The Nature Conservancy

Caribbean Impact Report 2025

Nature can provide solutions to climate challenges

GREETINGS, FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS! We are proud to share the remarkable progress we have made throughout 2025 to create a Nature Positive Future for the Caribbean by 2030. This year's Impact Report reveals how we continue to leverage the strength and capabilities of TNC as a global organization (now in our 75th year) to encourage transformative action across the region. We did so by using science to identify the most important places for nature and people, engaging leaders of nations and territories to encourage restoration and protection of critical ecosystems, and mobilizing financial resources to enable durable action by conservation partners at scales that matter.

As you explore this report, you'll discover stories of innovation and collaboration and stories of hope and resilience. Together with our partners, we demonstrate that nature is essential not only for biodiversity, but also for the well-being and prosperity of Caribbean communities.

We were reminded, once again, that the Caribbean remains on the frontlines of climate change. Hurricane Melissa, the strongest storm to come ashore in Jamaica, was fueled by Caribbean waters that were exceptionally warm, even at great depth. That heat and energy was unleashed on Jamaica and other countries with devastating impacts, a reminder of the region's vulnerability to extreme climate events. As we prepare this report, TNC is working with Jamaica's Government, local researchers and local communities to assess Melissa's impacts to nature using imagery collected by satellites and drones. The imagery, interpreted by sophisticated tools developed by our science team, will help prioritize areas for restoration. The insights we gain will also help us better understand where and how nature plays a role in supporting community resilience.

Our post-hurricane work underscores why The Nature Conservancy must continue to be bold and science driven. As a global organization, we strive to address the twin crises of accelerating biodiversity loss and the impacts of a changing climate on people and nature. The organization's 2030 Goals illustrate the actions needed globally; our goals for the Caribbean reflect what we believe is both necessary and possible. With the right approach, we will ensure:

- **262 million acres of ocean benefiting from improved regional management**
- **4.8 million people supported through nature-based solutions to climate challenges**
- **294,000 acres of coral reefs, mangroves, and watersheds restored and protected**

The health and well-being of nature and people are inextricably linked, and this is especially true in the Caribbean. Nature can provide solutions to climate challenges, coral reefs and other habitats can continue to produce fish and support livelihoods, and a well-managed ocean can continue to support a dizzying array of marine life across an area as large and diverse as the Amazon. We know our progress is only possible through generous contributions from our many supporters, so we thank you for being part of this story. Your lightly restricted gifts to The Nature Conservancy allow us to bring together the science and technology, financial expertise, and partnerships that will lead to a Nature-Positive Future for the Caribbean. Together, we find a way.

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FRONT COVER: TNC Conservation Practitioner in the Northern Caribbean Program Solomon Gibson snorkeling in The Bahamas. Photo: © Kip Evans

WHERE WE WORK

Working in 17 countries and territories, The Nature Conservancy is committed to securing lasting conservation outcomes and a bright future for the Caribbean by protecting the ocean and coasts, safeguarding the habitats that sustain people and wildlife, building resilience against the impacts of climate change, and empowering communities to manage their natural resources in ways that allow people and nature to thrive together.

2025 BY THE NUMBERS

$494 MILLION

Annual value of CoralCarib refugia reefs to people in terms of tourism, coastal protection, fisheries and ecosystem services.

$2.8 BILLION

Annual tourism expenditures generated by coral reefs in the Dominican Republic.

$264 MILLION

Annual flood-protection value of reefs in CoralCarib refugia sites.

12,000

Hectares of mangrove forests documented in Jamaica.

10,436

Hectares of Marine Protected Areas in The Bahamas with climate-smart management plans.

1,763

Agricultural producers and cattle farmers benefiting from agroforestry and silvopastoral practices, resulting in improved tree cover and watershed infiltration in the Dominican Republic.

152

People trained in coral restoration and diverse sustainable livelihood activities under the CoralCarib project in Haiti, Cuba, Jamaica and the Dominican Republic.

63

Jamaican professionals trained in blue carbon, habitat geospatial analysis, and the UNFCCC climate finance framework.

46

Hydrometeorological stations installed in the Dominican Republic to monitor and estimate volumetric benefits (higher flow) from interventions supported by water funds.

30

Years of TNC conservation presence in the Dominican Republic.

55,000 HECTARES

Seagrass beds documented in Jamaica's first national inventory.

5

Coral conservation and restoration learning exchange trips TNC and partners hosted in Cuba, Puerto Rico, USVI, Dominican Republic and The Bahamas.

7

Officers of the Department of Natural Resources (Puerto Rico) who boosted their knowledge of coral restoration and propagation during an exchange in the USVI.

2.5 MILLION

Views of wastewater awareness video on IG and FB.

94,003

Followers on TNC Caribbean social media channels.

TNC'S 2030 GOALS

The Decade to Deliver

2030 Goals

Our ambitious plan to secure a thriving planet—for people and nature

Reduced climate impact for a livable world

3GT CO_2E
avoided or sequestered per year

Resilient ecosystems for a flourishing world

100M
people benefitted

Sustainable solutions for thriving oceans

4B
hectares conserved

Restored rivers, lakes and wetlands for flourishing freshwater systems

1M
kilometers of rivers conserved

30M
hectares of lakes and wetlands conserved

Healthy lands for a healthier planet

650M
hectares conserved

Thriving communities stewarding global ecosystems

45M
people supported

Securing a Nature-Positive Future for the Caribbean by 2030

This year marks the halfway point in a critical decade for conservation in the Caribbean and globally. Through the Global Biodiversity Framework, the world established ambitious targets for conservation, including a goal to permanently protect at least 30% of land, ocean, and freshwater ecosystems by 2030. Similarly, nations are working together to prevent global temperature from increasing more than 1.5°C – a critically important threshold for maintaining a livable climate. The Nature Conservancy's 2030 Goals are designed to help the world achieve these outcomes.

In the Caribbean, our primary goal is to help Secure a Nature Positive Future by 2030. Our roadmap for achieving this has three main components:

- Using the best science to identify the most important places for nature and people
- Engaging leaders of nations and territories to take action to restore and protect critical ecosystems
- Mobilizing financial resources to enable action that endures at scales that matter

What does this look like in practice? This year, we unveiled a region-wide analysis that relied upon high-resolution satellite imagery and state-of-the-art modeling of biological, geological, and geographic information to identify the places that maintain functioning ecosystems and support both nature and people. We hosted webinars and training sessions with national leaders to present our analysis. Then we supported them in applying its findings to national plans developed as part of global biodiversity and climate frameworks.

We continued to build on the success of two Nature Bonds in Barbados and The Bahamas, opening discussions about similar national and regional financing strategies with the Dominican Republic and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States. In the past two years alone, we mobilized USD $175 million in new private financing for conservation in the Caribbean, and we believe we can reach $1 billion by 2030.

This combination of science, policy, and financing creates the conditions necessary to implement effective interventions on land and in the water. In the sections that follow, you will see how the work of our Caribbean team with Nature-based Solutions for Climate Adaptation, Coral Conservation and Restoration, and Improved Ocean Management is helping propel the region toward a Nature Positive Future.

$1 BILLION

USD $175 million in new private financing for conservation in the Caribbean. We believe we can reach $1 billion by 2030.

A young green turtle surfaces for a breath of air.
Photo: Christophe Mason-Parker / TNC Photo Contest 2019

Mangroves form a protective barrier, shielding coastal communities from damage during storms and hurricanes in Carriacou. Photo: © Steve Schill

Scaling Nature-based Solutions for Climate Adaptation

Our climate adaptation work and nature-based solutions across the Caribbean showcased the power of local expertise and global innovation. In collaboration with TNC's global Sustainable Food and Water, Impact Finance and Markets, Global Science, and Global Climate teams, we are advancing cutting-edge tools, financing models, and scientific insights that help communities build resilience in the face of a changing climate, helping them adapt and thrive.

As One Conservancy, we are accelerating solutions that protect people, strengthen ecosystems, and secure a more climate-resilient future for the region.

