

Turneffe Atoll
Sustainability Association

BLUE TALKS

Building Sustainable Revenue for Marine Protected Areas

A case study on tourism sector partnerships, donor engagement, and blended finance in the Turneffe Atoll Marine Reserve, Belize.

Turneffe Atoll Marine Reserve, Belize

- **365,000 Acres of Marine Ecosystems**
  Turneffe Atoll is the largest and most biologically diverse atoll in the Western Hemisphere, featuring extensive coral reefs, mangroves, and seagrass beds.

- **Socio-Economic Lifeblood**
  Sustains over 2,000 commercial fishers, tour guides, and resort operators in Belize.

- **The Funding Challenge**
  Traditional park entry fees cover less than 40% of operational costs needed for effective enforcement and science-based management.

- **The Solution: Blended Finance**
  TASA developed 'Blue Talks' to unlock non-traditional revenue by partnering directly with luxury dive resorts operating within the reserve.



Tourism Financing



TASA field staff & ranger operations on-site at Turneffe Atoll

Tourism Revenue Streams:

Entry Fees

Conservation Contributions (Full Access)

Citizen Science

Blue Talks

- *Adopt a Turneffe Initiative*
- *Amazon Wish List*
- *Private Donations & Donor Retention Programs*

Origin Story: Connecting Dive Resort Guests Directly to Conservation

- **Inception at Blackbird Caye Resort**
  Blue Talks originated as a partnership with Blackbird Caye Resort, bringing TASA presenters directly into resort lounges to speak with eco-tourists.

- **Captive, High-Value Audience**
  Resort guests spending thousands on dive trips are passionate about marine life and eager to support the reefs they experience firsthand.

- **Educational Storytelling**
  Presentations cover Turneffe's marine species, climate resilience, and TASA's operational work without feeling like a commercial pitch.

- **Seamless Donation Mechanics**
  Providing immediate, frictionless ways to give: QR codes, card processing, and exclusive branded merchandise.



The Merchandise Hook: Branded Gear as Donor Keepsakes

By offering premium, custom-branded apparel and gear, TASA provides donors with a tangible symbol of their contribution. Guests wear these items back home, serving as global ambassadors for Turneffe Atoll.





Teal Conservation T-Shirt

Features the Turneffe Atoll Marine Reserve emblem and sea turtle graphic.





TASA Dri-Fit Sport Cap

Technical performance cap with embroidered Turneffe Atoll logo.



Long-Sleeve Sun Shirt

UPF performance solar shirt printed with the Turneffe Atoll map.

The Four Giving Pathways: Structuring Donor Engagement for MPAs

1. Merchandise Donations

On-site donations tied to premium apparel, tumblers, caps, and dive accessories. Low barrier to entry for resort guests.

2. Amazon Wish List-2026

Donors purchase direct operational equipment (underwater cameras, dive gear, GPS units) shipped directly to TASA's logistics hub.



3. Adopt-a-Turneffe Program- 2026

Targeted adoption tiers for key flagship species (Sea Turtles, Manatees, American Crocodiles, Coral Reefs) providing recurring support.

4. Donor Match & Major Gifts

Philanthropic matching campaigns where major donors match resort guest contributions dollar-for-dollar.

