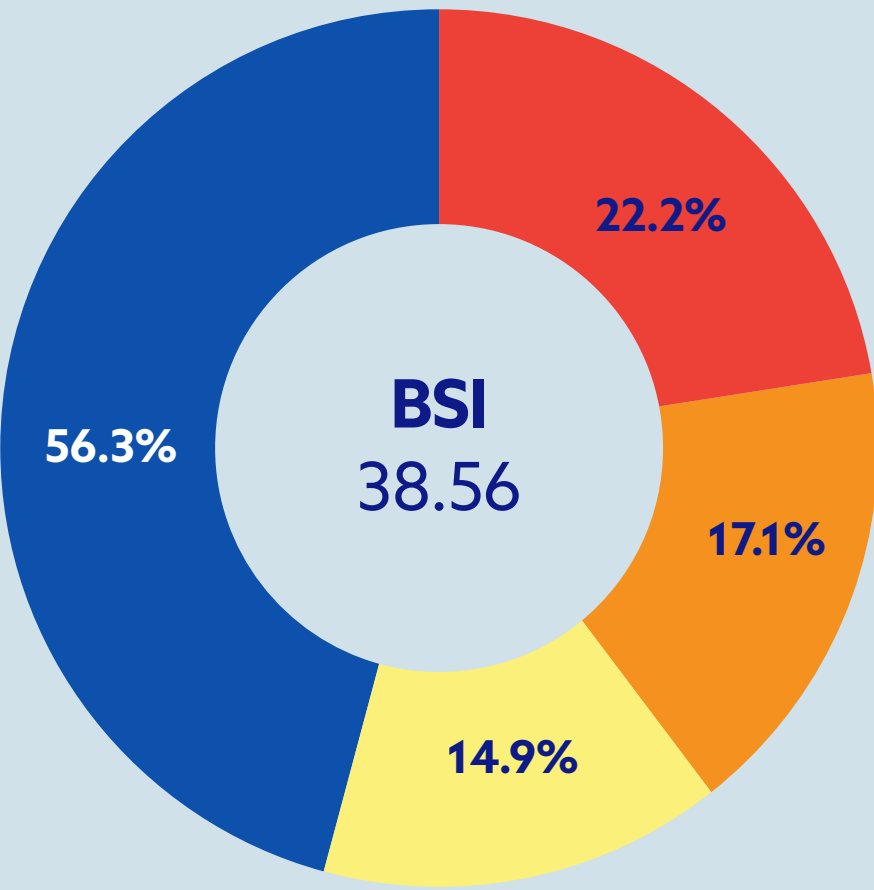


Ana Giró

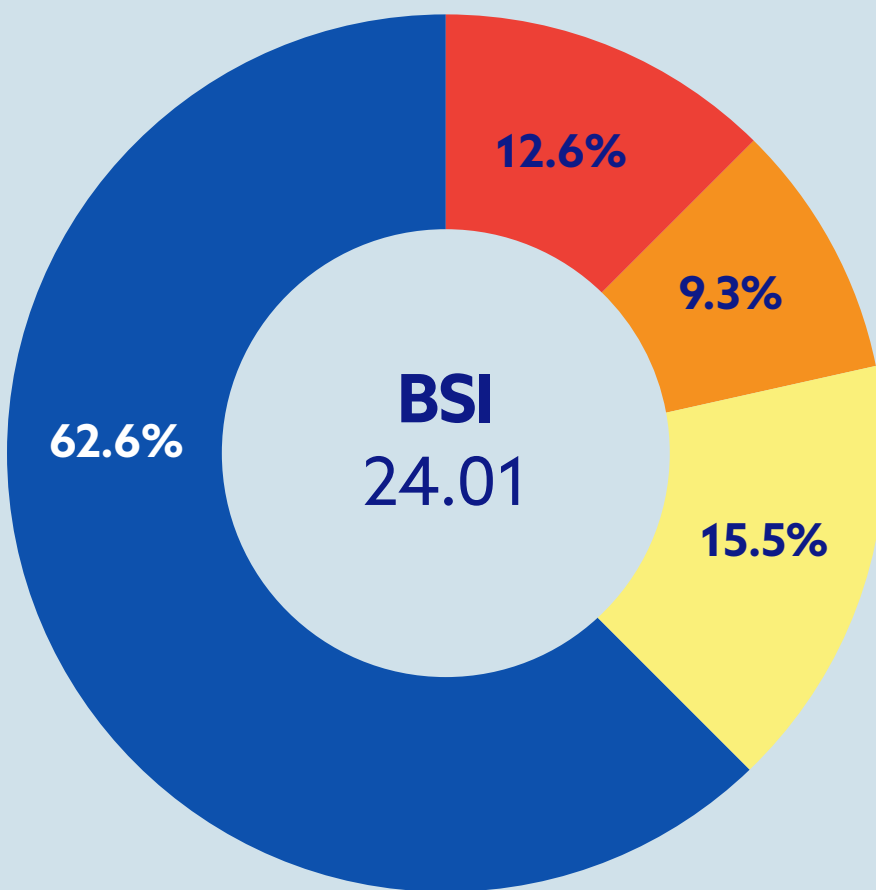
2024 Bleaching Observed



MAR n=63



Belize n=12



Guatemala n=7

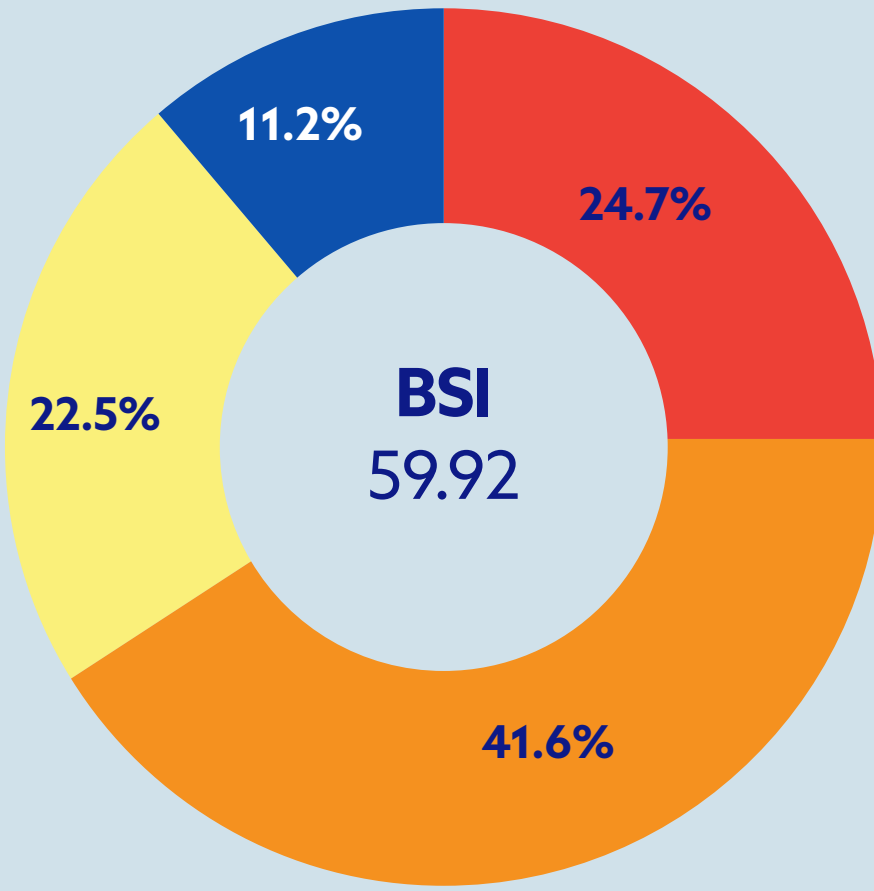


Raúl Tecalco

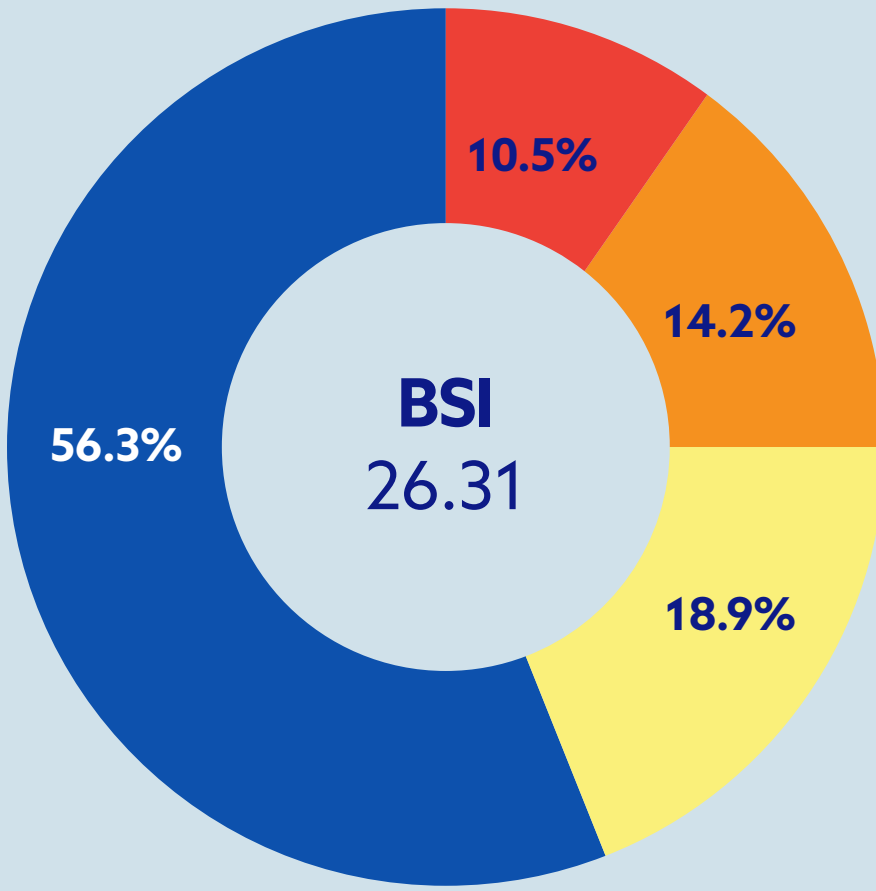
Category

- Healthy
- Pale
- Partially Bleached
- Whole Bleached

BSI Bleaching severity index
n Number of sites



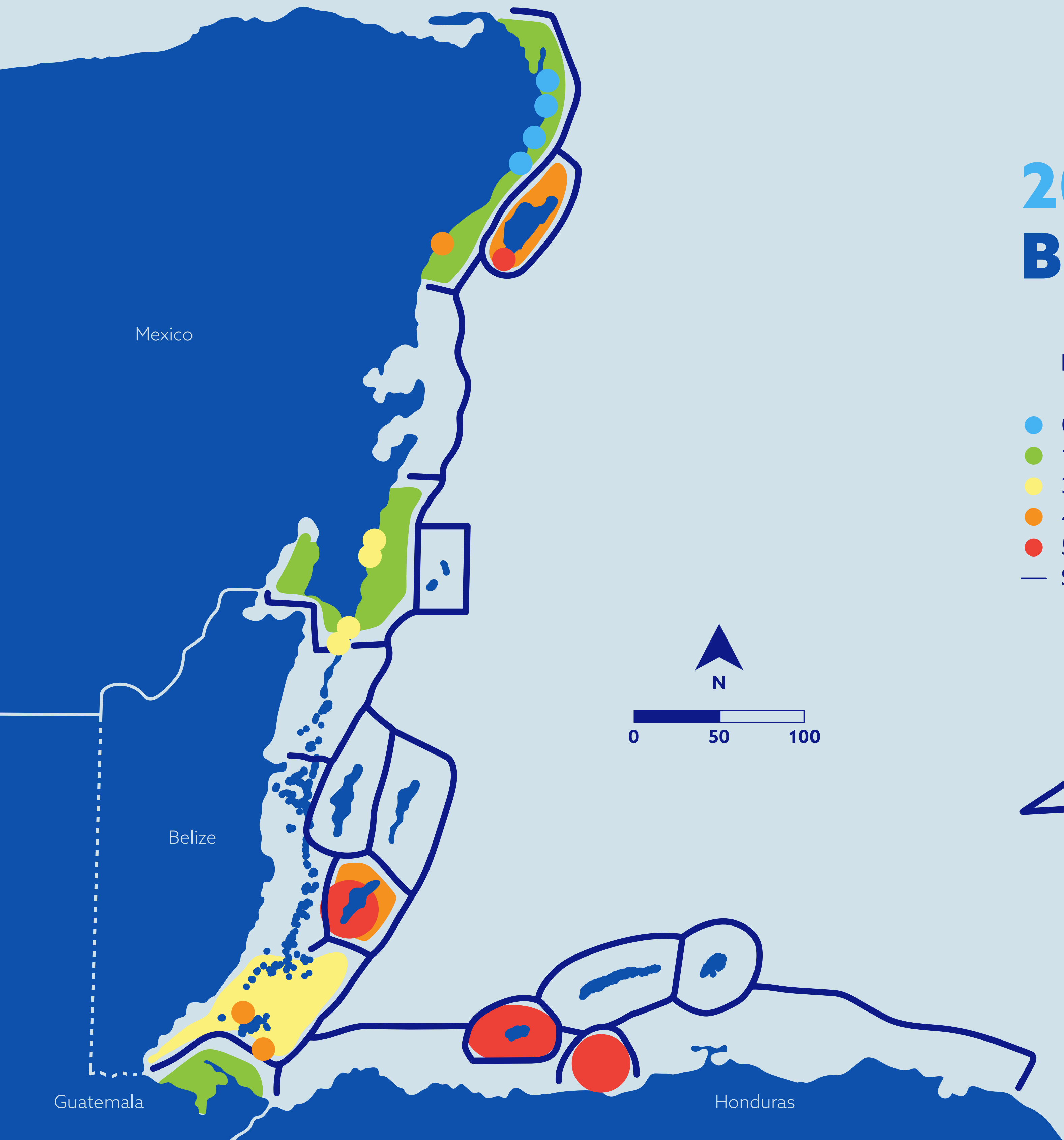
Honduras n=9



Mexico n=35



Raúl Tecalco



2024 Bleaching Observed

- BSI** Bleaching severity index
- 0 - 10
 - 10 - 30
 - 30 - 40
 - 40 - 50
 - 50 - 62
 - Subregions

PART 2

Turning Science into Conservation Action

Marine Protected Areas need at least 20% in full protection

Every **Report Card** (since 2008) has included this critical recommendation to have at least 20% of the sea (and each habitat) within fully protected marine areas. We have very slowly moved the needle, as measured in the **Eco-Audits** and in **Report Card MPA** analysis. Each country has its own process and progress to report.

From a Regional Target to National Action

Mexico

HRHP works with **Alianza Kanan Kay's** coordinating committee to communicate the benefits of fully protected fish replenishment zones.

Although new areas were successfully designed and declared in **Yucatan** and **Campeche**, in Quintana Roo (which has led this effort) two important **fish replenishment zones (FRZ)** were not renewed by local cooperatives as no enforcement nor support were secured to deter illegal fishing and support the community.

Belize

