

2021

22nd Conference of the Meso American - Caribbean Sea Hydrographic Commission

National Report Belize

Presented by: Mr Michael Jenkins
Operations and Safety Manager
Belize Port Authority



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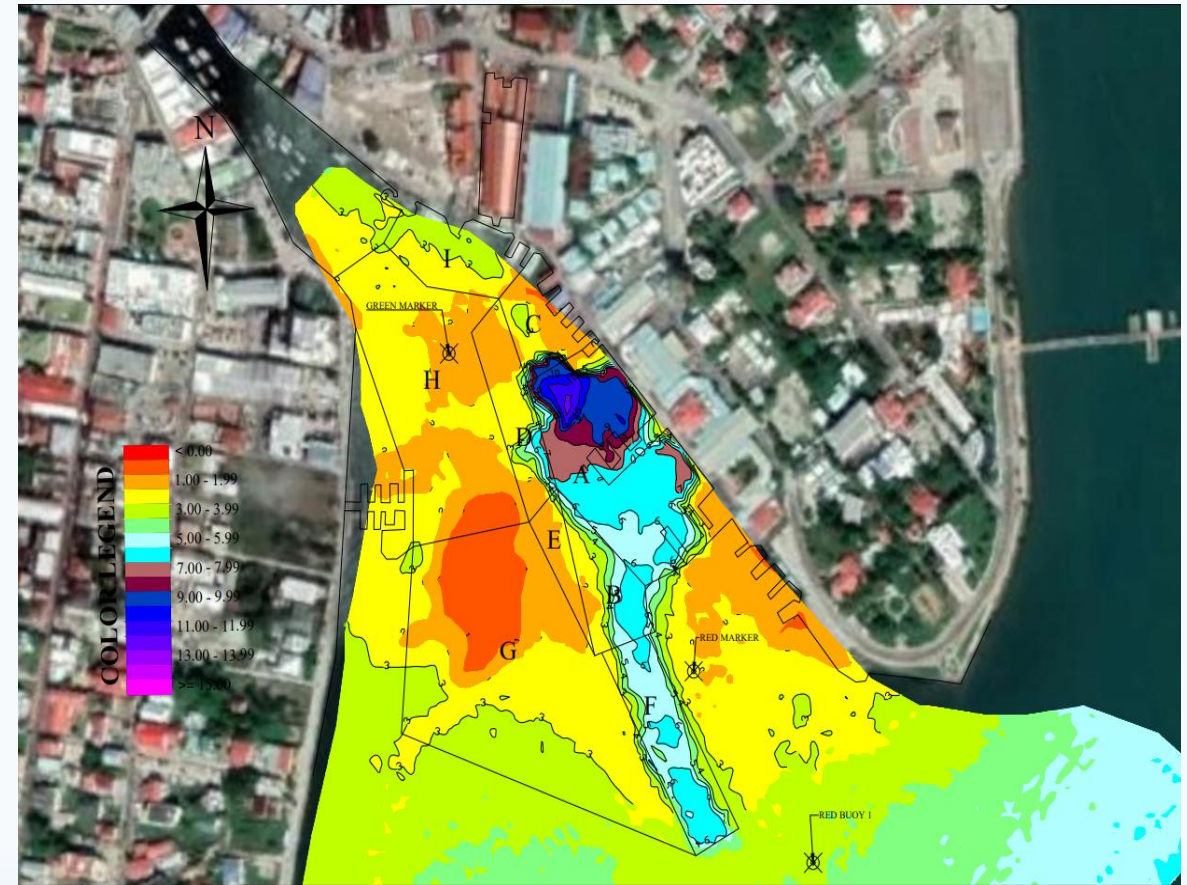
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Belize Achievements in 2021

1. The effects of the Covid 19 pandemic is still being felt throughout the maritime industry. Belize with no exception from the pandemic effects and with much corporation with stockholders has achieved the development of a “Gold Standard” certification for the safe reopening of the tourism industry and the services provided.