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donorbox

Congrats Turneffe Atoll Sustainability Association,

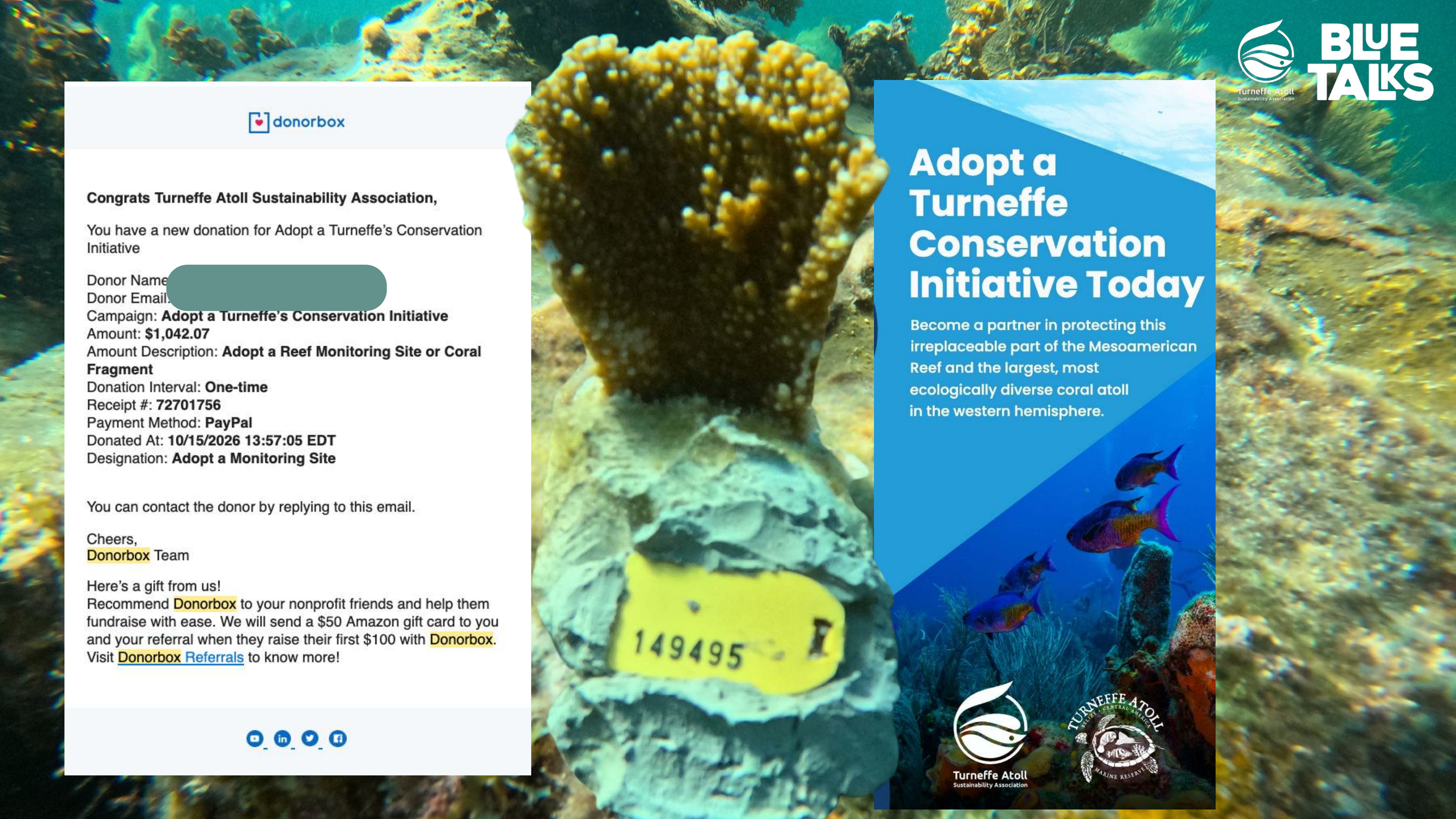
You have a new donation for Adopt a Turneffe's Conservation Initiative

Donor Name [redacted]
Donor Email [redacted]
Campaign: **Adopt a Turneffe's Conservation Initiative**
Amount: **$1,042.07**
Amount Description: **Adopt a Reef Monitoring Site or Coral Fragment**
Donation Interval: **One-time**
Receipt #: **72701756**
Payment Method: **PayPal**
Donated At: **10/15/2026 13:57:05 EDT**
Designation: **Adopt a Monitoring Site**

You can contact the donor by replying to this email.

Cheers,
Donorbox Team

Here's a gift from us!
Recommend Donorbox to your nonprofit friends and help them fundraise with ease. We will send a $50 Amazon gift card to you and your referral when they raise their first $100 with Donorbox. Visit Donorbox Referrals to know more!





You make my day when you send this kind of stuff. I love that they're able to be used in such a special and important way for the next generation. Thank you for sharing this!

11:16 AM

❤️

Sun, Aug 2

Are there other supplies you need that never got filled from the last Amazon list?