HRHP held a high-level meeting with **Belize Government** officials in February 2025 and presented a preliminary set of maps that achieved the 20% of reef in full protection target during the **Blue Forum** in April, supporting the **Prime Minister's commitment** to this target at the UN in 2023. We also provided data and guidance to **Resilient Bold Belize** - a massive long term fundraising effort led by **WWF**. Following concerns raised by fishers, the Government agreed to having additional targeted consultations before finalizing the proposed expansion of fully protected coral reef areas, thus the process is still underway.

Guatemala

HRHP worked with **DIPESCA** and **Fundaeco** to advance community-based awareness and pursue the formal declaration of **Foudara** as a highly protected zone, where only subsistence fishing would be permitted. The effort to get full **MPA** status for **Cayman Crown** continues.

Honduras

HRHP has consistently led efforts to strengthen capacities for monitoring marine protected areas and to leverage the data generated in driving initiatives that expand and consolidate the protection of these areas.

Although the designation of wildlife importance sites along the **Caribbean coast** has increased, there is still a need to expand the areas categorized as **highly and fully protected**.



Belize Sustainable Ocean Plan

The **Coastal Zone Management Authority** and Institute is leading the **Belize Sustainable Ocean Plan**, the country's primary marine spatial planning framework for balancing biodiversity conservation / MPAs, with fisheries, coastal development, tourism, ports and climate resilience planning. The **HRHP** science team contributes to this initiative by providing reef condition assessments, ecological indicators, and regular technical expertise during workshops that guide planning decisions informed by the best available scientific evidence. Through this collaboration, **HRHP** supports the identification of priority conservation areas, evaluation of management scenarios, and integration of coral reef health into national ocean planning and policy.

It will include 30% of ocean space in high protection, and hopefully 20% of reefs in full protection. It should be completed in 2026.

Regional Roadmap to Reef Resilience

This initiative brings together the Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL), HRHP, University of Leeds, UK and the Mesoamerican Reef Fund (MAR Fund), building on over two decades of collaboration across the region.

The effort focuses on integrating new models of climate and other environmental stressors along with our ecological data to guide the post effective placement of these fully protected zones in **MPAs**. It also supports **MPA** managers in developing sustainable financing mechanisms and regional conservation priorities. As part of this initiative, we contribute to implementing science-based approaches, strengthening management effectiveness, and supporting coordination among stakeholders. These efforts aim to enhance the resilience of the **Mesoamerican Reef** and promote the long-term sustainability of coastal ecosystems and the communities that depend on them.