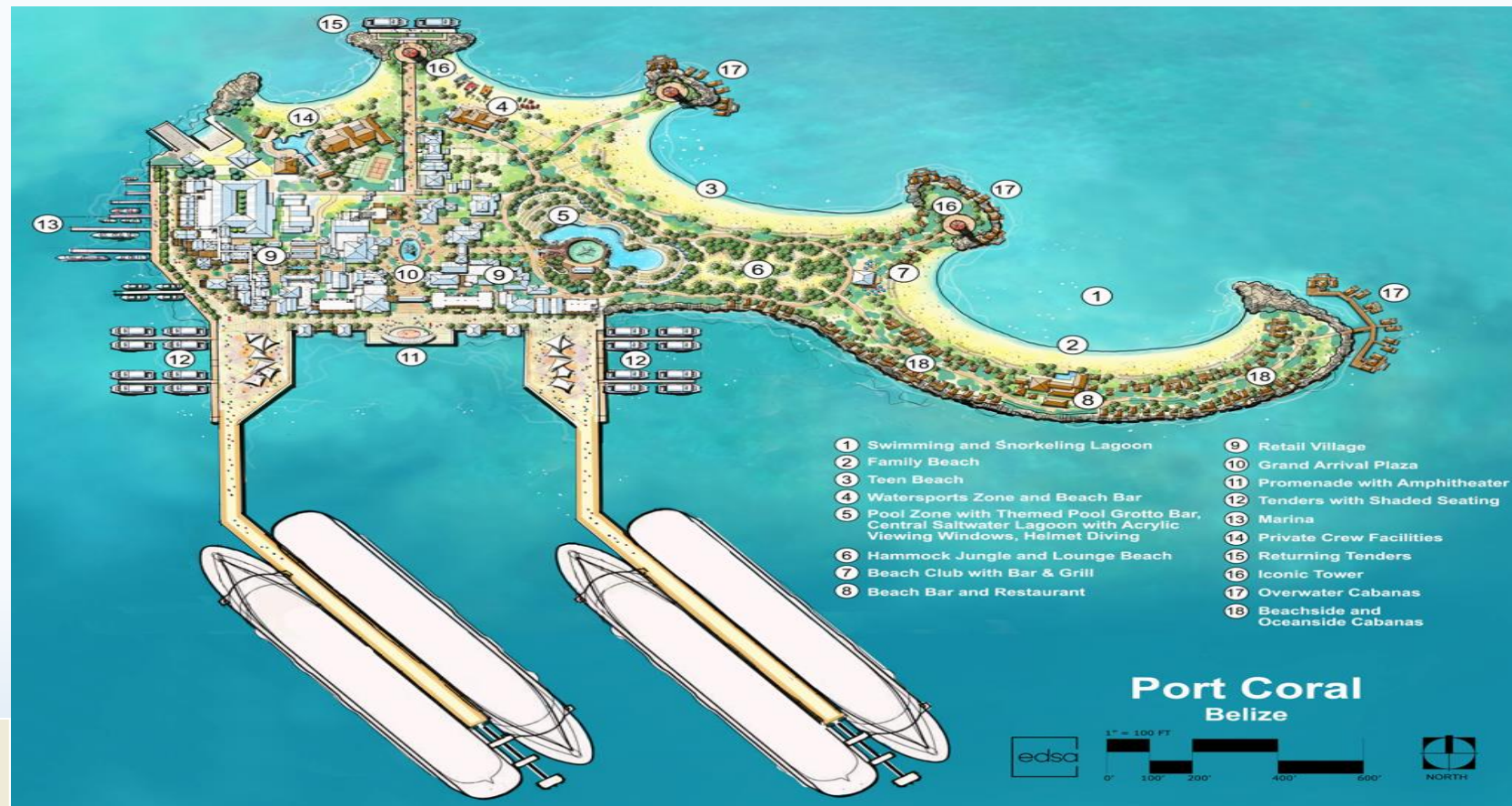
In addition extensive dredging to the cruise tourism terminal navigational channels has been done and bathymetric surveys using a 200kHz single beam echosounder with Trimble 5700 positioning system conducted to verify depths attained.



