

Critical funding to continue operations, improve enforcement capacity, and enhance self-financing capability of Oracabessa Bay Special Fishery Conservation Area

Type of priority area

Marine Protected Area

Marine Managed Area

Primary objective

Management Effectiveness

Target groups

Local Communities

National/Local Protected Area Agency

Farmers/Fishermen

Main activity focus

Enforcement

Sustainable Financing

Monitoring/Patrol Equipment

Duration
01.03.2021 – 28.02.2022

Type of grant & budget
Rapid Response Grant | 49.925.80 €

Location
Jamaica, Caribbean

Protected & Conserved Areas
Oracabessa Bay Fish Sanctuary

WDPA ID
555542819

BIOPAMA RRIS Link
<https://rris.biopama.org/oa/555542819>

Project Lead

The Oracabessa Marine Trust

Description of the project

The project aims to:

1. Supplement salaries to maintain effective monitoring and patrolling of the protected area;
2. Increase technical capacity through training in SMART app use and surveillance technology;
3. Create marketing content and carry out a marketing campaign for the protected area's social enterprise;
4. Improve data collection and reporting to World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) and the government of Jamaica.





Diagnostic Tools Used

METT analysis has been used to evaluate management effectiveness in 2017, the results of which have guided management planning.



The BIOPAMA AC Objective(s) Addressed

- ✓ Enhance the management and governance of priority protected areas by addressing existing limitations;
- ✓ Enforce the legal framework required to achieve effective biodiversity conservation in protected areas.



Priority Need Addressed

- The government of Jamaica provides core funding for the Oracabessa Bay Fish Sanctuary which is managed by The Oracabessa Marine Trust. However, due to the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic the government restricted funding to MPAs. This created challenges for the protected area to implement its management program. In particular the ability to pay enforcement staff, provide fuel for marine patrols and paying utility bills for the fish sanctuary office.
- With the increased financial constraints operational efficiency is very important. Investment is required to implement tools and build capacity to increase efficiency. To increase resilience to major shocks, in particular the economic shocks, the organization needs to bolster its social enterprise operation, which is a SCUBA diving ecotourism attraction. This social enterprise leverages the ecological gains that the protected area has achieved over the past 10 years to help provide funding for the conservation activities of the protected area.
- The economic impact of the pandemic on local communities has resulted in an increased reliance on fishing by community members. To ensure that fisheries resources are not over exploited the marine protected area must be properly managed. This will ensure that fisheries resources are used more sustainably and mitigate negative impacts resulting from the increased fishing pressure.



The change the project implementation will bring for the protected areas

The project will protect the gains achieved by the Oracabessa Bay Fish Sanctuary in its 11 years of existence. Financial constraints pose a major operational threat to the protected area and could be disastrous for the local community of Oracabessa and surrounding communities that benefit from spill-over effects. The project will help maintain the current staff cohort comprised of fisherfolk and provide training and equipment to implement new technologies geared at improving operational efficiency.

From the protected area's establishment in 2010, the fish biomass has increased over 60-fold, after years of overfishing the reefs in Oracabessa Bay whereby catch was found farther out. However, the stability and sustainability of the protected area is at risk, which the project will mitigate.

Although tourism has slowed, the industry will be key to the post-COVID-19 recovery of the community. Continued protection of natural resources is paramount in providing the natural framework for the tourism industry to recover. This project will ensure that the conservation efforts continue to function throughout the pandemic. During this project, the marine protected area will benefit directly from the anticipated recovery of the tourism sector. Marketing support will increase customer awareness of the area's SCUBA diving and snorkelling social enterprise and provide an online platform for better customer engagement.

This project is financed by the European Union and the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States through the BIOPAMA Programme. The contents of this material are the sole responsibility of the Oracabessa Marine Trust and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the EU nor of the OACPS.

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The project Critical funding to continue operations, improve enforcement capacity, and enhance self-financing capability of Oracabessa Bay Special Fishery Conservation Area is financed by the European Union and the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States through the Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management (BIOPAMA) Programme.

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