The Soubise Climate-Smart Fisher Facility

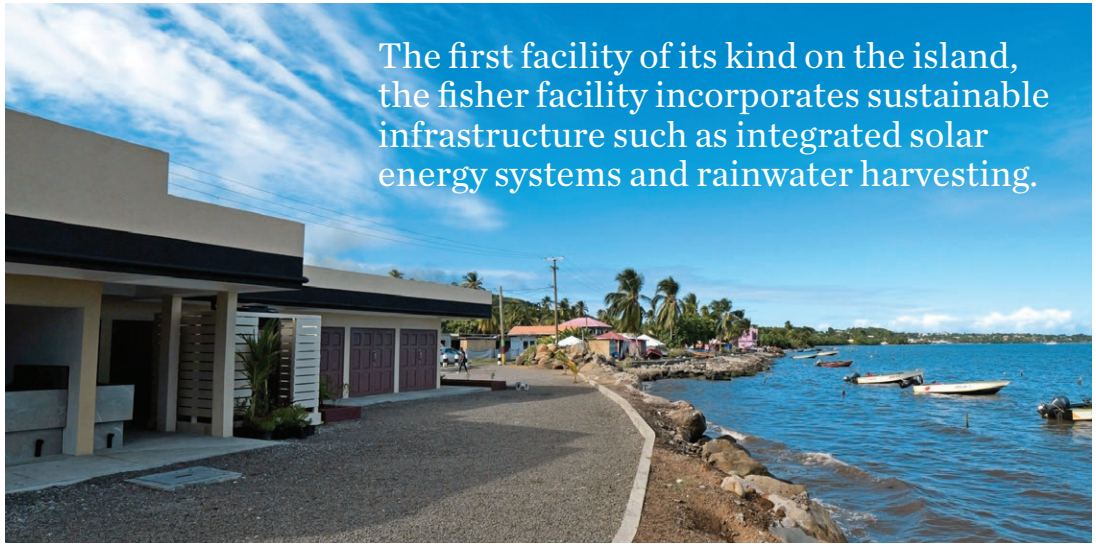
Community Empowerment Through Climate Resilience

Hon. Dickon Mitchell, Prime Minister of Grenada (4th from right) and Hon. Kerryne James, Minister for Climate Resilience, the Environment and Renewable Energy (4th from left) stand with local fishers and TNC staff to commemorate the handover of the newly constructed Climate-Smart Fisher Facility in Soubise, Grenada. Photo: © PinkReel

In one of the most significant advancements in green infrastructure in Grenada, TNC in the Eastern Caribbean and the Government of Grenada celebrated the opening of the climate-smart Fisher Facility in Soubise, St. Andrew – one of Grenada's most fishing-dependent communities. Here, livelihoods, income, and food security rely heavily on the sector.

The first facility of its kind on the island, the fisher facility incorporates sustainable infrastructure such as integrated solar energy systems and rainwater harvesting. The surrounding site includes nature-based solutions like grey-green hybrid shoreline stabilization—combining natural rock sea walls with native coastal

The Soubise Fisher Facility features 21 secure lockers for storing fishing gear, washing stations for cleaning catch and equipment, and shower areas.



vegetation—to reinforce the coastline on which the building stands. In a community like Soubise, where severe storms and rising tides pose increasing risks, these measures help absorb wave energy, reduce coastal erosion, and enhance nearshore habitats essential for fishing.

Grenada officials and representatives from partner organizations marked the opening with a ribbon-cutting event that highlighted both community empowerment and climate resilience. It was attended by Grenada Prime Minister Dickon Mitchell; Minister for Climate Resilience, Environment and Renewable Energy Kerryne James; and representatives from partner organizations, including the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and community fisher groups whose members contributed to the facility's unique, climate-smart design.

The Soubise Fisher Facility features 21 secure lockers for storing fishing gear, washing stations for cleaning catch and equipment, and shower areas.

The facility was constructed under TNC's Resilient Islands by Design initiative, Integrating Ecosystem and Community-based Approaches to Enhance Climate Change Adaptation in the Caribbean. Its completion reflects a strong partnership between the Government of Grenada, TNC, the International Climate Initiative, the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), and the Grenada Red Cross Society.

Dive Deeper
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TOP: The Soubise Climate-Smart Fisher Facility utilizes solar power and rain water harvesting.

BELOW: The foundation of the Soubise Climate-Smart Fisher Facility combines natural rock sea walls with native coastal vegetation to strenghten the coastline, making it more climate resilient.

Photos: © Andre Joseph-Witzig/TNC

Northern Bahamas Mangrove Restoration

Assessing Carbon Stocks After Hurricane Dorian

Mangrove forests in The Bahamas serve as critical transitional ecosystems between marine and terrestrial environments, providing habitat for important species as well as conservation benefits such as carbon sequestration and slowing coastal erosion.

After Hurricane Dorian devastated Grand Bahama and Abaco in 2019, mangrove rehabilitation became paramount. Restoration partners across governmental and non-governmental agencies activated to meet the need through the Northern Bahamas Mangrove Restoration Project, which replants trees to accelerate natural recovery and restore ecosystem services.

In 2025, The Nature Conservancy's Northern Caribbean Program completed a baseline carbon study in hurricane-impacted areas, partnering with TerraCarbon, the University of The Bahamas, and the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources' Forestry Unit. The report highlights results of field assessments measuring the above- and below-ground carbon stored in plant biomass and soil organic carbon – a first-of-its-kind study in The Bahamas. TNC presented the study findings — the outcomes of the baseline carbon science report including methods and comparative findings between the two islands and in a national, regional and global context — at two webinars held in August and October attended by government agencies and other interested stakeholders across the region. The study aims to inform ongoing restoration strategies and contribute to potential carbon market initiatives and broader environmental management.

This work was made possible through funding provided by the Global Fund for Coral Reefs and Builder's Initiative.

BOTH IMAGES: Northern Bahamas Mangrove Restoration Project (NBMR) team.
Photo: © Jewel Beneby/TNC

Jamaica Steps Up Commitment to Preserve Wetlands

The year 2025 marks the first time Jamaica's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC 3.0) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change included commitments and ambitious targets to conserve and restore coastal wetlands, including mangrove forests and seagrass beds. TNC Jamaica, with support from global teams, played a key role in developing the NDC.

The team provided technical guidance on integrating blue carbon habitats into national climate strategies and also led the drafting of the science-driven targets based on input from the Forestry Department, the National Environment and Planning Agency, and the The University of the West Indies Centre for Marine Sciences. The work was supported by the Integrating Coastal Wetlands into Jamaica's NDCs project funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts.

TNC Jamaica and the Centre for Marine Sciences at the University of the West Indies, with funding from the Pew Charitable Trusts, are leading groundwork to integrate coastal ecosystems into Jamaica's Nationally Determined Contributions. Photo: © Sheldon Levene

The commitments to the NDC resulted from science-based collaboration and sustained policy engagement and represented the culmination of intensive stakeholder engagements. Including coastal wetlands in the NDC marks a milestone for Jamaica.

Among the major developments as part of this science/policy nexus:

- Creating the first comprehensive map of Jamaica's near-shore seagrass ecosystems, including a documented spatial extent of over 55,000 hectares within a 30m depth contour.
- Estimating national carbon stock for seagrass based on documented spatial extent - 7,326,538.10 ± 1,915,206.24 MgC (above- and below-ground biomass)
- Classifying the health of the seagrass ecosystem by density
- Documenting approximately 12,000 hectares of mangrove forests
- Classifying mangrove ecosystems health using NDVI
- Estimating a national carbon stock for mangrove - ~ 4,699,894 ± 232,566 MgC (above- and below-ground biomass)
- Making new maps publicly available through the Blue Carbon Explorer GIS portal (http://bluecarbon.tnc.org)
- Hosting several technical training and capacity building sessions highlighting several topics, resulting in 63 professionals trained in multiple areas.

Dive Deeper
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Jamaica NDC 3.0 | NDC Report | Jamaica Gleaner | Blue Carbon Explorer

Jamaica's coastal wetlands NDC targets

Coral reef and seagrass ecosystems slow waves offshore, protecting people living at the water's edge in East Portland, Jamaica. Photo: © Sheldon Levene

Protect approximately 67% of the island's mangrove forests by 2033.

Restore at least 2,200 hectares of mangroves by 2030.

Work to include mangroves in Jamaica's National Greenhouse Gas Inventory by 2030.

Develop/formalize a no-net-loss policy for forests and coastal wetlands by 2035.

Complete mapping and conduct carbon stock assessment of seagrass ecosystems across nearshore Jamaica by 2030.

Conserve 100% of seagrass ecosystems within legally declared protected areas by 2035.

CReW-DR to Improve One Million Lives

The Nature Conservancy took a significant step toward advancing climate resilience in the Dominican Republic by submitting a concept note outlining a potentially significant watershed conservation project.

The proposed Climate Resilient Watersheds in the DR (CReW-DR), the first project TNC has submitted as part of the Green Climate Fund, seeks to mobilize over $90 million to implement nature-based solutions that safeguard communities and ecosystems against the growing impacts of climate change in Yaque del Norte Watershed and Miches.

In alignment with the DR's NDC 2.0, NDC 3.0 and National Adaptation Plan 2015-2030, the project will contribute to adaptation targets in water, ecosystems, agriculture, and climate governance. Other benefits include mitigation, economic improvement (e.g. job creation), and increasing biodiversity. Beyond that, TNC expects to improve lives for more than one million people by enhancing water security, reducing disaster risks, and promoting climate-smart livelihoods. Overall, CReW-DR demonstrates TNC's commitment to leveraging global climate finance for impactful, community-driven solutions.

The project will use grants and blended finance tools to promote enabling policy and financial environments through an integrated approach that provides tangible benefits to communities and builds capacity and systems for upscaling on a national level.

By implementing a suite of nature-based solutions to restore, protect, and sustainably manage ecosystems such as forests, rivers and wetlands, and coastal areas, CReW-DR will reduce risk from flooding and droughts and lessen downstream impacts on coastal ecosystems and communities.

All photos on this page: © Ricardo Briones

Fresh water systems like Rio Jimenoa in the Dominican Republic are critical to locals who depend on them for water security, cleansing and recreation.