BELIZE RIVER FSTV DREDGING PROGRESS BATHYMETRY

2. Construction of the second cruise port, Port Coral is making great progress and will be operational in July 2022.

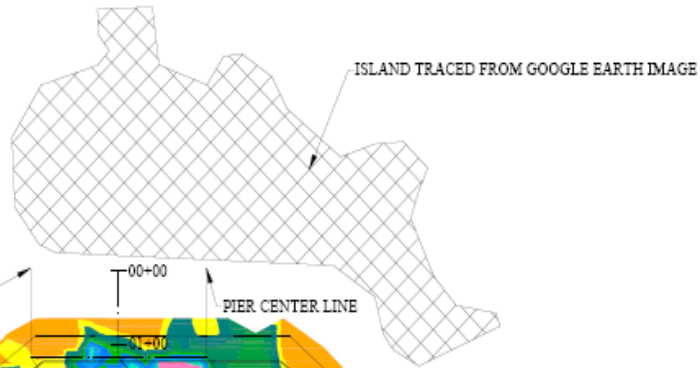
- Located about 4 miles off the coast of Belize City, the construction of the Port Coral has seen extensive dredging and the installation of a two new trestle that would be able to simultaneously accommodate four Oasis size cruise ships



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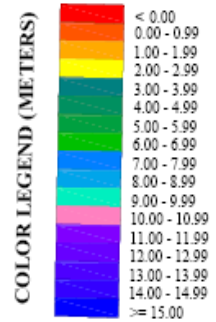
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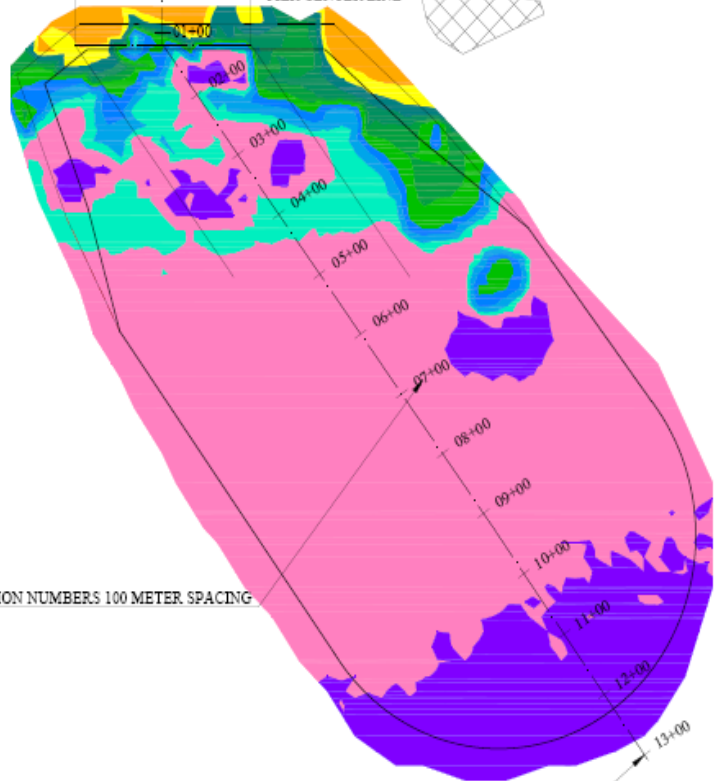


