



About Us

The **University of Belize Environmental Research Institute (UB ERI)** was officially launched on January 28, 2010. It distinguishes itself as a first of its kind Institute that is dedicated to the development of research in Belize through the building of local capacity.

Mission

The University of Belize Environmental Research Institute continuously builds national scientific capacity for the effective management, sustainable use and conservation of Belize's natural resources.

Vision

As the premiere environmental research institute in Belize and highly respected in the region, UB ERI provides sound science and creates a culture of evidence-based decision-making in the public and private sector in areas relevant to Belize's sustainable development.



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**University of Belize
Environmental Research
Institute**



Objectives

- ◆ To provide a mechanism at the University of Belize for research that meets the natural resource management needs of Belize;
- ◆ To undertake teaching and training functions at undergraduate, post-graduate and professional levels, in environmental related fields;
- ◆ To provide coordination and integration of environmental research to inform and influence decision-making regarding formulation of national policies, plans and laws;
- ◆ To engage in national and regional collaborations for research, training, and implementation of management and conservation initiatives;
- ◆ To develop and maintain relations with the universities, research institutions, governments and other entities, nationally and internationally, for the best interest of the Institute;
- ◆ To provide and extend the application of best practices and relevant technologies to private sector entities engaged or interested in the use and extraction of natural resources; and
- ◆ To provide technical services to public and private entities engaged in the use and management of natural resources.

Programs

Research and Monitoring

UB ERI's main research and monitoring programs are focused on work in the Central Belize Corridor and the Turneffe Atoll Marine Reserve.

Central Belize Corridor

The institute and partners have been working to delineate and implement the Central Belize Corridor (CBC), a critical segment of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor. The collection of ecological data on the abundance of large predators such as jaguars, and the abundance and movement of important prey species such as pacas, within the CBC has helped to demarcate the corridor.



Turneffe Atoll Marine Reserve

The UB ERI contributes to the management of the Turneffe Atoll's marine resources through research and monitoring. The Institute monitors the health of coral reef, seagrass and mangrove ecosystems, coral bleaching, sea turtle nesting and fish spawning aggregations on an annual basis. Research efforts focus on investigations into the invasive lionfish population and its impact on the reef and keystone herbivore populations such as *Diadema*.



Communication and Outreach

This program focuses on mainstreaming the results of the UB ERI's scientific work in order to influence decisions made for the management of the country's resources. It involves the translation of research data into user-friendly formats for use by key decision makers, the private sector, students, and the public at large.

Training and Fellowships

Training and Fellowships is the UB ERI's main capacity-building program. It involves the implementation of short-term training opportunities aimed at meeting the needs of professionals in the field and the development of long-term training programs. Research opportunities for local students and fellowships for resident and visiting researchers are also offered as part of this program to enrich existing programs at the University and enhance the research capacity of the Institute.

Protected Areas (PAs) Training

UB ERI is the key implementing partner for training related to protected areas (PAs) management and was instrumental in the development of the National Training Program for Protected Areas Management (NTPPAM) which is financed through the Protected

Areas Conservation Trust (PACT). The overarching goal of the NTPPAM in Belize is to develop national capacity for PA Management to enhance and sustain management of the National Protected Areas System for strategic planning, program development and implementation, and long-term sustainability.

Database and Repository

The UB ERI hosts and manages online databases for national Coral Bleaching and Spawning Aggregation (SPAGs) in collaboration with national monitoring networks. It also manages an online repository of natural resource and environmental focused publications produced by scientist or organizations that have conducted research in Belize, as well as publications produced by the UB ERI or UB.

Calabash Caye Field Station

The UB ERI manages a marine field station, the **Calabash Caye Field Station (CCFS)**, located in the Turneffe Atoll, and all its programs. Through the CCFS, the Institute provides marine science education to both Belizean and foreign students, and hosts numerous visiting groups and researchers.

