Strategic Plan
2011 to 2016

PACT
Protected Areas Conservation Trust
Strategic Plan 2011 - 2016

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Front Cover
Top Left: Sarteneja Village
Top Right: Chiquibul Forest Reserve, Maya Mountains
Bottom Left: Marine life, Turneffe Atoll
Bottom Right: Black Howler Monkey, Community Baboon Sanctuary

Back Cover
Top: Black Orchid, National Flower of Belize
Middle: Support, Rio Blanco National Park
Bottom: Grants Ceremony, Guanacaste National Park
Circle: Caves Branch River, Jaguar Paw

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Strategic Plan 2011 to 2016
Protected Areas Conservation Trust (PACT)

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PACT was formally established in January 1996 with the passing of the Protected Areas Conservation Trust Act, No. 15 of 1995, creating the institution as a Statutory Board. The functions of PACT are to encourage and promote, for the benefit and enjoyment of the present and future generations of the people of Belize, the provision, protection, conservation and enhancement of the natural and cultural resources of Belize.

The PACT 2011-2016 Strategic Plan comes at a time when PACT must be cognizant and responsive to the dynamic circumstances surrounding the protection, conservation and financing of Belize’s natural resources. This ever-changing environment presents new challenges that require creativity, reform and continued leadership in order for PACT to remain a relevant and necessary player in the financing of protected areas in Belize. The strategic objectives and actions outlined in this Strategic Plan were informed by extensive constituent consultations and reflect, for the most part, the concerns and suggestions of constituents.

The 2011-2016 Strategic Plan contains six (6) Strategic Objectives as follows:

1.0. Develop and Implement Mechanisms to Grow and Sustain the Fund in Order to Progressively Increase the Impact of the Trust on Protected Areas and Natural Resources Management in Belize
2.0. To Achieve Enhanced Institutional Capacity
3.0. Improve the Allocation, Management and Impact of PACT Grants
4.0. Improve the Overall Management of the Fund
5.0. Improve and Consolidate Inter-Institutional Linkages and Stakeholder Confidence
6.0. To Improve the Strategic Leadership and Overall Governance of the Board
1.0 Executive Summary

The first two years of the implementation period will see a key focus at streamlining the organization for enhanced operational and financial efficiency. Other early priorities in the strategic development of PACT will include the establishment of a Development Office, the introduction of a Grant Management Software, the definition of a more focused protected area investment portfolio, the establishment of a PACT Foundation, an immediate reduction in PACT administrative expenses, and a restructuring of the Board of Directors to enhance strategic leadership, delivery of purpose and an overall increase in the size and rate of growth of the fund. Strategic deliverables that will either be continuous through-out or implemented in the latter years of the planning period include a comprehensive Board Development Program, tailor-made Mentorship Programs for grantees, the implementation of the PACT Communications Strategy, the implementation of a Micro-Grant Program in buffer communities, the establishment of a Constituent Engagement Policy, a Cost-Benefit Analysis of protected areas management to truly assess protected areas management ‘core costs’ at multiple levels of management, and an assertive and structured attempt to meet fifty percent (50%) of protected areas core costs.

Of significant importance is the inclusion of a Performance Monitoring Tool as an annex to the Strategic Plan, to allow PACT to assess its performance well into the future. As part of this tool, a set of specific indicators that can be used to assess PACT effectiveness, efficiency and relevance has been identified. In essence, PACT can now have an ‘Institutional Report Card’ to allow the Board and staff to continuously evaluate their performance to ensure that the institution is achieving its mandate and core purpose.
The original concept for the establishment of PACT dates back to 1992 as part of a Revenue Generation Strategy for Protected Areas of Belize with the support of the United States Agency for International Development and the World Wildlife Fund for Nature. The original concept went through an extensive process of consultations with public, private and NGO organizations between 1992 and 1995, and PACT was formally established in January 1996 with the passing of the Protected Areas Conservation Trust Act, No. 15 of 1995, creating the institution as a Statutory Board. PACT officially opened its doors for business in June of 1996. As provided for in the Act, the functions of PACT “…shall be to encourage and promote, for the benefit and enjoyment of the present and future generations of the people of Belize, the provision, protection, conservation and enhancement of the natural and cultural resources of Belize”.