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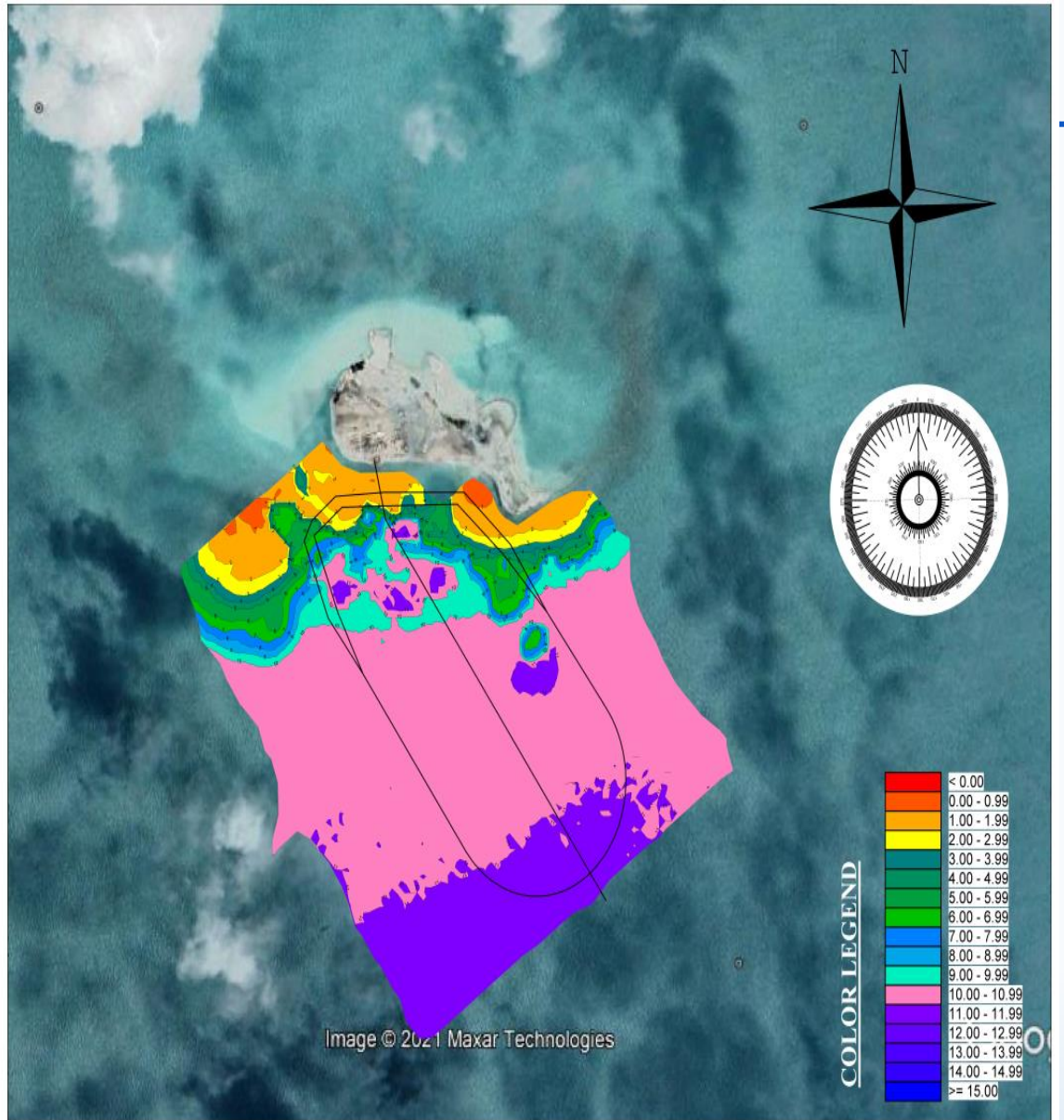