Cattle farming relies on fresh water availability in the Dominican Republic.

Agricultural communities in the Dominican Republic rely on fresh water and available habitat.

Advancing the Dominican Republic's 30x30 Vision

Bayahibe fishing village, Dominican Republic. Photo: © Ricardo Briones

TNC has played a pivotal role in supporting the Dominican Republic Government's efforts to align its Nationally Determined Contributions and National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan with the global 30x30 conservation target, which calls for protecting 30% of land and marine areas by 2030.

Through technical assistance, spatial planning tools, and capacity-building initiatives, TNC has helped integrate nature-based solutions into climate and biodiversity strategies, ensuring protected area expansion and ecosystem restoration contribute to emissions reduction and resilience goals. In this context, TNC supported the development and updating of six management plans. This collaboration between the Dominican Republic Government and TNC strengthens the nation's commitments under the Paris Agreement while advancing biodiversity conservation priorities in line with international frameworks.

At a workshop held in December, TNC showcased its 30x30 Conservation Dashboard, a geospatial decision-support tool designed to help Caribbean nations achieve their 30% protection goal by 2030. The session brought together government representatives, conservation experts, and local stakeholders to explore how the dashboard's data-driven insights can guide strategic planning for biodiversity conservation, protected marine areas, and climate resilience. Participants discussed practical applications of the tool and how it can help align national policies and foster regional collaboration, reinforcing the Dominican Republic's leadership in advancing the 30x30 commitment.

Dive Deeper
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A scuba diver attaches staghorn coral fragments to a coral reef near Playa Blanca in Dominican Republic. Photo: © Paul A. Selvaggio

Coral Conservation and Restoration

Coral reefs are the underwater engines of biodiversity, the drivers of blue economies, and the protectors of coastal communities. In 2025, TNC's Caribbean Division worked in partnership with TNC's Global Reefs Team, California Chapter, Latin America Division, and global Super Reefs Project Team, as well as a network of external partner organizations, to accelerate climate-smart coral restoration practices, conduct large-scale blended and innovative finance approaches for coral reef conservation, and support sustainable livelihoods of local fishers who depend on resilient reefs.

Through this combination of knowledge and expertise, we are ensuring the long-term future for coral reefs and the communities that depend on them.

Solar Energy Powering Coral Restoration in the VI

TNC's U.S. Virgin Islands team installed a solar energy system comprised of 164 panels to power TNC's Coral Innovation Hub at Estate Little Princess. The Hub, a land-based coral nursery and laboratory devoted to advancing coral restoration science, is highly energy-intensive, making the new alternative energy source even more significant.

The Hub, designated a Coral Reef Research Center by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Coral Reef Conservation Program, contributes to scaling coral restoration in the U.S. Virgin Islands and beyond. The Hub creates and grows more than 10,000 corals per year for TNC's St. Croix projects alone. Pumps and filtration systems must run around the clock, circulating vast quantities of sea water and maintaining optimal temperatures and lighting conditions essential for coral health. In the U.S. Virgin Islands, as in much of the Caribbean, electricity is generated from fossil fuels, which means the energy used to grow corals is contributing to the very climate crisis we are working to tackle. Installation of the solar energy system puts us on the road to carbon-neutral coral restoration and serves as an example of integrating sustainability to other ex-situ facilities worldwide.

This work was made possible through funding provided by Popular.

The Hub, designated a Coral Reef Research Center by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Coral Reef Conservation Program, contributes to scaling coral restoration in the U.S. Virgin Islands and beyond.

The installation of 164 new solar panels to power The Nature Conservancy's Coral Innovation Hub at Estate Little Princess marks significant progress towards achieving our 2030 goal of reduced climate impact for a livable world. Photo: © Matthew Davies/TNC

CoralCarib: Improving Livelihoods for Fishers

The IKI-funded CoralCarib initiative is demonstrating that coral reef recovery is closely connected to the well-being of the people whose livelihoods depend on these vital marine ecosystems. By promoting alternative livelihoods, capacity building, and threat reduction, CoralCarib focuses on working with fishers to reduce pressure on reefs while strengthening economic resilience in coastal communities.

A major CoralCarib strategy has been supporting reef-positive livelihoods that help reduce unsustainable fishing practices and offer viable alternatives to fishing. In Jamaica, this approach advanced significantly when TNC undertook a Sustainable Livelihoods Feasibility Assessment and drafted business plans tailored to local fishers. These plans now serve as the foundation for capacity building and microgrants, enabling community members to establish or strengthen alternative income-generating activities. In addition, TNC has crafted Threat Abatement and Capacity Building plans that integrate sustainable fishing practices, community awareness, improved monitoring, and alternative livelihoods with long-term social and environmental resilience. Knowledge exchanges and skills development remain central, from trainings to learning opportunities such as the Coral Series webinars TNC hosted to strengthen local stewardship in Jamaica.

In Haiti, livelihood support has combined equipment donations, adapted fishing gear, and fish aggregating devices to move fishing activities away from coral reefs, reducing pressure on the ecosystem. The project has also launched enterprises such as beekeeping to provide alternative livelihoods to fishers.

CoralCarib has adapted its livelihood strategies to local realities. In Cuba, where fishing remains a primary source of sustenance in some communities, TNC prioritizes reducing indirect reef pressure through alternative food production systems. Agriculture offers new sources of income and food security, allowing households to invest more time in land-based livelihoods while decreasing reliance on reef fishing.

Fixing and sorting fishing nets in Samana, Dominican Republic. Photo: © Tim Calver

In the Dominican Republic, long-standing partnerships have supported fishers who have reduced or transitioned away from fishing to participate in coral restoration and marine conservation programs. A multi-strategy plan now guides scalable actions to address overfishing across the Southeastern Marine Reef Sanctuary, with indicators to track threat reduction. These interconnected efforts show how focusing on livelihoods, learning, and local leadership reshapes symbiotic human–reef relationships to improve coral protection while sustaining communities.

Haiti Case Study

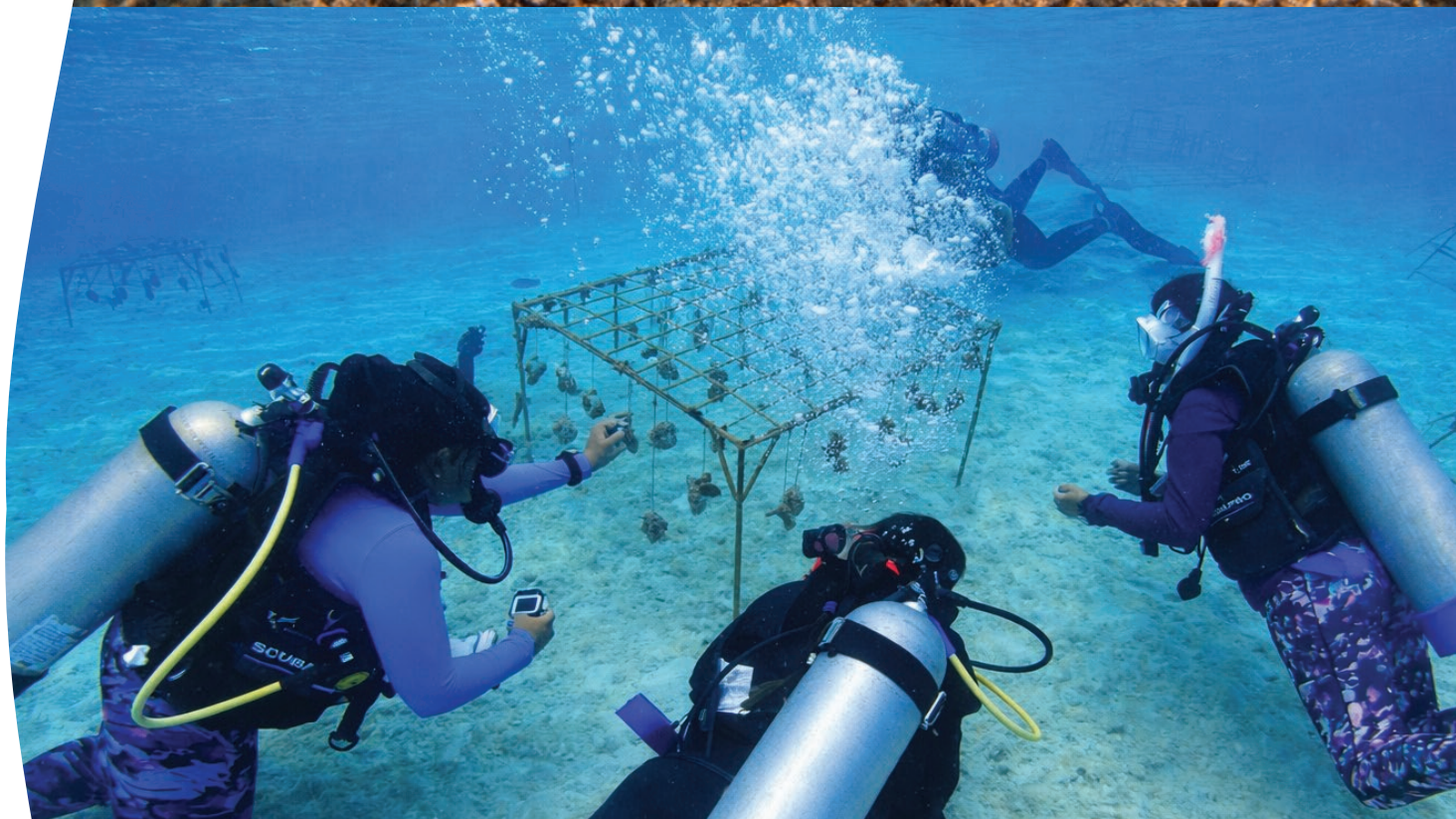
Prior to the project, fishing communities in Corail, Grand Boucan, and Petit-Trou de Nippes operated in a legally declared Marine Protected Area that lacked an operational management plan. Fishing pressure was concentrated near the coast, there was a high incidence of juvenile fish among the catch, and fishers lacked fish aggregating devices (DCPs), appropriate gear, and reliable boat engines. As a result, fishing trips were long and often unproductive, safety at sea was compromised, and monthly incomes remained low and unstable at around $10,000–$20,000 gourdes ($USD 76–$USD 153) per month. These challenges were intensified by climate change impacts such as sea-level rise and salinization of coastal farmland, further undermining livelihoods and ecosystem health.

