



MAR LEADERSHIP
Mesoamerican Reef Leadership Program

Fourth MAR Leadership Program Report March 2012

Induction and Fundraising Workshop (March 4-14, 2012, Livingston, Guatemala)

Thirty-three MAR Fellows from Mexico, Belize, Honduras, and Guatemala attended this workshop, along with seven international experts. The fellows were from all three cohorts of the program (2010, 2011, and 2012). During the workshop, Paquita Bath ([Aligning Visions](#)) and Luis Bourillón, Ph.D. ([COBI](#)) assisted 2012 fellows in developing their project ideas and integrating them with work proposed by their peers. Norissa Giangola ([Spitfire Strategies](#)) taught the cohort skills like how to plan an elevator speech, how to effectively transmit a message, and how to make a good presentation to a targeted audience. Eda Roth ([Eda Roth & Associates](#)) shared her expertise in seizing the stage and showed how to ensure that the audience pays attention. Brigitte Seumenicht ([Merkatua](#)) engaged all three cohorts in a fun, interactive LEGO activity: creating a tangible representation of all of the MAR Leadership projects and fellows, as well as the goals of the program. The 2010 and 2011 cohorts received a very practical and needs-focused fundraising training by Anne McEnany ([International Community Foundation](#)).

The 2010 and 2011 fellows, along with several experts, gave feedback on the 2012 fellows' projects, and all cohorts and experts interacted in several activities that strengthened the MAR Leaders' network of expertise and friendship. The interaction among the three cohorts was beneficial in terms of conservation (exchange of knowledge, experiences, techniques, etc.) and also as a bonding experience for committed conservation leaders from the four Mesoamerican Reef (MAR) countries.

During the workshop, we took a field trip to visit four fishermen's cooperatives in Amatique Bay that address topics like no-take zones and hatcheries. We gave feedback on the cooperatives' projects, and fellows received feedback on their projects from fishers. We also interacted with a Quechí women's cooperative that promotes community tourism. Another very gratifying experience was our community service activity, where the fellows interacted with students at the Ak' Tenamit School. Fellows shared their leadership experiences and explained the importance of MAR conservation.

Two important documents arose from this workshop: a letter in which the MAR Leadership Program supports and encourages Banco Cordelia's declaration as an Important Wildlife Site which was sent to the Honduran ICF Forestry Development Subdirection and a letter in which MAR Fellows and the institutions they belong to declare their support for establishing the first-ever marine protected areas in the Guatemalan Caribbean.



Kim, a 2011 fellow during the LEGO training, explaining the role his project plays among all of the MAR Leadership Program's conservation goals.



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2012 Cohort Selection



For the 2012 selection process, more than 100 local, regional, and international organizations working in the MAR Region were solicited for nominations. Of the original pool of 87 candidates, 33 qualified applicants were interviewed and their references checked. From this pool, we selected the top 12 applicants (4 Belizeans, 3 Guatemalans, 3 Hondurans and 2 Mexicans) for admission to the program, given inputs from the Program's Executive Committee. Our [2012 MAR Fellows](#) were selected based on their

commitment and passion for MAR conservation, their ethical fiber, and the strength and innovation of their project ideas, which will be incubated by the MAR Leadership Program and its expert network of consultants and collaborators.

They will receive 18 months of individual and group trainings and will be working to design, strengthen, and implement projects in order to establish a network of multifunctional marine reserves with emphasis on mangrove protection, evaluation and expansion of fisheries recovery zones, and establishment of new marine protected areas.

Our MAR Network

An explicit objective of the MAR Leadership Program is to create and maintain a strong fellow and alumni network. There are different strategies to maintain this engagement, including providing membership to our Groupsites, encouraging interaction on social networks, keeping everyone up-to-date on program news, giving webinars, sharing relevant information, and inviting alumni to become mentors or trainers. Our internal motto is: *Once a MAR Fellow always a MAR Fellow.*



Thank you once again for your generous contribution. We are so excited to continue a relationship with our donors and look forward to working together to conserve the reef.