STATION NUMBERS 100 METER SPACING

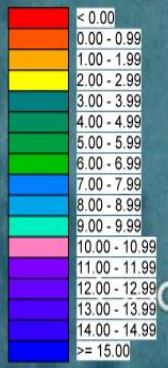


STAKE BANK PORT CORAL SOLID CONTOUR BATHYMETRY

TURN BASIN CENTER LINE



COLOR LEGEND



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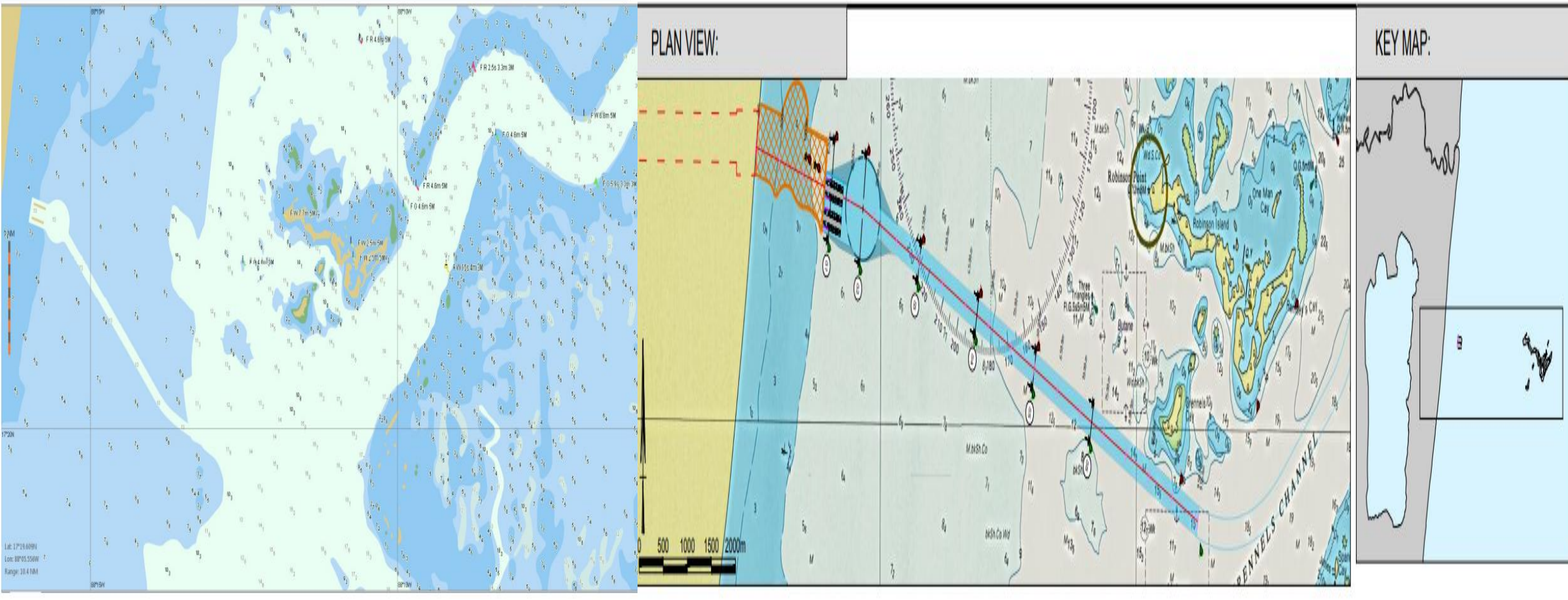
2021 achievement

3. The Government of Belize through the National Environment Appraisal Committee (NEAC) which the Belize Port Authority is a member has approved the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the development and construction of a third cruise port.

The development will entail extensive dredging for the creation of a new access channel and turning basin to the new birthing facility. Land reclamation approximately one mile into the sea.



Extensive hydrographic surveys has been conducted and upon completion new chart updates will be reuiered.



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Challenges of the Belize Port Authority

1. The Authority has come a long way in developing our maritime safety information infrastructure. It has been identified that for the correct dissemination of information it starts with the VTO officers whom control the movement of ships and monitor the availability of aids to navigation and provide any information as it relates to a notice to mariners.

Not having a properly trained VTO manager has been seen as a challenge in the Authority and importance is placed in making sure that management of pertinent information is received, logged and disseminated to all with vested interest.