Through CoralCarib, TNC implemented interventions: communities obtained and learned how to build and maintain fish aggregating devices two to five miles offshore and received two 15-horsepower engines and access to ecological fishing gear and post-harvest equipment. The results are considerable: monthly incomes increased to $25,000–$40,000 gourdes ($USD 190–$USD 305), larger and more diverse catches, including pelagic species averaging 12–15 kg per fish, and more targeted and productive fishing trips. While impacts varied, the overall shift shows a clear before-and-after transformation: higher incomes, safer and more efficient fishing trips, and reduced stress on coastal ecosystems, demonstrating the project's potential for long-term resilience, improved livelihoods and scalable impact.

Coral Conservation Exchanges in the Dominican Republic, The Bahamas, and Jamaica

Macro-fragments of *Acropora palmata* corals outplanted on seeded Reef Stars by the Fundemar team in Bayahibe, Dominican Republic.

The Dominican Republic's coral restoration program served as a platform for learning exchanges with partners from The Bahamas and Jamaica that advanced restoration strategies. In the spring, DR Coral Manager Aldo Croquer collaborated with Anna-Cherice Ebanks-Chin and Gina Maddix during a visit to Alligator Head Foundation in Portland to design and implement targeted interventions under the IKI Coral Carib project. The team outplanted more than 100 macro fragments of *Orbicella faveolata* in areas with and without algal removal, removing several hundred kilograms of seaweed from climate refugia without extracting donor colonies. Donor corals recovered well, and an impressive 96% survival rate was recorded over the year.



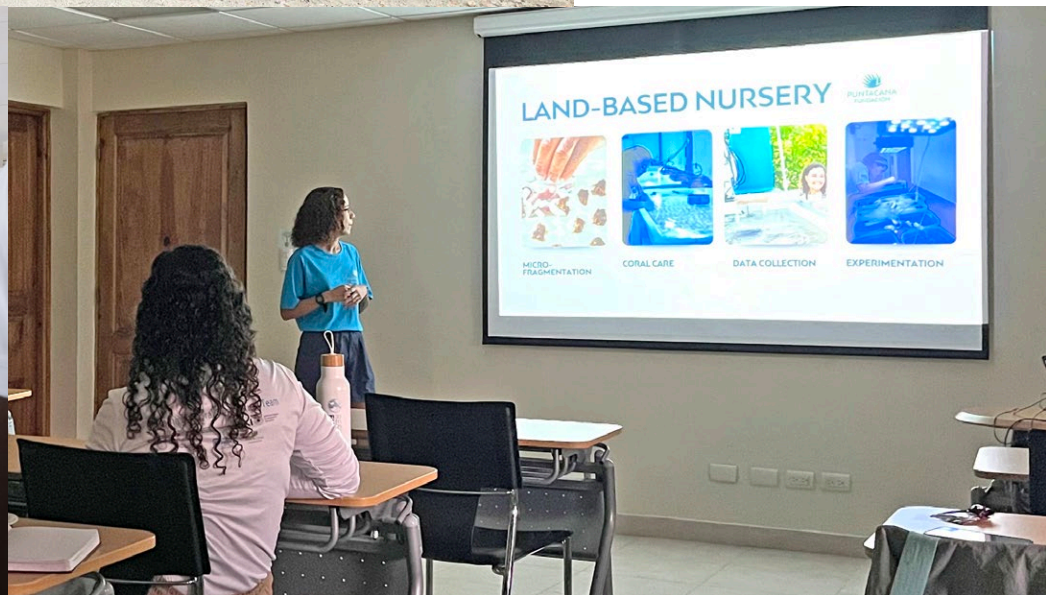
RIGHT, ABOVE AND BELOW: Partners from the Perry Institute for Marine Science and the Cape Eleuthera Institute of The Bahamas observing outplanted corals arranged on underwater tables at FUNDEMAR's restoration site in Bayahibe, Dominican Republic during a coral exchange visit.
Photos: Solomon Gibson/TNC

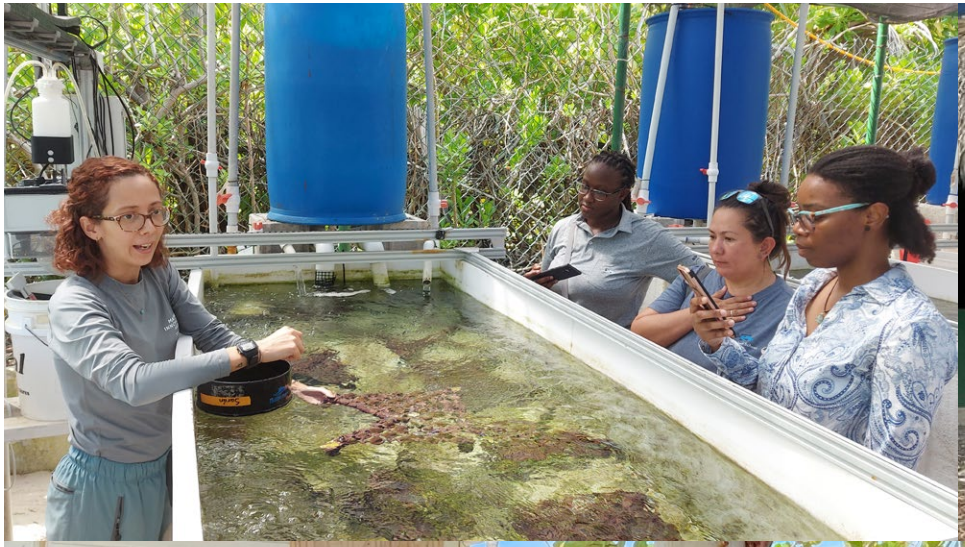
During summer 2025, Daniel Veras from Fundación Punta Cana led a technical exchange on land-based nursery design with Alligator Head partners. Staff received training in the best practices for monitoring coral life support systems. In addition, María Villalpando of FUNDEMAR conducted an advanced workshop on assisted sexual propagation, enabling successful coral spawning monitoring, gamete collection, fertilization, and larval rearing in Portland for the first time.

LEFT & BELOW LEFT Participants of the the advanced training on land-based coral nurseries, Puntacana, Dominican Republic.

BELOW RIGHT: María Villalpando of FUNDEMAR conducts an advanced workshop on land-based coral nursery processes.

Photos: © FUNDEMAR





Solomon Gibson and Aldo Croquer led a learning exchange in Punta Cana that convened coral restoration partners from the Dominican Republic—FUNDEMAR and Fundación Punta Cana FPC)—along with colleagues from Eleuthera, The Bahamas. The sessions focused on comparing coral restoration strategies, highlighting both successful approaches and persistent challenges across sites. The gathering also offered an opportunity to bring together representatives from the Bahamian and Dominican Ministries of Environment, who engaged in productive discussions about similarities and differences in each country's regulatory frameworks for coral restoration. As part of the exchange, participants visited the MareRD and CIM 2.0 laboratories, as well as active restoration sites in Bayahibe and Punta Cana, gaining firsthand insight into the restoration techniques now being implemented in the Dominican Republic.

This work was made possible through funding provided by Steve and Maureen Klinsky.

ABOVE: Exchange participants in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic.

LEFT ABOVE & BELOW: Participants observe corals in a land-based nursery, Punta Cana, Dominican Republic.

Photos: © Centro de Innovación Marino

Strengthening Jamaica's Coral Restoration Capacity

Jamaica is experiencing a breakthrough moment in coral reef restoration, driven by the collaborative strength of the CoralCarib Project and its national partners. Over the past three years, TNC Jamaica and the Alligator Head Foundation (AHF) have worked side by side under CoralCarib, the IKI-funded initiative to expand the country's capacity in coral restoration.

This includes conducting synchronized spawning observation events and helping build reefs with fertilized coral embryos. Together, they are equipping Jamaica's restoration community with modern skills and scientific insight essential for scaling reef recovery efforts.

