Title of the proposed presentation: ***Understanding the process of waterfront development in Belize; perspectives from the coast***

The sub-theme to which it relates: ***Water and the City – reclaiming waterfronts***

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Abstract

Many coastal communities in Belize have experienced a growing tourism industry which has resulted in increased pressures to develop waterfront land. The importance of waterfront land on tourism planning should require the involvement of multiple stakeholders. This presentation will examine the evolution of waterfront development in Belize with an emphasis on understanding resident and stakeholder involvement. The study will also assess the impacts of waterfront development on the economy, environment, and social/cultural aspects in three communities (Belize City, San Pedro, and Hopkins). It will also attempt to answer the question: What can be learned about stakeholder involvement in waterfront development, from the Belizean experience and external case studies, for application to future waterfront development projects in Belize?

Ultimately, the purpose of this study is to explore the idea of stakeholder participation in waterfront development as it relates to tourism planning, to create principles for successful involvement of stakeholders that can be applied to waterfront development and tourism planning in Coastal Belize, and to assess the extent to which Belize has incorporated successful stakeholder involvement and make recommendations where gaps exist.