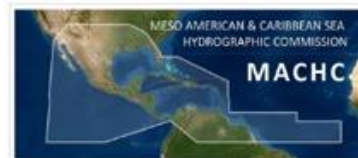
The Vessel Traffic Officer (VTO) management course provided by IALA is priority needs of the Belize Port Authority.

2. The Belize Port Authority is still challenged with the lack of trained cartographers and Hydrographic surveyors and to also mention gender equality within the hydrographic team. Having competent surveyors is critical in managing the survey platform and equipment and with the Authorities goals in acquiring our own multibeam sonars the challenge the Authority faces as not a full member of the MACHC is finding the funds and being accepted to receive Category B and Category A hydrographic training.



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Challenges and obstacles

3. The Belize Port Authority recognizes the importance of Seabed 2030 to increase navigational safety, increase the protection of the maritime environment and to help mitigate the effects of climate change. The challenge in meeting our seabed2030 goals lies in the capacity to collect hydrographic data and more so to identify surveys that has already been conducted and stored as Non realisable or classified documents.

Belize is totally grateful to our Charting Authority UKHO for all the valuable services they have provided which directly and indirectly has benefited the country's development. It has been determined that at present 49% of or waters are surveyed to standards and if approval is received the Non- Releasable data or classified data would represent an additional 10% survey coverage.

Our challenge is where do the Authority start, what agency should request release of data and to whom this request should be addressed to? The UKHO at present has 84 sheets of survey data for Belize territory but 74 of those survey sheets are restricted information. How do we get Non- releasable or Classified survey data released to the Designated Authority?



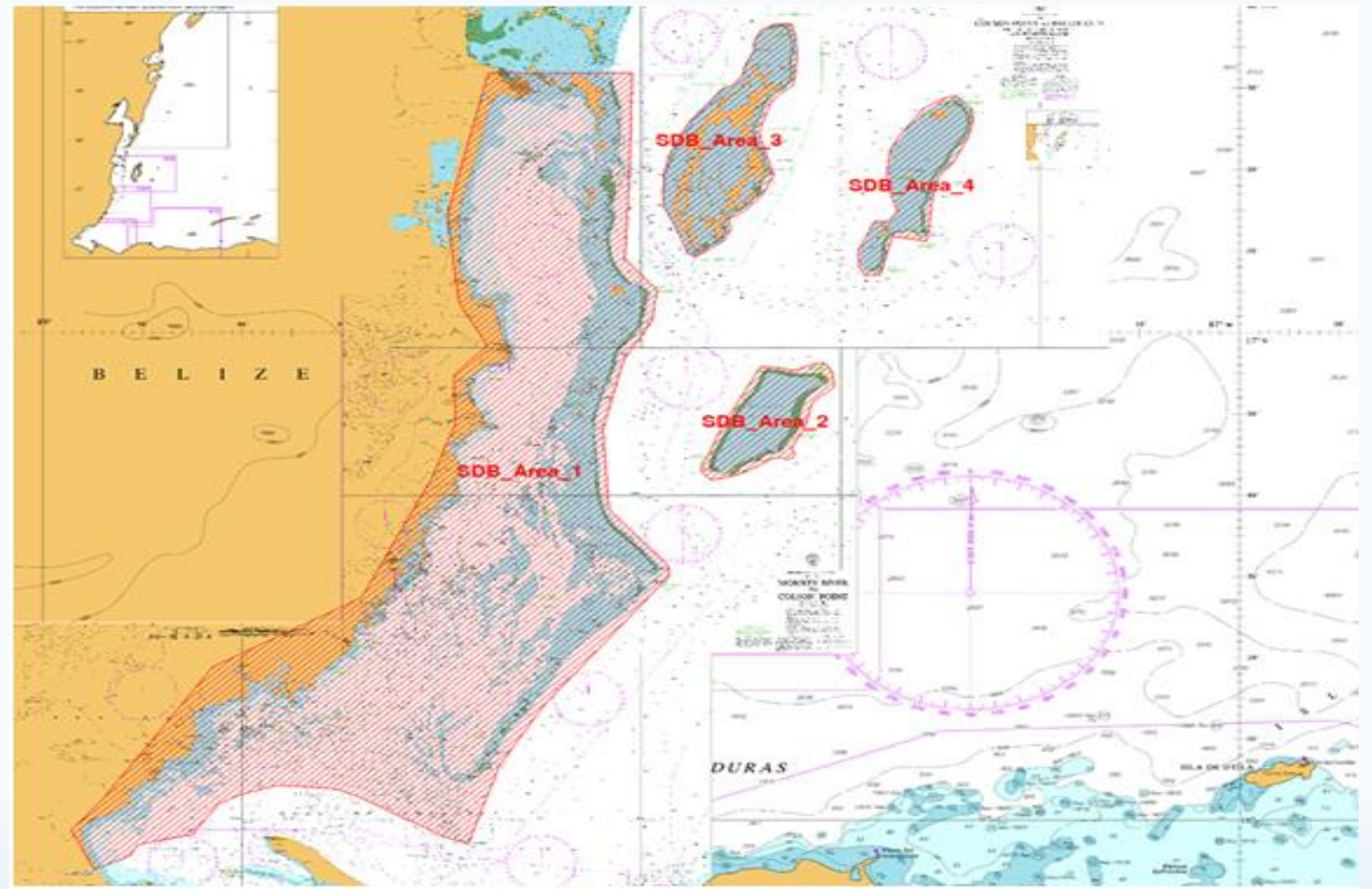
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Future plans and endeavours