In 2025, the partnership benefited from hands-on training delivered by CoralCarib partner FUNDEMAR in the Dominican Republic. Representatives from both TNC Jamaica and AHF participated in FUNDEMAR's coral spawning and facilitated sexual reproduction program, which focused on coral spawning observation, gamete collection, and assisted fertilization. The immersive training paved the way for a national-level workshop in Jamaica, enabling more coral restoration practitioners to learn these sophisticated methods and strengthen local restoration capacity.

One of the year's standout achievements came during the National Environment and Planning Agency's (NEPA's) Coral Reef Awareness Month, when TNC Jamaica, AHF, NEPA and other partners applied the training to conduct synchronized spawning observations for *Orbicella faveolata* and *Orbicella annularis* across three coastal sites. For the first time in Jamaica, the groups documented spawning of both species simultaneously at multiple locations. This is a milestone that validated CoralCarib's spawning calendar predictions and produced valuable data for researchers and conservation managers.

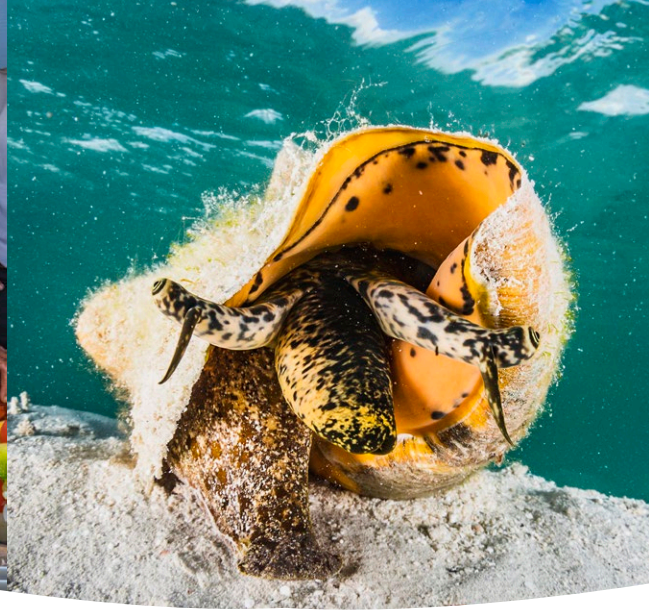
The momentum continued at the East Portland Coral Refugia, where AHF and TNC collected and fertilized gametes from the *Orbicella* species. Staff released hundreds of thousands of new embryos onto nearby reefs, directly enhancing natural recruitment potential. They retained some of those embryos in the CoralCarib-supported AHF Ex-Situ Coral Lab, the first and only facility in Jamaica to successfully raise sexually reproduced corals. These embryos have since developed into polyps visible to the naked eye – a landmark achievement that underscores Jamaica's growing capacity in coral restoration science.

These regional and national collaborations demonstrate what coordinated science, shared training, and strong partnerships can accomplish. The work TNC is leading under CoralCarib is building cutting-edge skills while ensuring knowledge and innovations are widely shared. These successes mark an important step forward for Jamaica's coral reef rehabilitation efforts and a promising sign of what continued collaboration can achieve.

TOP: Anna-Cherice Ebanks-Chin welcomes trainees to the first coral spawning training in Jamaica in August 2025. The training was facilitated by the Coral Carib project and was held at the University of the West Indies Discovery Bay Marine Laboratory and Field Station. The trainer was Maria Villalpando from the project's partner FUNDEMAR. Photo: Gina-Marie Maddix/TNC

CENTER: One of the many coral spawning nets placed on the Orbicella complex located in the East Portland Fish Sanctuary. Photo: Anna Ebanks-Chin/TNC

LEFT: Orbicella faveolata coral spawning during the September 2025 spawning period. Photo: Anna Ebanks-Chin/TNC



New MOU between The Bahamas Development Bank and TNC Advances Sustainable Development and Conservation

To further efforts to develop a sustainable blue economy in The Bahamas, TNC's Northern Caribbean Program and the Bahamas Development Bank (BDB) signed a Memorandum of Understanding last September that formalizes our collaboration to support initiatives that promote climate adaptation and mitigation.

The five-year MOU establishes a framework for cooperation between the two institutions and reflects a shared commitment to supporting the goals of The Bahamas' National Development Plan, the Sustainable Development Goals, and other national priorities related to environmental sustainability and inclusive economic growth.

Under this agreement, BDB and TNC will together promote projects that contribute to conserving and restoring coral reefs, advancing sustainable marine resource management, and creating resilient, nature-based livelihoods. The partnership will employ blended finance models to support the Impact Funding for BahamaReefs Program — implemented in collaboration with the Global Fund for Coral Reefs — and other innovative conservation finance efforts.

"This MOU underscores the bank's vision to support sustainable development through climate-resilient financing and impactful partnerships," said Dave Munroe, BDB Acting Managing Director. "By combining our financial tools with TNC's environmental expertise, we will create paths for more inclusive, equitable growth while safeguarding our invaluable marine ecosystems."

"This partnership supports the empowerment of local communities and entrepreneurs to take part in protecting our natural environment while building climate resilient livelihoods," said Sumayyah Cargill, BDB Acting Deputy Managing Director.

Through the MOU, BDB will also serve as a member of the BahamaReefs steering committee and provide technical assistance, financial services, and business development support to strengthen TNC's conservation finance initiatives.

LEFT: "The Tree of Life," a mangrove-inspired sculpture created by Bahamian artist Jolyon Smith at the Lynden Pindling International Airport in Nassau, The Bahamas. Mangroves provide shelter, protection from predators, and a habitat for foraging for juvenile conch.

CENTER: A vendor proudly serves up his pickled conch, a Bahamian favorite in West End, Grand Bahama.

RIGHT: A juvenile queen conch emerges from its shell in the shallows of a tidal creek in East End, Grand Bahama, showcasing one of the Caribbean's most iconic and ecologically important species.

All photos: Shane Gross

Dave Munroe
BDB Acting
Managing Director

"By combining our financial tools with TNC's environmental expertise, we will create paths for more inclusive, equitable growth while safeguarding our invaluable marine ecosystems."

ASSESSMENTS

Quantifying the Value of Coral Reefs

The Caribbean Science Team estimates that CoralCarib refugia reefs in Cuba (Zapata and Havana), Dominican Republic (Bayahibe and Punta Cana), Haiti (Baraderes Cayemites) and Jamaica (Portland) contribute up to $494 million per year in ecosystem services value, including coastal protection (53%), tourism (41%), and fisheries (6%).

The team updated the 2025 tourism model for the four CoralCarib countries, building upon previous TNC Mapping Ocean Wealth projects that analyzed both on-reef tourism value (snorkeling and diving) and reef-adjacent value (beach visits, boating, etc.). The new model highlighted that, at a national level, coral reefs drive up to $2.8 billion per year in tourism expenditures in the Dominican Republic, $689 million/year in Cuba, $670 million/year in Jamaica, and $61 million/year in Haiti.

To better understand the role of coastal habitats in flood reduction, as well as their economic value in protecting housing and other infrastructure, the team applied a 2022 Caribbean regional model (developed by Beck et al.) as well as a new local level InVEST Coastal Vulnerability model. They found that the CoralCarib reefs protect $264 million from flooding on an annual basis, but if factored together with safeguarding mangroves and seagrass, they can protect up to $346 million during a major hurricane event. Finally, fisheries evaluations were completed by contractors and partners at the site level, using local statistics such as average fish catch per day, number of boats in operation, number of days spent fishing per year, and market prices for different species of fish; these studies found that the CoralCarib reefs support $29M in fisheries value per year. The science team compiled all of this data into a national-level report for each of the four CoralCarib countries, which will be made publicly available as part of our Caribbean Science Atlas after stakeholder review.

CORAL CARIB

Dive Deeper
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Mapping ocean wealth

Caribbean Science Atlas

RIGHT: Invaluable! A coral reef teeming with life off Eleuthera Island, The Bahamas. Reefs like this serve multiple purposes including supporting fisheries, livelihoods, coastal protection and ecosystem services. Photo: © KipEvans

A boost to coral restoration in The Bahamas

Coral reefs are critical to The Bahamas' economy and environment, contributing USD $671 million annually to tourism and USD $23.5 million to fisheries, as well as providing coastal protection for vulnerable communities. In 2025, TNC's Northern Caribbean Program achieved an important goal toward reinvigorating the Bahamas Coral Innovation Hub (BCIH) by renewing an agreement with The Cape Eleuthera Institute and The Perry Institute for Marine Science.

Under the renewed agreement, TNC and Hub partners will:

- Develop and implement a five-year strategic plan, including a targeted reef restoration program by 2030
- Advance research on and increase propagation of climate-resilient coral species
- Expand the use of innovative reef monitoring techniques
- Lead trainings to expand local capacity for coral restoration and protection
- Provide scientific and technical guidance to inform national policy development and support local partners engaged in coral conservation.