Henry Brown

Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA) Designation

HRHP will work with **MAR Fund** in 2026 to update the **Technical Proposal** to designate the **MAR Region** as a **Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA)**, in accordance with **International Maritime Organization (IMO)** requirements.

Other Policy Efforts

Mexican Senate

HRHP participated in the **Mexican Senate** on November 5th, 2025, in a roundtable “Voices for the **Mesoamerican Reef** providing the latest science on the health of the **Mesoamerican Reef** -critically threatened but still alive- and emphasizing the urgency of acting before reaching ecological points of no return. We highlighted that full protection works, if enforced, stressed the need to enforce **NOM-001-SEMARNAT-2021** for clean coastal waters. We also called for a renewed “**Tulum +30**” regional commitment and greater support for legislation and funding based on science, noting the importance of this momentum ahead of **COP30** on **Climate Change**.

Belize

HRHP has continued to support **Belize’s marine and coastal governance** by actively participating in national meetings and workshops and providing technical expertise to the development and implementation of key marine and coastal policies. These include the **National Seagrass**



Management Policy, updates to the Integrated **Coastal Zone Management Policy** and **Plan and the Coral Reef Resilience Plan**. **HRHP** also contributed to the development of Belize's national marine habitat layer, in addition to supporting the Resilient Bold Belize initiative, led by **WWF** as part of **Belize's Blue Bond commitments**, supporting national efforts to expand marine protection, secure long-term financing for conservation, strengthen sustainable ocean governance, and achieve **Belize's** long-term conservation objectives.

Guatemala

HRHP highlighted the urgent need to safeguard Guatemala's marine ecosystems in a Congressional presentation of the **Legislative Agenda for Sustainable Development and Climate Change** in January 2025. During this event, Congresswoman **Karina Paz** introduced a bill to protect the **Cayman Crown Reef** and declare it as a full **MPA** (the current designation is a marine spatial closure zone through a ministerial agreement that will expire in 2030). The initiative received strong support from several members of Congress, as well as from the leadership of the **IUCN**, representatives of environmental organizations, and civil society. Building on this momentum, in March the **Cayman**

Crown Reef Protection Bill successfully advanced through its first reading in the National Congress of **Guatemala**. **HRHP** collaborated with the **National Congress** communications team to produce an educational video on the **Cayman Crown Reef**, highlighting its ecological importance and the need for its **MPA** designation. The video helped inform legislators and the general public. The bill advanced to its second reading, marking an important step toward the reef's long-term protection.

Honduras

In early 2025, **Honduras** took a major policy step by approving a ministerial agreement to protect parrotfish, surgeonfish for an indefinite period and groupers from the first (01) day of November 2025, until the thirtieth (30) day of April 2026. Building on this momentum, the country has also officially included coral reefs in its upcoming **NDC 3.0**, reinforcing ecosystem-based resilience at the national level. In parallel, **HRHP** is advancing the integration of the GIS information layer while continuing to support national commitments to safeguard marine ecosystems and active participation as part of the technical team of the **Alianza Honduras Libre de Explotación Petrolera**.

PART 3

Motivating Reef Positive Impacts within the Blue Economy

MAR + Invest overview

Through our participation in the **Global Fund for Coral Reefs (GFCR) MAR+Invest Project**, HRHP has helped demonstrate the potential of blended finance as a novel tool to mobilize private and public capital for reef conservation, supporting scalable investment approaches for long-term reef protection and resilience in the **MAR**. The project has been heralded by **GFCR** and other Impact Investing programs as one of the best examples globally. We provide initial evaluations of projects for potential reef-positive impacts, as well as the design and implementation of the whole monitoring and evaluation component for the program, which involves the following three elements.

Acceleration Program

HRHP contributed to the **2025 Acceleration Program (AP)** which aims to support the growth of businesses with a positive impact on the MAR and its reef-dependent communities. Our communications and technical teams helped disseminate the call for applications, participated in the project selection process, and applied the **HRHP-MAR + Invest** rating tool. **HRHP** gave a session during their bootcamp training program, from which eight projects were selected for the 2025 cohort. **HRHP** has developed the monitoring and evaluation plans, as well as providing reef focused mentorship alongside **New Ventures'** mentorship in business / financial practices.

Build & Connect

HRHP also assists with this program, led by **Sureste Sostenible**, which provides training and support to empower environmental leaders in the region and promotes nature-based solutions via entrepreneurship. We supported the development of public policy proposals through the 2025 **BC** cohort with 15 projects, at least eight of which incorporated reef-health indicators and demonstrated potential for regional scalability.

Transactional Services

HRHP also brings scientific support to the evaluation of larger business proposals submitted to the **New Ventures** and **Viwala Transactional Services (TS)** team to review and assess the potential for reef health and community benefits of the business proposals that are being suggested to the **MAR + Invest TS** pipeline. Over twenty companies were evaluated in 2025.

Wastewater Solutions

HRHP maintains active discussions about the need for better Wastewater Treatment (WWT) solutions within the [MAR + Invest](#) program and beyond - through our participation in the [Ocean Sewage Alliance](#).

[MAR + Invest's](#) first commercial loans for [WWT](#) have marked a significant milestone and are the result of ongoing efforts to promote innovative wastewater solutions. They include a technology provider that delivers compact, high-level water treatment systems designed to comply with both [Mexican Law](#) and the [Cartagena Convention](#) standards, for houses and small businesses in remote places where no municipal connection is available. Another loan to a boutique hotel allowed upgrading their waste water treatment plant to meet reef-specific standards. The [HRHP](#) team has been closely involved in the monitoring of these systems and for supporting better wastewater solutions.