1. Belize has been included in a bid submission funded through the Commonwealth Maritime Economies programme (CME programme) to receive satellite derived bathymetry data for southern Belize territorial waters with an area to cover of 9000 km² at resolution 2-10 meters. Data that will be collected will include bathymetric information, habitat coverage and imagery of survey area.



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Future endeavours; Revised Legislation

2. The Belize Port Authority Act has been revised and the first draft submitted for stakeholder engagement and consultations. The new Belize Maritime and Port Authority Bill, 2021 introduces new legislation as it pertains to hydrographic data collection and the enforcement of prior-survey to be conducted before any proposed development and post survey that must be submitted to the Designated Authority. The new legislation also speaks of the installation of Aids to Navigation and the requirements for such installation.



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National Ports Policy implementation 2022

3. The Blue Economy is key to the overall development of our country. Its protection through sustainable development is very much important for our continued economic development. Ships are getting larger and the interest in coastal development is overwhelming. It is therefore important that the challenge of balancing commercial interest with sustainable development must be priority hence the reason for the development of the first draft National Ports Policy 2021.

The Government of Belize (GOB) is committed to ensure that the network of Belizean port complexes act in unison to promote and facilitate trade in an efficient and uninterrupted fashion. To that end GOB has adopted this National Ports Policy to guide the necessary investments in Belizean ports to guard against demand outpacing supply or vice versa. The GOB, through the Belize Port Authority (BPA), shall therefore endeavor, as best as is possible, to seek equilibrium in the port sector in terms of supply and demand.

The central role of ports to Belize's national economy cannot be overstated; our ports are important economic drivers and any inefficiencies related thereto will have a knock-on effect on the economy. The implications of inefficient ports for Belize's competitiveness, particularly in what is forecasted to be a hyper competitive post-Covid macroeconomic environment, can be detrimental and must be avoided as far as is possible.

Since all port development have some impact on the natural environment; the BPA shall ensure that port productivity and performance are optimized to avoid undue development in the port sector by improving port efficiency.



The Belize Port Authority anticipate a productive 2022 year and will be in full preparation for 2023 IMO Audit and MACHC technical and high level visit. The Country of Belize expresses our greatest gratitude for all the support in achieving our Seabed2030 goals.

- The End
- Thank you all for the attention and lets work together to meet our goals for the MACHC region.



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