BCIH partners also participated in a learning exchange in the Dominican Republic with the FUNDEMAR Foundation and Punta Cana Group to promote collaborative research. The exchange aimed to strengthen technical knowledge to inform upgrades and operations at the Hub in South Eleuthera and provide insights to government agencies tasked with improving the regulatory framework and permitting process for coral research and restoration activities in The Bahamas.

This work was made possible through funding provided by Steve and Maureen Klinsky.

Funding Secured for Bahama Reefs Program Phase II

A conservation practitioner in the Northern Caribbean Program scuba dives to monitor coral reefs at Eleuthera Island, Bahamas. Photo: © Kip Evans

The approval of the replenishment request to the Global Fund for Coral Reefs (GFCR) confirms strong confidence in the Impact Funding for BahamaReefs Phase I Program's results and long-term strategy.

Phase I delivered notable successes including:

- Reef-positive enterprises advanced restoration efforts, including the Reef Rescue Network, which outplanted over 1,500 coral fragments and raised more than USD $693,000 through philanthropy, co-financing, and market revenues – achieving 2.8x leverage on the initial GFCR investment.
- The Bahamas Protected Areas Fund's Voluntary Opt-In program on the Customs Click2Clear platform generated over USD $146,000, yielding a 4.7x return on grant support.
- The Elizabeth Harbour Conservation Partnership installed 64 eco-friendly moorings to reduce anchor damage and now generates more than USD $122,000 annually in revenue.

A major advancement for Phase II is the new MOU with the Bahamas Development Bank (see page 18), signaling increased national-level support for reef-positive businesses. In parallel, the Small Business Development Center's Blue Economy Accelerator is preparing to launch its first cohort in 2026, aiming to strengthen local entrepreneurship and unlock future concessional lending. Forty micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises are expected to benefit.

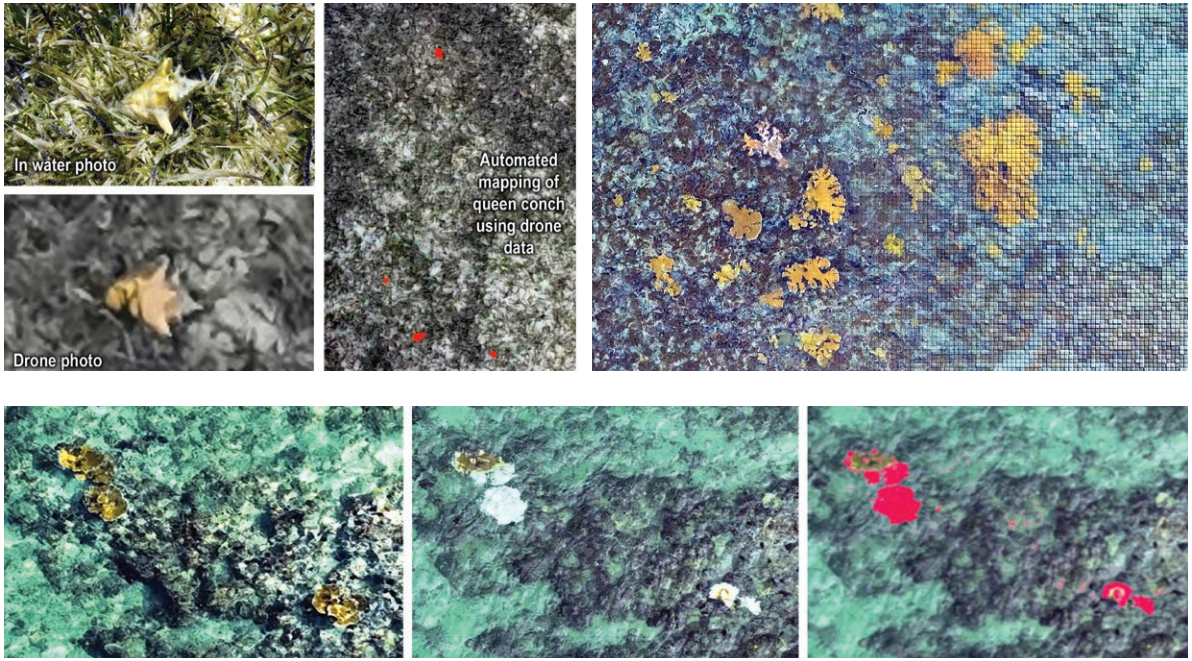
By integrating conservation, community livelihoods, and innovative finance, BahamaReefs is well positioned to sustain and scale its impact as additional funding becomes available to achieve the full vision of the program.

High Tech Advances Efficiency and Accuracy in Conservation

AI is transforming marine conservation by giving scientists, managers, and policymakers an unprecedented view of ocean ecosystems and human activity at sea. In the past year, TNC's Caribbean Division has expanded its responsible use of AI to help governments monitor the environment faster, more accurately, and at much larger scales.

Using deep learning models, the team analyzed drone and satellite imagery to assess the health of coral reefs, mangroves, and seagrass beds. More recently, TNC tested automating how to detect key ecosystem features at the species level. For example, new AI methods will be able to count queen conchs across vast areas of East End National Park in Grand Bahama. In the USVI, monthly drone surveys processed with AI detection algorithms are tracking bleaching events and coral recovery across kilometers of reef.

To improve model accuracy, the team now integrates field data collected through underwater surveys and GPS-enabled drop cameras with satellite basemaps. These actions provide greater ecosystem-scale insights that strengthen both science and management outcomes. Coral managers are able to better target surveys and monitor more effectively, improve estimates of coral biological indicators, understand ecological drivers and stressors, and design more effective zoning plans. They are able to assess disturbance impacts and recovery, model future scenarios, and ultimately communicate better results to decision makers. By automating image recognition and applying predictive modeling, AI tools help identify habitat change, map critical areas, and flag emerging stressors. In turn, these AI-supported analyses enable governments to develop marine conservation plans far more quickly and effectively than relying solely on manual GIS work or limited field data.



Another way TNC is advancing conservation is by developing custom GIS-driven web applications that provide governments with easy access to decision-making tools. For example, the interactive ArcGIS-based Caribbean 30×30 Conservation Dashboard helps countries identify the most important areas to protect as they work toward their 30×30 biodiversity commitments. The dashboard consolidates national and regional priority areas, highlights biodiversity connectivity across the Caribbean, and synthesizes high-quality spatial datasets to guide both marine and terrestrial protection strategies.

Other AI strategies are also bearing fruit. TNC has developed new deep ocean models to fill longstanding data gaps that have limited conservation planning in deeper waters. In addition, the Blue Carbon Explorer provides critical insights into mapping ecosystem damage and recovery following hurricanes. The Jamaican government, for example, is using this tool to assess ecological impacts and pinpoint areas where restoration is most needed. By combining multi-scale imaging, advanced analytics, and accessible digital mapping platforms, TNC is delivering a shared, science-based foundation that helps governments make smarter, more resilient conservation decisions across the Caribbean.

A massive black grouper off Nassau, Bahamas. Photo: © Shane Gross

Improved Ocean Management

TNC's work on improving ocean management in 2025 demonstrates that combining regional and global expertise is the key to advancing science-based solutions to safeguard marine ecosystems and support the communities that depend on them.

Through close collaborations with TNC's global Sustainable Food and Water Team and the Global Protection and Nature Bonds Team, we continue to strengthen policy, planning, and financial tools that support sustainable fisheries, long-term ocean conservation, and nature-based solutions to safeguard marine ecosystems and the communities that depend on them.

Together, these efforts are driving transformative, scalable impact across the Caribbean.

WHEN PURPOSE MEETS PARTNERSHIP

Barbados' Journey toward Sustainable Ocean Stewardship

Board members of the Barbados Environmental Sustainability Fund (BESF) and grant recipients representing eight organizations pose during the BESF Grant Awards Ceremony, Barbados. Photo: © DigitalShark

Following the landmark 2022 debt conversion that unlocked new financing for marine conservation, Barbados has embraced Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) as a science-driven approach to balance development needs with the protection of its coastal and marine ecosystems.

A strong technical foundation has anchored this progress. Through extensive data mapping, scenario modeling, and cross-sector collaboration, TNC is supporting Barbados in designing a plan that reflects the diverse demands on its ocean space while advancing biodiversity, livelihoods, and climate resilience. Guided by TNC's marine science expertise, teams modeled future ocean use scenarios—assessing implications for fisheries, tourism, renewable energy, and climate adaptation—informing the country's advancement to MSP Milestone 2. This evidence-based process is helping decision-makers and communities understand trade-offs and opportunities, reinforcing transparency and shared vision.

Stakeholder engagement remains central to the MSP. Consultations with fishers, coastal businesses, youth, NGOs, and policymakers have strengthened trust and ensured the plan reflects nationally aligned priorities. A nationwide ocean literacy initiative complemented this work, reaching over 500 students through classroom and outdoor learning, while public outreach efforts such as Marine Minutes and Seaside Chats translated complex ocean science into accessible, community-centered conversations.

A major milestone was the first call for proposals from the Barbados Environmental Sustainability Fund (BESF), which awarded eight grants totaling BBD $1.29 million. This innovative financing mechanism supports locally led initiatives that advance MSP goals. TNC also strengthened BESF's governance and operational capacity through targeted training.