Mario Motiño

Caribbean King Crab for Regeneration & Resilience

HRHP has led a **Reef Regeneration** project focused on **Caribbean King Crab (CKC)** since 2020 in **Mexico, Belize and Honduras** in collaboration with local partners (**IMIPAS, Xcaret, TASA, FINS, and HCRF**) aimed at raising and reseeding these mostly herbivorous crabs on reefs to testing increase herbivory - supporting coral growth and reef resilience - while also creating a new economic opportunity through sustainable aquaculture. In 2025, the **GFCR-funded Research & Development** consultancy achieved a 16-fold improvement in juvenile survival (from 0.5% to 8.1%) through specialized feed and the introduction of **Individual Vertical Systems (IVS)**, which produced 32% faster growth than traditional shared-tank systems. In parallel, a business development consultancy is exploring investment requirements for different culture systems, identifying a market opportunity linked to **Alaskan King Crab** fishery closures and high global demand for crab. The project also reached a gastronomic milestone, with the first culinary event and tasting of farm-raised **CKC** led by **Chef Pedro Abascal** of **Restaurant Primo**, confirming commercial and culinary potential of farm-raised crabs - which tasted even better than the wild version in a comparison.

[+ Read more](#)

PART 4

Contributions to Coral Reef Science

Scientific publications

In order to remain a credible science-based organization, we aim to collaborate on several peer-reviewed publications each year in addition to our [Report Cards](#) and project reports. The following articles were published in 2025, covering the global climate crisis and coral reef tipping-point, integrating physical and environmental variables into reef classification, a review of global coral bleaching methods and a regional reef management review, all co-authored by [HRHP](#).

Scientific Publications

1

Pearce-Kelly, P., Altieri, A. H., Bruno, J. F., Cornwall, C. E., McField, M., Muñiz-Castillo, A. I., ... & Yesson, C. (2025). Considerations for determining warm-water coral reef tipping points. *Earth System Dynamics*, 16(1), 275-292 [+ Read more](#)

2

Bolaños-Durán, E., Muñiz-Castillo, A. I., Valenzuela-Quíñonez, F., & Paz-García, D. A. (2025). Classifying the seascape of eastern tropical Pacific based on physicochemical variables. *Marine Environmental Research*, 210, 107294.

3

Rivera-Sosa, A., Muñiz-Castillo, A. I., Charo, B., Asner, G. P., Roelfsema, C. M., Donner, S. D., ... & Fox, H. E. (2025). Six decades of global coral bleaching monitoring: a review of methods and call for enhanced standardization and coordination. *Frontiers in Marine Science*, 12, 1547870.

4

Bohorquez, J., Fine, M., Grieco, D.I. et al. Coral reefs span borders, so must solutions: transboundary conservation in complex political environments. *npj Ocean Sustain* 4, 64 (2025). [+ Read more](#)

2025 UN Ocean Conference

One Ocean Science Conference The **2025** was a scientific conference of the **UNOC** held in **Nice, France** that fed into the policy conference the following week. **HRHP** gave two presentations at this meeting, covering our **MAR Health Report Cards** and the wider **GCRMN Caribbean Report**.

UN Ocean Conference Also in Nice, France provided high-level talks and discussion about global and regional policy initiatives. **HRHP** staff participated in nine high-level panels or presentations and two film screening events, sharing science, solutions, and strategies to safeguard the **MAR** and coral reefs worldwide. New partnerships, including the **Earth Law Center** and the **"Reef Rights" Initiative** were established at this meeting.

UNFCC COP30 In **Bélem, Brazil** was touted as the **"Last Stand for Coral Reefs"** given the closing window of time available for temperature reduction relevant for coral reef survival and the previous difficulty of garnering real carbon commitments to limit global warming to 1.5 °C. **HRHP** participated virtually with two presentations about the **2025 Global Tipping Points Report** and implications for the world's coral reefs. Panelists discussed tipping point risks and governance frameworks to clarify the state of the science and policy needs.





International Conferences

78th Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI) Conference

Brings together scientists, managers, fishers, and conservation partners from across the **wider Caribbean** each year. **HRHP** gave a presentation on regional trends in fish biomass and bleaching impacts in the **MAR**, highlighting how the bleaching event of 2023/2024 affected key coral species across the region and emphasizing the urgent need for coordinated responses and global climate action.