The circumstances surrounding the protection and conservation of Belize’s natural resources through protected areas have substantially changed since the creation of PACT. The organizations and agencies involved in protected areas management, both public and private, have evolved with the changing times and have created new dynamics characterizing access to funding for protected areas management both nationally and internationally. This rapidly-changing environment presents new challenges that require creativity and reform in order for PACT to continue to be a relevant and necessary player, while delivering its mandate and core purpose.

The Minister of Finance and the Board of Directors of PACT has commissioned the development of this Strategic Plan for the period 2011-2016, as a ‘forward thinking’ agenda that will guide the institution in its development during the next five years as it continue to assert its role as a relevant and effective National Trust. Overall, the 2011-2016 Strategic Plan is designed to position and project PACT as a model National Trust and leader in protected areas financing, with clear and tangible benefits to the natural heritage, economy and people of Belize.
3.0 Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles of PACT

The PACT 2011-2016 Strategic Plan responds to the values, principles and philosophies expressed in the Vision, Mission, and Guiding Principles of PACT.

Vision of PACT:
‘PACT is a strategic partner in the funding, management, and sustainable development of Belize’s natural and cultural resources for the benefit of Belizeans and the global community’

Mission of PACT:
‘To contribute to the sustainable management and development of Belize’s natural and cultural heritage by providing effective funding support to protected areas’

Guiding Principles of PACT
• Equity, transparency, accountability, and good governance are hallmarks of PACT
• The success of PACT as a National Trust Fund is dependent on its ability to continuously grow the fund
• Being responsive to protected areas and constituents’ needs is a permanent campaign of PACT
• Networking and engagement with constituents on a local, national and global scale is indispensable for PACT to deliver its mission
• PACT continuously sets new standards of efficiency in grant-making and delivery
• Effective communications is a key function of the day to day operations of PACT
4.0 The PACT 2011-2016 Strategic Objectives

4.1. Develop and Implement Mechanisms to Grow and Sustain the Fund in Order to Progressively Increase the Impact of the Trust on Protected Areas and Natural Resources Management in Belize
4.2. To Achieve Enhanced Institutional Capacity
4.3. Improve the Allocation, Management and Impact of PACT Grants
4.4. Improve the Overall Management of the Fund
4.5. Improve and Consolidate Inter-Institutional Linkages and Stakeholder Confidence
4.6. To Improve the Strategic Leadership and Overall Governance of the Board
An institutional assessment of PACT was conducted to collect baseline information as part of the strategic planning process. The Institutional Assessment Report is a comprehensive document that ultimately assessed PACT in the core parameters that defined institutional progression and survival: Efficiency, Effectiveness, and Relevance. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were utilized to gather data from over 75 constituents of PACT. A detailed and structured survey instrument was utilized to gather extensive data from a broad constituent base comprising both internal and external constituents; this was complemented with extensive literature review, regional constituents’ consultation meetings and interviews.

As part of the institutional assessment, a SWOT (Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats) Analysis was conducted. The SWOT analysis was enhanced with the application of a ranking methodology in which constituent assigned relative importance to ‘strengths’ (internal factors) and to ‘threats’ (external factors). This procedure minimizes subjectivity and helps to guide the institution towards those strengths that can really make a difference, and assist in a preliminary identification of strategic priorities and strategic actions. Ranks indicating relative importance were assigned to internal and external factors by constituents during the surveys conducted. Weights were assigned by the consulting team based on an informed professional judgment, using the findings of the surveys, interviews, and literature review. The sum of all weights is 1.0, where each individual rank is expressed as a fraction of the total.

The findings of the institutional assessment and SWOT Analysis were presented and discussed in three regional stakeholder meetings throughout the country, in addition to a specific consultation with Community Based Organizations. Stakeholders were asked to use the information presented and their own experiences with PACT to identify and prioritize strategic objectives and actions that could guide PACT into the future during the next 5 years.