Together, these achievements highlight Barbados' leadership and TNC's partnership in shaping a resilient, inclusive, and sustainably managed ocean future for generations to come.

The Bahamas Hosts Deep-Sea Pelagic Knowledge Exchange

In June 2025, TNC's Global FishPath and Bahamas Program teams partnered with the Department of Marine Resources and BahaMar Ltd., to co-host the country's first Deep-Sea Pelagic Learning Exchange, which provided guidance on supporting sustainable deep-sea pelagic fisheries to benefit Caribbean countries.

Held on Nassau, The Bahamas, the event came in response to The Bahamas Government and fishing communities' interest in exploring opportunities to expand The Bahamas deep-sea pelagic fisheries and to offer additional economic opportunities for fishers.

The exchange drew fisheries consultants, key agencies and organizations, and commercial and sports fishers from across the Caribbean and USA. They discussed challenges and best practices connected to pelagic fisheries, including biological trends, management, monitoring, and enforcement approaches as well as livelihood and economic development opportunities. Participants identified critical management, capacity, and financial and technical resources that support deep-sea pelagic fisheries.

This work was made possible through funding provided by Builder's Initiative, Moore Bahamas Foundation and the Sean Connery Foundation.

Participants identified critical management, capacity, and financial and technical resources that support deep-sea pelagic fisheries. Photo © TNC Northern Caribbean

Participants taking part in a group exercise. Photo: © Felicity Burrows/TNC

Empowering Communities to Manage Marine Protected Areas

A sea cave formed by surf action on the small island of San Salvador in the Out Islands of The Bahamas. Photo: © Greg/Adobe Stock

In 2025, the TNC Bahamas team and partners made significant progress on the Manage Marine Protected Areas (MPA) Community Co-Management Pilot Project, a multi-year collaborative effort to promote and strengthen community participation in MPA governance and, ultimately, support more sustainable livelihoods.

With the Department of Marine Resources (DMR), the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources' forestry unit, the Bahamas National Trust (BNT), Department of Local Government and other stakeholders, TNC continued its work to move from "paper parks" to well-managed MPAs that leverage community expertise and interest and offer an equitable path toward more effective management.

With support from TNC, the BNT and community-based NGO San Salvador Living Jewels (SSLJ), signed an MPA co-management agreement and developed a two-year workplan that reaffirms their commitment to the island's five national parks, which encompass 8,774 hectares of marine and 1,646 hectares of freshwater habitat.

TNC also assisted SSLJ to:

- renew its non-profit status
- develop a five-year strategic plan
- develop a sustainable funding plan

As a key next step to strengthening the organization's capacity, TNC will execute a one-year sub-grant that will support hiring the organization's first employee to lead community outreach efforts and implement the sustainable funding plan.

TNC's San Salvador Island partnership is the first of two community-based pilots under the MPA project. Plans are also underway with the DMR and Forestry Unit to establish a project community advisory council and to select one or more intervention sites on Cat Island. Community stakeholders on the islands have played a leading role in designating MPAs and have demonstrated sustained interest in supporting their effective management.

Community-based activities will also provide real-time insights to inform development of a national MPA co-management policy and governance framework to expand co-management approaches to other islands.

This work was made possible through funding provided by Builder's Initiative, Bloomberg Ocean Fund, Moore Bahamas Foundation, and the Sean Connery Foundation.

> We are working closely with partners to demonstrate that shared decision-making and responsibility between protected area managers and local communities can lead to more effective management of MPAs, while ensuring that benefits outweigh costs.

Aerial view of the beautiful Junkanoo beach at the Western Esplanade next to Nassau town, The Bahamas. Photo: © moofushi/Adobe Stock

Celebrating Year One of The Bahamas Debt Conversion Project for Marine Conservation with International Awards

The Bahamas Debt Conversion Project for Marine Conservation, facilitated through TNC's Nature Bonds program, completed its first year toward advancing the country's vision for improved ocean management and a sustainable blue economy.

Since November 2024, the Government of The Bahamas and the Bahamas Protected Areas Fund (BPAF) have made significant progress on this 15-year initiative, including:

- Establishing a program management unit in the Office of the Prime Minister
- Developing a capacity gap assessment that will inform measures to advance implementation
- Appointing a Cabinet-approved National Protected Area Steering Committee
- Amending the Bahamas Protected Area Fund Act to aid transfer of funds to both government and non-government implementing partners

BPAF also issued its first call for grant proposals from national and community-based stakeholders to support strategies to achieve project milestones and support blue economy livelihoods.

As part of TNC's technical assistance role, TNC Bahamas and Nature Bonds teams continued to provide support to project partners. In the last year, TNC hosted an implementation planning workshop that included coordinating meetings of all relevant parties and knowledge-sharing to ensure staff in all implementing agencies understand milestone criteria and compliance requirements under the Conservation Agreement.

International Recognition

TNC was gratified to receive recognition for the Bahamas Debt Conversion Project with two international awards that highlight its innovative financing approach and potential conservation impact: the Global Capital ESG Deal of the Year at the Latin America Bond Awards 2025 and Sustainable Debt Award 2025 Green Loan of the Year (Americas).

The deal refinanced $300 million in commercial debt, unlocking $124 million for marine conservation over 15 years.

Timothy Hill Overlook, St. Kitts and Nevis.
Photo: © ATGImages

Grenada's Capital city, St. George's.
Photo: © Andreas Voelkel

26,000 Residents to Benefit from GEF-Funded Projects in Grenada and St. Kitts

The Nature Conservancy has been awarded two Global Environment Facility (GEF) grants under the Clean and Healthy Oceans – Integrated Program (CHO-IP). The CHO-IP, which is in its eighth GEF funding cycle, supports accelerated global efforts to address marine hypoxia (i.e., critically low levels of oxygen in the ocean) and nutrient pollution from agricultural, industrial, and municipal sources.

The projects will run for five years, 2025–2030, with TNC serving as the Executing Agency through the Eastern Caribbean Program, and Conservation International as the GEF Implementing Agency.

The first project, "Improving Waste Management and Public Awareness for a Clean and Healthy Ocean," will be implemented in Grenada at a value of USD $5,048,777, while "Building a Blue-Green Economy in St. Kitts and Nevis" will be run in that country at a value of USD $2,652,294.

The projects are designed to help prevent the formation of hypoxic zones in Grenada and St. Kitts and Nevis. Currently, there are no documented marine hypoxic zones in either country. The projects include three components: improving awareness to more effectively address solid waste and wastewater management; supporting the strengthening of policy, regulatory, and investment frameworks to incentivize and finance pollution mitigation; and enhancing knowledge management for informed decision-making and sustainable pollution mitigation.

These projects will advance TNC's 2030 Goals through combined contributions of approximately 10,300 hectares toward land area and 5,700 hectares toward ocean area with improved management. Additionally, the projects will directly benefit over 22,000 people in Grenada and 4,800 in St. Kitts and Nevis, representing approximately 19% and 10% of the national populations respectively.

As The Nature Conservancy marks 75 years of global conservation leadership in 2026, the Caribbean stands as a living testament to what committed partners can achieve together. Your support today helps carry this legacy forward, protecting our islands, oceans, and communities for the next 75 years and beyond. Join us in shaping a more sustainable and resilient future.

75 YEARS

The Nature Conservancy

For all generations

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to protect nature and people in the Caribbean

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Conservation Financing Takes Center Stage at DR Summit

As part of celebrations throughout 2025 to highlight 30 years of TNC environmental stewardship in the Dominican Republic, the TNC Caribbean team hosted a conservation summit, "Financing a 2030 Nature-Positive Future in the Dominican Republic," in Santo Domingo on June 11. Over the three decades, TNC's work has supported coral reef restoration, sustainable fisheries, and forest conservation in partnership with local communities.

The summit marked a significant milestone for TNC in the Dominican Republic for its work to forge transformative partnerships and investments and to ensure a future where both people and nature thrive.

The landmark summit brought together national leaders, the private sector, financial institutions and conservation experts at the Hotel El Embajador with the objective of building momentum for transformative investment in conservation. Aligning financing with conservation and management activities remains critical for realizing national and global goals, with an exciting range of mechanisms to leverage public and private funding underway.

The summit was divided into two segments: a panel entitled "Private Sector Leadership in Conservation in the Dominican Republic" and a plenary session, "TNC Finance Mechanisms for Conservation." A common theme that echoed through the speeches is that while the Caribbean, like most regions of the world, faces major environmental challenges, hope lies in the power of collaboration.

Collaborating on conservation finance! L to R: William R. Phelan, President Tropicalia; Her Honorable Maike Friedrichsen, German Ambassador to the DR; José Elías González, Vice Minister of Forest Resources; Frank Rainieri, President Puntacana Group; Adriana Cisneros, President Group Cisneros; Robert Brumbaugh, TNC Caribbean Division Executive Director; Sofia Perazzo, Vice President of Sustainability Tropicalia. Photo: © Pinceladas Digital

Jeff Paris, TNC Global Managing Director for Protect Oceans, Lands and Water, delivered the keynote speech, during which he presented the suite of conservation financing options TNC offers to help countries achieve their conservation goals. Among the options he emphasized is Project Finance for Permanence (PFP), a powerful conservation strategy designed to secure long-term, sustainable funding for large-scale environmental protection, where stakeholders adopt a conservation plan and funding commitments to protect conservation areas for generations.