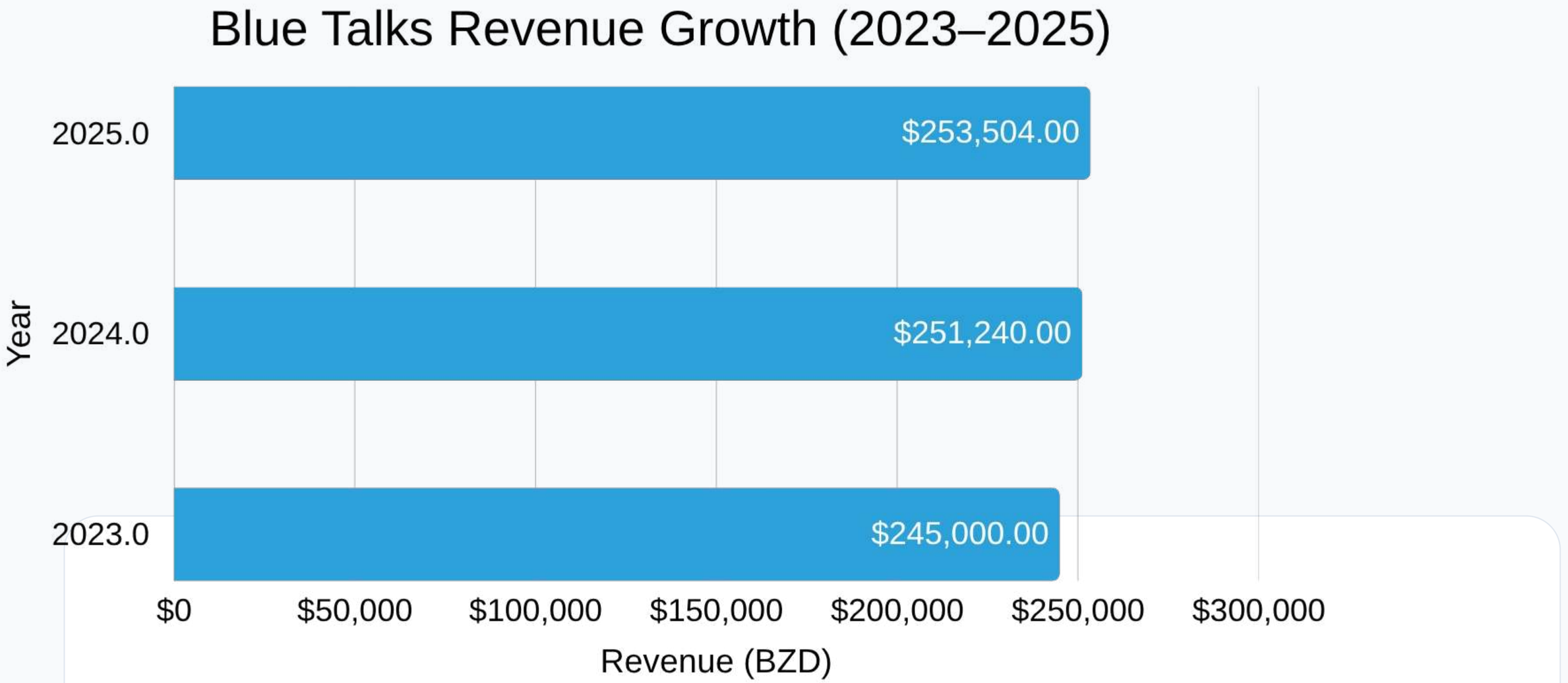
8:14 AM



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Financial Impact



Replicable Roadmap: How Peer MPAs Can Implement a Blue Talks Model

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Step 1: Secure Partnerships

Engage local resort management or tour operators with a clear win-win proposition: high-quality guest entertainment that enhances their eco-credentials.

Step 2: Curate Premium Merchandise

Source high-quality, eco-friendly apparel and accessories (caps, shirts, tumblers, dry bags) that guests genuinely want to wear.

Step 3: Train Passionate Presenters

Equip MPA field officers and educators with compelling visual stories rather than dry technical presentations.

Step 4: Establish Digital Payment Rails

Implement mobile card readers, QR codes, and automated tax-deductible donor receipts for international visitors.

Step 5: Maintain Donor Transparency

Send regular impact updates showing how donor contributions directly fund boat engine repairs, ranger food, or turtle monitoring.

The Blue Economy Virtuous Cycle: Preservation Meets Growth

A Self-Sustaining Framework Balancing Ocean Stewardship & Economic Value

PHASE 1: ECOSYSTEM HEALTH

Healthy marine biodiversity underpins tourism appeal and natural resilience.

PHASE 2: VISITOR CONNECTION

Blue Talks connect tourists directly with local ecological challenges and solutions.

PHASE 3: FINANCIAL CAPTURE

Tourism revenue is converted into dedicated park operational funds.

PHASE 4: ONGOING PROTECTION

Active park management preserves the reef, renewing the eco-tourism value loop.



REPEATABLE OCEAN CONSERVATION MODEL

By linking visitor experience directly with revenue capture, Turneffe establishes a self-funding ocean economy where ecological health and economic value continuously reinforce each other.


THANK YOU
Empowering Marine Protected Areas Through Shared Innovation
Turneffe Atoll
Sustainability Association
BLUE TALKS
delonie@tasabelize.com
www.visitturneffe.org