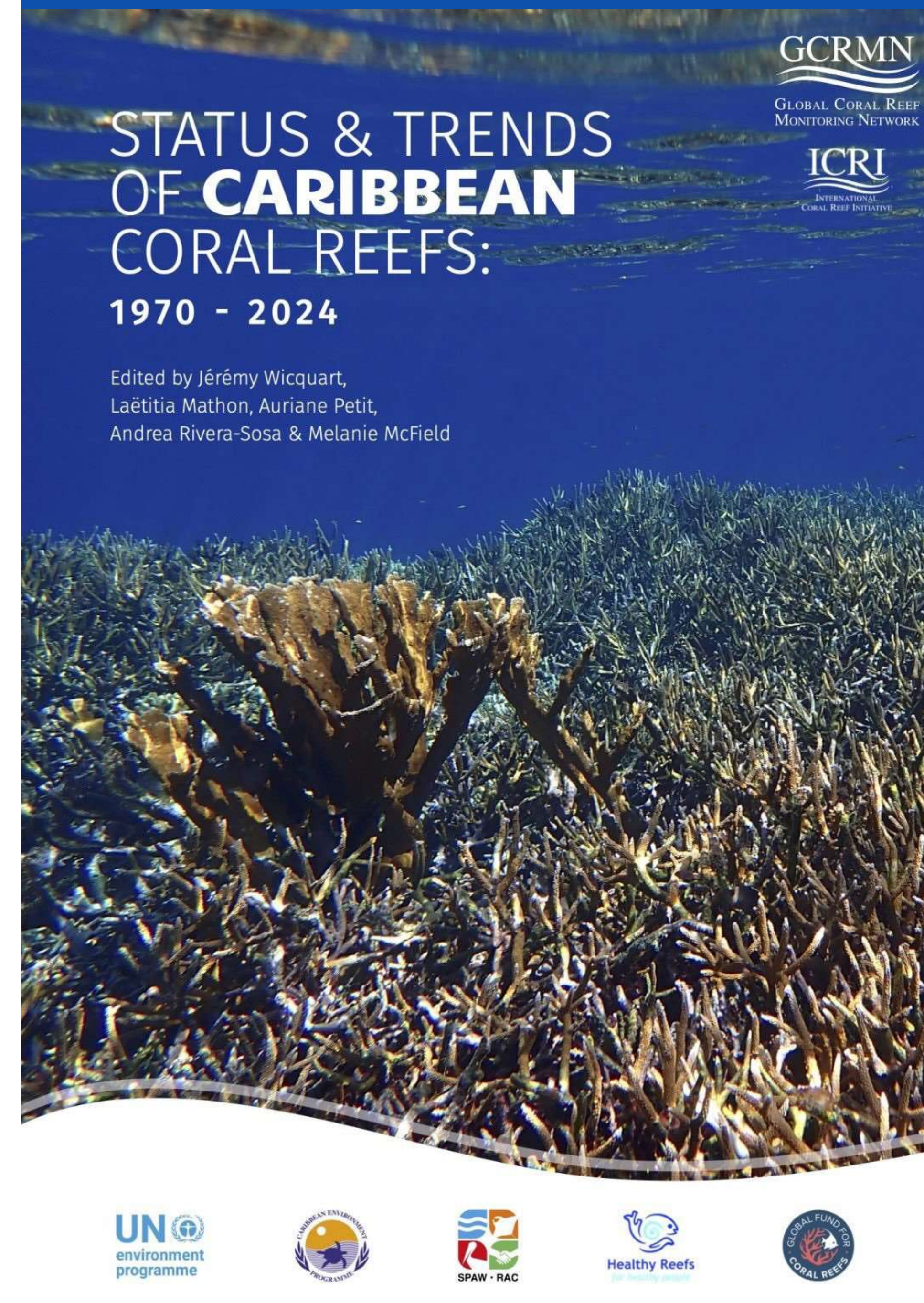
The Mexican and Latin American Coral Reef Congress (CMAC) Conference 4th Pan-American Coral Reef Congress (CPAC)

This brought together researchers, students, and organizations from across the region to share scientific advances and conservation strategies for coral reefs. **HRHP** staff gave several presentations, including **20 years** of collaborative, science-based lessons and presented **MAR + Invest**, an innovative financing mode and the **Caribbean King Crab** aquaculture / reef rehabilitation project. Our data was used and cited in more than **10 presentations**, including a student-presentation that won an award at the conference, illustrating the wide impact of our work on the scientific community overall.

Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network - Caribbean (GCRMN)

HRHP continues to play a leadership role as the **Co-Chair of the GCRMN - Caribbean**, overseeing and editing the [Status and Trends of Caribbean Coral Reefs: 1970-2024](#) launched in December. This report is the most comprehensive assessment of the **Caribbean region** to date, identifying climate change-induced heat stress, disease, pollution and overfishing as major drivers of reef degradation which included highlighting a 48% decline in coral cover since 1980. It reinforces the reef-focused recommendations found in our Report Cards and includes a companion **Policy Brief: [Caribbean 2025 - GCRMN](#)**.

HRHP also participated in the **Steering Committee for the IUCN Red List of Ecosystems Assessment for Caribbean Reefs** which feeds into the global report that will be launched in 2026. These high visibility global reports will help raise global awareness about the coral reef crisis - particularly for the **Caribbean** and hopefully catalyze new funding and strengthen support for concerted reef conservation actions including the establishment of more fully-protected zones.



Special Recognitions

Smithsonian Ecological Research Center

Our reef scientist **Dr. Israel Muñiz** has become a research fellow at the **Smithsonian Ecological Research Center**. This collaboration connects **HRHP** to one of the world's leading marine science institutions, giving us direct access to the latest research, innovative methods, and a global network of experts. Collaboration with these scientists help ensure that our reef monitoring, restoration, and conservation recommendations are based on the best available science.

Communications Earth & Environment

Dr. Israel Muñiz was also selected as an **Outstanding Reviewer by Communications Earth & Environment (Nature Portfolio)**, in recognition of the quality, professionalism, and constructive impact of his peer-review contributions to the journal.

Latin American and Mexican Coral Reef Congress

We also celebrate the achievements of our student collaborators: **Andrea Melina Fonseca (CINVESTAV)** - recognized for her research on the role of herbivorous fish; and **Bárbara Velázquez Rivera (UABCS)** - awarded for her work on ichthyofauna and ecosystem services at the **2025 Latin American and Mexican Coral Reef Congress** in Cozumel.

International Coral Reef Society (ICRS)

Our Guatemalan Coordinator, **Ana Giró**, received the **International Coral Reef Society (ICRS) John Ogden President's Membership Award for 2025–2026**. She was one of 125 recipients selected, recognizing her contributions to coral reef science and conservation.

PART 5

Sharing Knowledge & Inspiring Action

Communications & Social Media

Throughout the year, **HRHP** maintained an active social media presence **Facebook**, **Instagram**, **new Blue Sky account**, and **LinkedIn** focused on reef health, bleaching, monitoring results, and conservation actions across the region. Key outreach efforts included targeted campaigns highlighting the findings of the **2024 Mesoamerican Reef Health Report Card**, helping to translate scientific results into accessible information for managers, partners, and the broader public.

Media Impact

On April 23, 2025, the **International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI)** released a press release about the 4th Global bleaching event. Our Director provided quotes for the release and was interviewed by several international journalists for newspapers, radio, and television in the US and Europe. The story was the #1 climate story globally, the #2 in all environmental news for **The Guardian**, and the #2 story in all news topics on **France24** – all leading up to the **UN Ocean Conference** in June.