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Conservation Collaboration
The panel consisted of representatives from Asociación de Bancos Múltiples de la República Dominicana, Asociación para el Desarrollo, Inc. , PROMICHES, Interamerican Development Bank, Coca-Cola / BEPENSA sustainable contribution to water security, and Fundación Banco Popular and was moderated by Jake Kheel, Vice President of Fundación Grupo Punta Cana.

Frank Rainieri, President of Groupo Punta Cana, a private company that has invested in conservation in the Dominican Republic, spoke about his company's approach to solving environmental challenges and urged others to look at saving nature as saving money. "Alone, no one can achieve the goals, we need to participate together or we will pay a very high price," he said to the audience of business executives, government officials and conservation partners.

Maike Friedrichsen, German Ambassador to the Dominican Republic, agreed. "No one nation can solve these challenges," she said. "The power of international collaboration in strengthening resilience is an integral part of our cooperation."

Vice Minister for Forestry Resources José Elias Gonzalez, while stating that the Dominican Republic has embraced the 30x30 goal at a national level, with more than 30% of oceans, 24% of lands designated for protection and restoration, and 44% of forestry cover, emphasized the need for collaboration. "We need to work as a team, and we all can reach our goals," he said.

Business support needed
Gonzalez called on businesses to support government's efforts in protecting the environment. "The business world must have a role in supporting government," he said. Citing climate change as the main threat, he noted, "We need more businesses to be involved in protecting our environment."

Members of the panel which discussed the topic, "Leadership of the private sector in conservation in the Dominican Republic." L to R: Nathaly Uribe, Banco Popular; Juan Amell, Coca-Cola/BEPENSA; Rosanna Ruíz, Asociación de Bancos Múltiples de la República Dominicana (ABA); Gustavo Roman, ProMiches; Smeldy Ramírez, BID Lab; Saúl Abreu, Asociación para el Desarrollo, Inc. /APEDI. Photo: © Pinceladas Digital

Dr. Rosa Margarita Bonetti de Santana, (Doña pirigua) Chair of Propagas, a Dominican businesswoman, conservationist, TNC Trustee, and 2023 OakLeaf Awardee, also called on the business sector to step up. She expressed that while the state needs to take concrete steps to advance the 30x30 goal, businesses must be part of the solution. "By investing in our nature, we are investing in the stability of our communities," she said. "Nature has given us a lot; it is time to give it back."

TNC's Jeff Parrish, while calling for "radical collaboration" among conservation stakeholders, linked the success of the business sector to the environment. "All businesses depend in one way or another on a healthy environment," he stated. He praised Dominican leadership, saying, "I have hope. The Dominican Republic is a leader in the world for 30x30 – that is why I am hopeful."

"All businesses depend in one way or another on a healthy environment."
TNC's Jeff Parrish

Barbadian and Jamaican Journalists win TNC Environmental Reporting Awards

Esther Jones of the Barbados Government Information Service (BGIS) and three journalists from RJR/GLEANER Communications Group, Jamaica received TNC-sponsored Caribbean Media Awards for Excellence in Environmental Journalism at the 36th Annual Caribbean Broadcasting Union (CBU) Media Awards Gala held in Barbados in August.

This marks the second consecutive year that TNC Caribbean has collaborated with the CBU to honor outstanding journalism focusing on the importance of preserving coral reefs, mangroves, and seagrass beds. Their stories highlight these ecosystems and how they contribute to biodiversity, support marine life, and protect coastal populations from climate change impacts.

The award for Outstanding Reporting on Mangrove and Seagrass Beds was presented to Jamaica's RJR/GLEANER Communications Group for their television segment, "Rocking the Boat," created by the trio of Romardo Lyons, Ivan Shaw, and Uton West.

Esther Jones, an Information Officer from the BGIS, received the accolade for Best Coral Reef Coverage for her video story, "Our Fragments of Hope," emphasizing coral restoration efforts in Belize. Additionally, Greater Belize Media (Channel 5) earned an Honorable Mention for their piece "Belize's Reefs Improving but Still Need Saving," produced by Marion Ali and Darrel Moguel.

Left: Cleveland Sam, Marketing and Communications Director for TNC's Caribbean Division presents Esther Jones of the Barbados Government Information Service with the Excellence in Journalism Award – Coral Reef. Right: Sam presents Dahlia Harris of RJR/Gleaner Communications Group with the Excellence in Journalism Award – Mangrove/Seagrass Beds. Photos: © Troy Barker

Dive Deeper
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A Decade of Collaborative Work: Santo Domingo Water Fund

Water security remains a pressing issue in the Dominican Republic, where climate variability and urban growth threaten supply and quality. The Santo Domingo Water Fund exemplifies how public-private partnerships can deliver sustainable solutions that safeguard water resources and improve community well-being.

TNC joined Dominican Republic officials last November to celebrate a significant milestone: the nation's decade of commitment to water security and watershed conservation. The anniversary ceremony, held in Santo Domingo, brought together government officials, water sector executives, founding members, representatives of partner organizations, NGOs, and community organizations to celebrate achievements and renew commitments for the future.

The event was led by the Vice Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Carlos Batista; Corporación de Acueducto y Alcantarillado de Santo Domingo (CAASD) General Director Felipe Suberví; Fondo Agua Santo Domingo (FASD) Board of Directors Vice President Juan Roberto Amell; Fund Executive Director Patricia Abreu; and members of the board, partners, and strategic allies.

Speakers highlighted conservation achievements over the decade as well as the challenges of watershed management in the context of climate change. They also emphasized the need to scale up conservation efforts and integrate climate resilience strategies to address growing water challenges in Greater Santo Domingo.

Francisco Núñez, TNC's Central Caribbean Program Director, shared the evolution of FASD's work over the past 10 years, outlining how the Water Fund's achievements are "sowing the seeds of the future."

Celebrating shared commitment to water security at the Santo Domingo Water Fund ceremony, partners and supporters gathered to mark 10 years of collaboration.

Impacts

In 10 years, the project has achieved the following:

- Planting of 1,708,919 trees
- Restoration of more than 1,350 hectares through reforestation and agroforestry systems
- Maintenance of 1,450 hectares
- Conservation of 700 hectares in critical areas of the Haina, Nizao and Ozama-Isabela basins, representing the replenishment of 1.4 million cubic meters of water and a reduction of 1,680 tons of carbon dioxide annually.

Carlos Garcia (right) receives a recognition plaque from Juan R. Amell, Vice President of FASD.

Photos: © Santo Domingo Water Fund

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

As we look ahead, we do so with a sense of urgency — the importance of nature for our well-being has never been clearer.

Nature delivers food and life-saving medicines, regulates our climate and is our first line of defense against global warming.

The natural world also underpins our global economy. This is especially true in the Caribbean, even in a year marked by the devastating impacts of Category 5 Hurricane Melissa. We closed 2025 with several encouraging developments that built a strong foundation for progress in 2026 and beyond. These silver linings, emerging behind seemingly gray clouds, fuel our optimism.

Two national initiatives – Improving Waste Management and Public Awareness for a Clean and Healthy Ocean – funded through the Global Environment Facility (GEF) were approved for Grenada and St. Kitts and Nevis in late 2025, and implementation is getting underway as this report goes to press. These projects represent opportunities to expand nature-based solutions and advance climate-smart marine management in ways that will transform the region.

Climate resilience is set to accelerate in the Dominican Republic thanks to approval from the Green Climate Fund to prepare a full-scale proposal in 2026. The Climate Resilient Watersheds in the Dominican Republic (CReW DR) initiative will mobilize more than $USD 90 million for nature-based solutions that safeguard vulnerable communities and critical ecosystems from the accelerating impacts of climate change.

These and other initiatives are allowing us to scale up our impact, support our partners, position nations for success, and position The Nature Conservancy to meet our 2030 Goals.

In 2026, TNC will celebrate its 75th anniversary. For that milestone, we've chosen the theme "For All Generations." With more than five decades of TNC-led conservation work in the Caribbean, we are proud to reflect on our achievements thus far and know that, with the help of our generous supporters, the course we have charted to 2030 will yield more impactful conservation work that will benefit all generations.

The Andros Island Rock Iguana (*Cyclura cychlura cychlura*), a subspecies of the Bahamian Rock Iguana, is one of the rarest reptiles in the Caribbean and is endemic to Andros in The Bahamas. Photo: Steve Schill/TNC

TOGETHER, WE FIND A WAY.

OUR MISSION

To conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends

Thank you for your continued support of our work! All of our work builds on our track record of success and is only possible because of our many supporters, partners, and contributors like you.

The Nature Conservancy
Caribbean Division

800 S. Douglas Road, Suite 220
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Mangrove seedling and Black Mangrove roots, Exuma Cays Land and Sea Park, Bahamas.
Photo: © Jeff Yonover