

Understanding and Building Trust Between Fishers, Law Enforcement, and Conservation Groups in The Bahamas

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Prepared for: The Nature Conservancy – Northern Caribbean Program

Date Completed: 1/18/2021



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to The Nature Conservancy for taking a leadership role in engaging with local stakeholders to make lasting impact in marine conservation in The Bahamas. Assistance provided by Current TNC-Bahamas Staff C, Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A, Marcia Musgrove, and Current TNC-Bahamas Staff B from TNC contributed to a well-organized project and completion of this report. This work was funded by The Nature Conservancy with a grant from the Vibrant Oceans Initiative.

Thank you also to community participants; both those who willingly stepped up to gather the persons that participated and, of course, the participants themselves. Their willingness to open up during these focus groups resulted in robust dialogue.

ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS

Acronyms

BNPAS – Bahamas National Protected Area System
BNT – Bahamas National Trust
BREEF - Bahamas Reef Environment Educational Foundation
CCI – Caribbean Challenge Initiative
KAP – Knowledge, Attitudes, and Perception
MPA – Marine Protected Areas
NGOs – Non-Governmental Organizations
TNC – The Nature Conservancy

Definitions

Affinitive trust – Trust that is built on the perception of commonalities. A person believes that you are trustworthy and share similar values because of your identity group. This is common in many circles such as fraternities, family, ethnicity, religion, career, and politics. Affiliation with a group improves the likelihood a person will trust you more than somebody not in that group because of affinitive trust.

Dispositional trust – This trust is determined before an individual meets you in person. This is built on worldviews crafted through experience, schooling, or upbringing. Here you will find bias and assumptions as an indicator of how much an individual will trust you based on what they heard about you from neighbors and friends, marketing materials they have read, or personal histories with you or representatives of your particular group.

Environmental social science – Utilizing the diversity of social science theories (psychology, anthropology, criminology, communications, economics, etc.) to provide a better understanding of complex socio-ecological conservation challenges.

Focus group – A group of individuals (8-12) that participate in a guided discussion to better understand the values, attitudes, and knowledge of that group.

Grounded Theory – Systematic methodology that involves constructing theories and approaches based on methodical gathering and analysis of data. This requires inductive reasoning based on information beyond a literature review of past science and can be achieved through conversations with local stakeholders and past experiences.

Node – Synthesized version of specific survey questions used for analysis purposes in NVivo.

NVivo – Globally approved statistical package software that analyzes qualitative data.

Qualitative social science techniques – Using methods such as interviews, focus groups, case studies, and observation to understand a social challenge.

Rational trust – Trust cultivated based on performance, failures, and achievements. An individual makes a rational evaluation of the costs and benefits of likely future performance based on past performance.

The individual bases their trust on the quality of past projects and the ability of the individual or organization to meet goals.

Systems-based trust – An individual’s assessment of the fairness and transparency of procedures. In this case, the individual will have more or less trust with a person or organization if they perceive that there is a process in place to address unfair treatment, conflicts, or challenges. An example of creating systems-based trust is to develop and sign a memorandum of understanding to provide a clear understanding of the roles, responsibilities, decision-making process, and intended outcomes within a project.

Trust ecology – A broad framework that explains four dimensions of trust (dispositional, rational, affinitive, and systems-based) that, through the richness and even distribution, enhances the efficacy, resiliency, and trustworthiness of natural resource management institutions.

INTRODUCTION

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) in The Bahamas is working with partners to demonstrate how the implementation of marine ecosystem management measures can play a significant role in improving marine resources for people and nature now and into the future. TNC believes that the effective engagement of stakeholders begins with understanding the knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions (KAP) of these stakeholders. This is shown in their 2015 KAP study that analyzed how fishers and the general public perceived the status and management of the Queen Conch (The Nature Conservancy 2015).

To further the approach of understanding their stakeholders, TNC engaged fishers and other stakeholders to gauge their knowledge and attitudes about marine ecosystem management measures such as marine protected areas (MPAs) and marine policies (The Nature Conservancy 2015, 2018, & 2019). Through this process, TNC documented that many fishers perceived a lack of trust with conservation groups and the government. Fishers state a need for clarity on the motives of conservation groups and their relationship with the government. Other concerns from various fishers included a lack of trust in the science behind marine conservation, distrust in funding sources, concern that environmental, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are not sensitive to fishers' livelihoods, and the inability for fishers to distinguish between the various environmental NGOs. Therefore, TNC developed The Bahamas Trust Project to document the current level of trust between fishers, law enforcement, and conservation groups to develop strategies to improve trust and overcome trust barriers.