The Weather Channel Interview

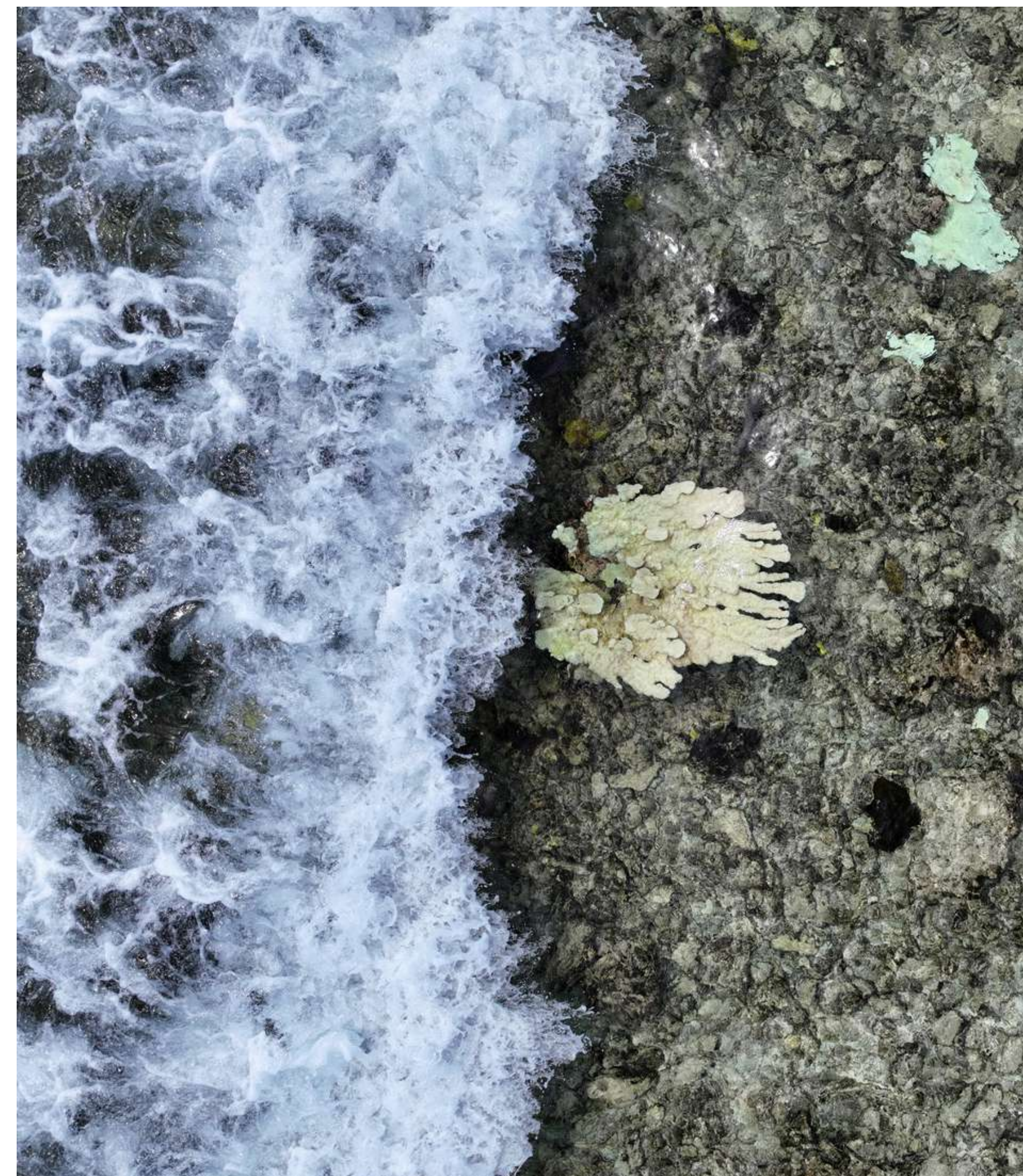
May 5, 2025 | [Watch](#)



The Guardian

April 23, 2025 | [Read more & watch](#)

More than 80% of the world's reefs were hit by bleaching after the worst global event on record.



Lorenzo Álvarez

Public Outreach & National Presentations

Our early **2025 Outreach campaigns** have focused on the **2024 Report Card** results, critical reforms in fisheries management, and increasing fully protected zones within **MPAs**, strengthened enforcement of all environmental regulations, climate change actions and environmental justice.

All of these actions are recommended collaboratively with partners for enhanced impact and implementation. The tourism industry stakeholders have been particularly interested in learning more about ways they can help to protect reef health. Highlights of **HRHP** national presentations include:

Mexico

United by Climate

Presented the current climate change threats for the MAR and its communities.

Sea of Change Festival

In La Paz, B.C.S., included our overview of the MAR and HRHP efforts during Ocean's Day.

Guatemala

Women in the Maritime Sector

Included an overview about women in ocean science.

The Treasure of the Caribbean

Film launch in Guatemala highlighted the amazing Cayman Crown reef and our long-term work at this site.

Belize

Belize Reef Week 2025

Raised public awareness on marine conservation under the theme 'Building Resilience from Ridge to Reef' including the Reef Swim event.

Ministry of Blue Economy Blue Forum

Presented a preliminary set of maps that could achieve the 20% of coral reef in full protection target that we recommended since 2008.

Regional Webinar Presentations by HRHP This year we actively contributed several presentations within the MAR Fund webinar series “Beyond the virtual space”, including:	The virtual launch of the Status and Trends of Caribbean Coral Reefs: 1970–2024 report, led by the GCRMN and the ICRI, reached an audience of more than 500 attendees.	Innovative Risk Financing Approaches to Enhance Ecosystem Resilience along the Caribbean’s Coastlines, organized with ORRA and MAR Fund.	IOI–OAMx and EAMx Course Instruction focused on Oceanic Culture and Biodiversity in Secondary and High School Education, hosted by the IOI Ocean Academy–UN, supporting capacity building in marine education.
	The FAO–UN webinar From Invasion to Restoration: Challenges and Solutions for Reef Recovery, contributing scientific perspectives on reef degradation and recovery pathways.	Science, Strategies, and Solutions for Responding to Coral Bleaching, convened by the Coral Reef Alliance, the ICRI, and the Reef Resilience Network, engaging in discussions on science-based bleaching response strategies.	