The Institutional Assessment Report and the results of stakeholder consultations held throughout the country served as the primary source document used to prepare this Strategic Plan for the period 2011-2016.
Strategic Objective 1:
Develop and Implement Mechanisms to Grow and Sustain the Fund in Order to Progressively Increase the Impact of the Trust on Protected Areas and Natural Resources Management in Belize

Rationale:
Fund Growth and Sustainability are integral to the purpose and continued relevance of PACT. Ultimately, PACT’s ability to achieve its mission and provide meaningful financial impact to protected areas is contingent on its ability to mobilize resources to meet the financing needs to Belize’s system of protected areas. Furthermore, the inability of grow and sustain the Fund was the most prominent criticism of the PACT by both internal and external constituents. The strategic actions outlined below are feasible, practical and based on best-practices observed in similar institutions that if implemented will provide mechanisms to achieve the strategic objective.

Strategic Actions:
1.1. Invest in low risk investment portfolio e.g. shares in local utility companies.

1.2. Establish a Development Office within PACT to be tasked with developing and implementing a Fund Raising Strategy, meeting fundraising targets, including strategic positioning of PACT for fund growth and the structured engagement of all bilateral and multi-lateral partners.

1.3. Establish a PACT Foundation to be the philanthropic fundraising arm of PACT, with its own Board of Directors that is strategically structured to maximize access to funding from philanthropic sources.

1.4. Increase revenues from existing sources as presently stipulated in the PACT Act and amend the Act to diversify the revenue base from other potential public sources.

1.5. Pursue payment for environmental services options with private sector partners; for example the Belize Electricity Limited (BEL), the Belize Electric Company Limited (BECOL), and the Belize Water Services Limited (BWSL).
6.0 Strategic Objectives and Actions

**Strategic Objective 2:**
To Achieve Enhanced Institutional Capacity

**Rationale:**
Institutional capacity underlies an institution’s performance. Enhancing PACT institutional capacity is integral to the achievement of its mission and fulfillment of its purpose. Enhancing institutional capacity should be geared towards strengthening the capacity of both internal (Staff and Board) and key external constituents (grantees) of PACT. The strategic actions outlined below seek to enhance the capacity of PACT to better position it to improve its effectiveness and relevance while at the same time capitalizing on the strengths and opportunities of the institution.

**Strategic Actions:**
2.1. Strengthen the capacity of PACT in proposal writing, project formulation and implementation, project monitoring and evaluation, grant management, and in fund management.

2.2. Institute a system that better integrates staff roles and responsibilities to improve service delivery, reduce redundancy and improve efficiency.

2.3. Support capacity building of grantees for protected areas management (identification, monitoring, conservation planning, community engagement, proposal writing, and fund raising).

2.4. Where capacity needs have been established for a potential grantee, institute tailor-made mentorship assistance to build grant application and management capacity of grantee.

2.5. Revise the current scholarship program to focus on awarding 1 or 2 high-profile environmental degree-level scholarships per year.
6.0 Strategic Objectives and Actions

**Strategic Objective 3:**
Improve the Allocation, Management and Impact of PACT Grants

**Rationale:**
PACT existence is contingent on its ability to fund and mobilize resource for protected areas management in Belize. Therefore, it is paramount that funds are allocated and managed effectively and efficiently in order to create meaningful impact. PACT's continued relevance and survival will depend on its ability to create significant impact in the financing, protection and management of Belize’s protected areas.

**Strategic Actions:**

3.1. In consultation with all constituents, review and streamline the PACT priority areas to optimize investments in areas of national priority, capitalize on current and emerging funding opportunities, and maximize the impact of PACT grants through more focused and targeted investments.

3.2. Conduct a cost-benefit analysis of protected areas management with a clear focus on developing a Belizean definition of ‘core cost’, the economic efficiency of protected areas management at individual and regional scales within Belize, an evaluation of the administrative as opposed to the actual on-the-ground investments in protected areas, and the determination of true necessary core costs for protected areas management based on the most economically efficient model.

3.3. Adopt a policy to meet fifty percent (50%) of protected areas core costs for qualifying protected areas and for which core costs have been included as part of a larger grant request, based on the findings of the analysis in 3.2 above, and provided that the remaining fifty percent (50%) of the core costs has been secured from sources other than PACT.

3.4. Introduce the use of a **Grant Management Software** to assist in the tracking of grantee progress and compliance with PACT Grant Policies, and as part of a broader process to improve efficiency of the grant management and approval process.

3.5. Review and modify grant application policies to allow multiple organizations to merge to be able to apply for larger grants.

