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# Capacity Building and Increased Financing for Long Term Monitoring Programmes for Coral Reefs in the Turks and Caicos Islands

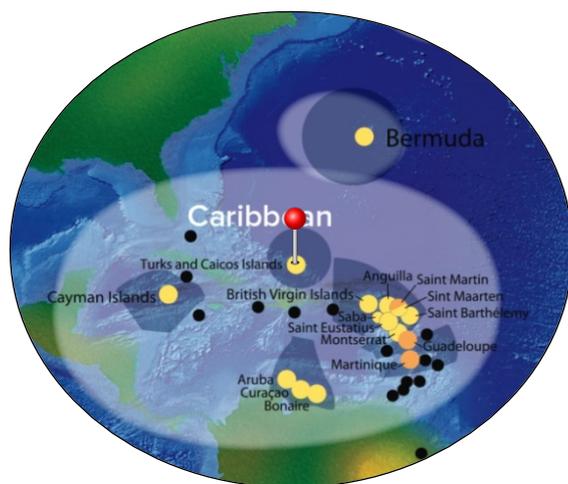
**Targeted territory:** Turks and Caicos Islands

**Total project budget:** 49,958 Euros

**BEST 2.0 grant awarded:** 49,958 Euros

**Duration:** March 2017 – January 2018 (11 months)

**Lead organisation:** Wolfs Company



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## Background:

Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI) is home to several globally endangered species and has some of the least damaged coral reefs in the Caribbean. Even though some of the marine ecosystems of TCI are covered by some degree of natural conservation status, i.e. nature reserves or natural parks, available financial resources to achieve an optimal implementation of protected areas are currently insufficient, especially in basic functions such as monitoring, research, patrolling and enforcement. Existing threats to marine ecosystems in the TCI include climate change, invasive species, illegal fishing and coastal

development. Monitoring of coral reefs is therefore essential for understanding the current state of these ecosystems and adapting management actions and conservation strategies to tackle the several threats they face. However, the lack of sustainable finance mechanisms and technical capacity hamper the effective implementation of monitoring programmes in the long term.

### Description of the Project:

The project will support the participation of the Department of Environment and Coastal Resources (DECR) staff and other civil society partners in an Atlantic and Gulf Rapid Reef Assessment (AGRRA)



coral reef monitoring course. The training will involve scientific survey techniques and provide participants with sufficient knowledge to develop effective monitoring programmes and improve communication for strengthening management of coral reefs. It will also promote the application of sound scientific findings to guide decision making and investment in natural resource management using the Princess Alexandra Land and Sea National Park as a pilot site.

A review of long-term revenue streams for monitoring along with the knowledge from the training course will serve to develop indicators that demonstrate the environmental “return on investment” in nature

management. These products will be used to define the necessary steps for the long-term implementation of the monitoring programme and protocol in the pilot site, and scaling up long-term monitoring efforts in the TCI.

### Intended results:

The project aims to contribute to the enhanced management and conservation of coral reef ecosystems in Turks & Caicos by:

- Creating support from key stakeholders for financing and long-term monitoring of coral reefs.
- Increasing the capacity of DECR and civil society partners in the monitoring of coral reefs and using sound scientific findings to guide decision making and investment.
- Identifying feasible long-term revenue streams for coral reef monitoring.
- Identifying suitable indicators for environmental ‘return on investment’ to be used to demonstrate the benefits of investment in nature management.



### CONTACT

Viviana LUJÁN GALLEGOS

Wolfs Company

[viviana.lujan@wolfscompany.com](mailto:viviana.lujan@wolfscompany.com)