 Lorenzo Álvarez

 Juan Carlos Huitrón

PART 6

Strengthening the Organization

Institutional Development & Organizational Strengthening

As a new organization, **HRHP** has focused on organizational development, in addition to our main work focused on reef conservation. We were fortunate to receive a timely grant from **Fauna and Flora International (FFI)** for **Institutional Development**.

Three HRHP organizational documents have been produced in both English and Spanish:

- 1 **A Comprehensive Roadmap to Sustainable Funding for Marine Conservation in the Mesoamerican Reef Region.**
- 2 **A Comprehensive Blueprint for Enhancing Operational Efficiency.**
- 3 **An External Communications Strategy and Internal Processes for Streamlining Communications.**

These strategy documents mark a significant step forward in strengthening Healthy Reefs for Healthy People’s financial sustainability, operational capacity, communications, and long-term impact.

“By diversifying funding sources, establishing meaningful partnerships, and leveraging existing strengths—including scientific credibility and regional leadership—HRHP is well-positioned to build a resilient, adaptable model of conservation finance.”

—
The Bonne Terre Team



FFEM MAR Fish Project Closure

We wrapped up our four-year French Facility for Global Environment (FFEM) funded MAR Fish project with the evaluators and donors site visit in early April. The FFEM was very pleased with the amazing results of the project, including significant progress in marine conservation and the strengthening of MPA protections achieved.



Rául Tecalco



2024 | Quintana Roo, Mexico

Our Team

Meet the experts behind our work

Raphael Martínez | 2 years with HRHP | was focused on coordinating national coral reef monitoring and training, strengthening our collaboration among government agencies, NGOs, academic institutions, and other partners. “Environmental stewardship should be part of every Belizean’s national identity, because loving Belize goes hand in hand with protecting the natural environment that sustains our communities, livelihoods, and future”.

Claudia Guerrero | 3 years with HRHP | has contributed to expanding the number of reef health monitoring sites and strengthening partner engagement. The resulting data now serve as the country’s most consistent database, widely used to track progress on protected area objectives and international commitments. In addition, HRHP has played a key role in advancing initiatives for the international recognition of Honduran reefs and their biodiversity, further elevating their importance in global conservation efforts.

Israel Muñiz | 4 years with HRHP | led scientific analyses from a region-wide coral bleaching and thermal-stress assessment to spatial mapping and technical support for regional conservation and policy initiatives — turning field data into science that guides protection across Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico.

Mélina Soto | 8 years with HRHP | focused on expanding our partner network, cultivating relationships with new actors, advocating in a wide range of forums, but also in hands-on teaching and learning opportunities with local groups, all eager to make positive changes and impacts on our dear reef.

Ana Giró | 14 years with HRHP | pioneered coral reef research and discovery in Guatemala including the “Cayman Crown Reef” made famous in the PBS Nature documentary *Treasure of the Caribbean*, and securing its designation as Guatemala’s first fully protected reef zone. She also supported the advancement of national legislation to strengthen the reef’s long-term protection through presentations to Congress and scientific outreach.

Marisol Rueda Flores | 15 years with HRHP | expanded HRHP’s digital outreach by increasing social media campaigns and collaborative communications with partners, strengthening the visibility of our conservation efforts across the Mesoamerican Reef region. “Science generates evidence. Conservation creates solutions. Communication connects both to the people who make change possible”.

Melanie McField | 21 years with HRHP | focused on strengthening the organization’s human resources, financial policies, audits, and systems, while introducing our work to new donors and reconnecting with long-time supporters. As climate change accelerates toward tipping points, her focus has expanded to fast-acting climate solutions that could help save our reef, as well as partnerships with environmental law teams to explore “Reef Rights.” Melanie is also a founding Board member as Secretary.

Looking ahead

Board of Directors

HRHP remains committed to strengthening regional collaborations, expanding reef monitoring and restoration efforts, and assisting private sector and policy efforts that improve the health of the Mesoamerican Reef.

Jenny Myton | Chairperson | The Coral Reef Alliance

CORAL and Healthy Reefs for Healthy People have collaborated for decades on MPAs and clean water solutions, but the real momentum for achieving big wins and accelerated actions comes from having a diverse and comprehensive alliance of organizations like HRI. Stronger action is even more urgent in 2026, given the impact of the fourth global bleaching event on reef health.

Armando Laborde | Treasurer | New Ventures Group

The team of committed and action oriented scientists at Healthy Reefs for Healthy People helps the whole ocean conservation sector design and implement more efficient conservation strategies. HRHP has become one of the most strategic actors for successful reef conservation.

María José González | The Mesoamerican Reef Fund

After more than 20 years of collaboration between HRHP and MAR Fund towards the same objectives of impactful science, continually improving MPA management, reduction of threats, and sustainable financing, maintaining our long-standing and mutually beneficial alliance is essential as we evolve and undertake exciting new approaches in marine conservation that respond to the changing conditions of the reef.

Mario Motiño

2025 Financial Situation

Operating Revenues		USD	
Contributions	76,949	12%	
Grant Revenue	591,004	88%	
Total Operating Revenue	667,952	100%	
Expenses by category			
Program Services	572,081	88%	
Management and General	57,738	9%	
Fundraising	19,149	3%	
Total expenses	648,968	100%	
Balance sheet			
Total Assets	1,002,495		
Total Liabilities		6,733	
Total Net Assets		995,762	
Total Liabilities and Net Assets		1,002,495	

Our **2026 Budget** of **USD\$700,000** was approved by the **BOD** in the **August 2025** meeting.



Henry Brown