3.6. Institute a multi-tiered granting scheme that is both sensitive and responsive to differences in institutional capacity and size of grant and update the PACT Grants Manual accordingly.

3.7. Develop and adopt a **PACT Investment Policy** that outlines and guides all of PACT investments and which captures the spirit of Strategic Actions 1.1 to 1.6 and 3.1 to 3.6.
**Strategic Objective 4:**
Improve the Overall Management of the Fund

**Rationale:**
PACT’s ability to mobilize resources from philanthropic sources will depend on prudent practices that are consistent with exemplary practices for the management of environmental trust funds. Improved management of the fund will ensure increased efficiency in the management, collection, and investment of resources so as to allow PACT to better serve its constituents by streamlining administration to programmatic costs in order to maximize investment in priority programmatic areas.

**Strategic Actions:**
4.1. Reduce PACT administrative expenses to a maximum of twenty five percent (25%) of annual revenue within the next three years and to twenty percent (20%) within the next five years.

4.2. Develop a “cost driver” for the allocation and recovery of the administrative expenses realized by the management and oversight of the programs of PACT mission partners.

4.3. Develop and implement a general *Fund Management Policy* based on international standards and best practice, to be incorporated as an annex to the Board of Directors Manual.
Strategic Objective 5: Improve and Consolidate Inter-Institutional Linkages and Stakeholder Confidence

Rationale:
The ability of PACT to forge meaningful and mutually beneficial inter-institutional linkages and improve stakeholder confidence will ensure its continued relevance and survival as an institution. Institutions simply do not exist without constituents. Alliances established by PACT should be strategic to allow the institution to capitalize on its strengths and opportunities while improving its weaknesses and mitigating threats. The strategic actions below establish mechanisms for PACT to better engage its constituents about the purpose and function of PACT while simultaneously allowing the institution to mobilize and leverage opportunities.

Strategic Actions:
5.1. Continue to implement the PACT 2009-2013 Communications Strategy.

5.2. Identify, pursue and establish formal institutional alliances with at least six (6) local and international partners in specific themes that bring strategic benefits to PACT and to Belize; for example, an alliance with the Caribbean Climate Change Center.

5.3. Develop a Constituent Engagement Policy that sets out guidelines for establishing formal alliances with strategic partners.

5.4. Establish a Micro-Grant Program for sustainable income generating activities in buffer communities.

5.5. Actively pursue partnerships with other local and foreign organizations to capitalize on leveraging opportunities and optimize the use of available resources for protected areas management in Belize.

5.6. Operationalize the Constituent Database and a Constituency Map as necessary tools to ensure PACT optimal engagement of all constituents.
6.0 Strategic Objectives and Actions

Strategic Objective 6:
Improve the Strategic Leadership and Overall Governance of PACT

Rationale:
Effective strategic leadership is critical to institutional capacity and institutional performance because it provides the vision, direction, purpose for growth, and efficient allocation of resources. Ability to set strategic direction is contingent on establishing a governance structure that is conducive to institutional growth, mobilization of resources and instilling stakeholder confidence. The strategic actions outlined below provide mechanisms to improve the strategic leadership and governance of PACT while maintaining the Public Trust identity of PACT.

Strategic Actions:
6.1. Modify the structure of the Board of Directors to reflect a composition that is consistent with the identity and purpose of PACT as a National Public Trust, and with the role of the Board in providing strategic oversight in fund development, allocation and management in support of Belize’s natural and cultural resources.

6.2. Develop individual profiles for each Board Member and amend the Act to require appointment based on prospective members meeting the defined profile and not on representation alone.

6.3. Update the Board of Directors Manual and Implement a strategic Board Develop Program for the Board of Directors

6.4. Strategically position PACT to serve as the fiduciary manager of the emerging National Protected Areas Authority through enhanced institutional and management capacity.

6.5. Amend the PACT Act to protect the fund from appropriation for uses outside the scope of the PACT Act.

6.6. Revise the Conflict of Interest Policy limiting organizations serving on the Board from accessing grants during their term of service.

6.7. Strategically position PACT to be a key partner in the establishment of a sustainable funding base for protected areas and natural resources management in Belize through the skilful engagement of the PACT Foundation to be established under Strategic Action 1.4.
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