While many of the past outreach efforts focused on fisher's, TNC recognized the role of law enforcement and the need to develop a more robust relationship. For this reason, TNC would also like to understand law enforcement's perception of trust, and how trust and engagement with law enforcement can be improved. Enforcement of marine policies has an important role in the success of marine conservation efforts and law enforcement personnel are on the front line. They also play a significant role in educating fishers on the importance of abiding by the laws and explaining how fishers contribute to the success of sustainable fisheries and healthy marine ecosystems.

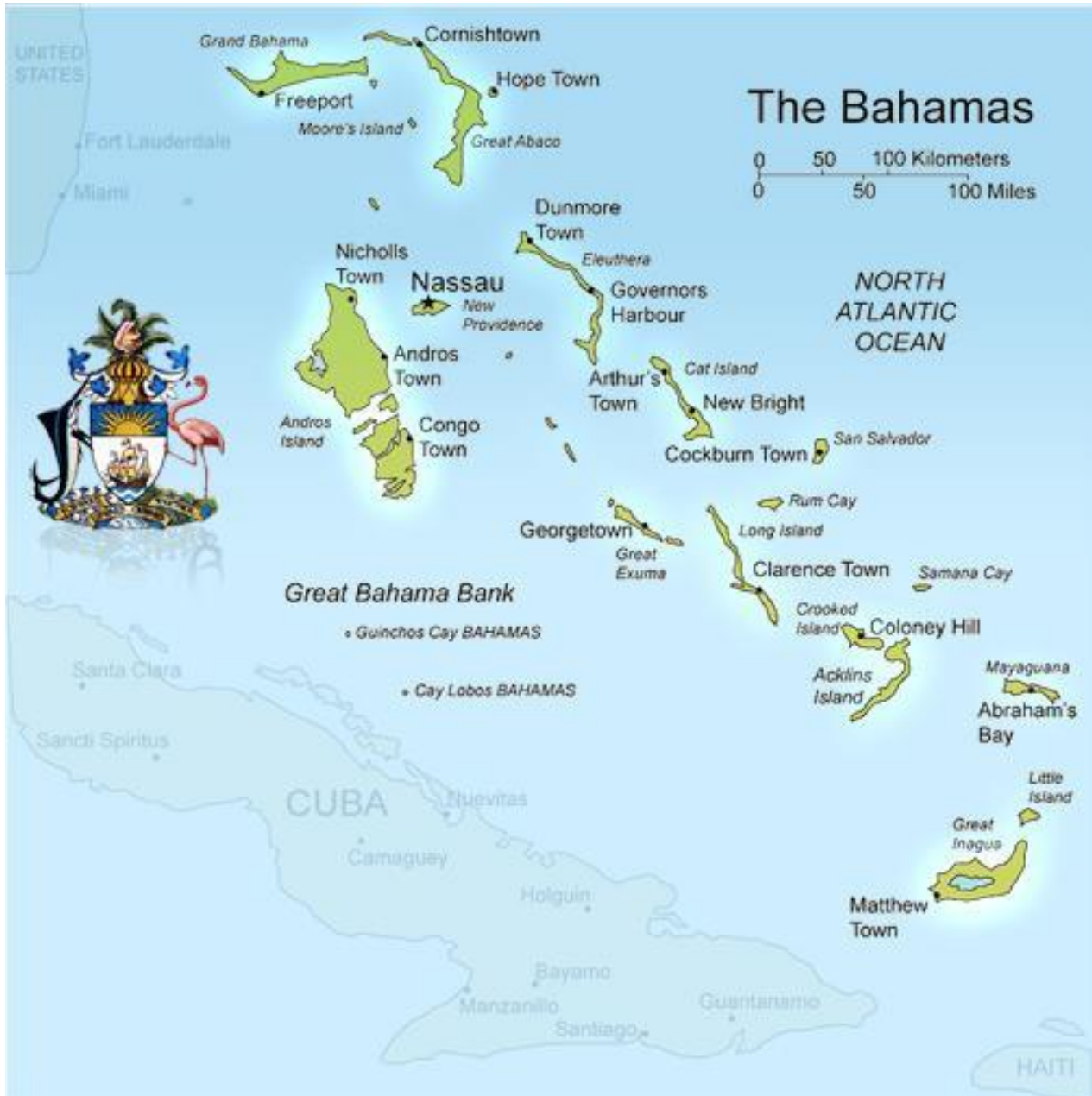
It is hypothesized that improving trust among fishers, law enforcement, and environmental groups, such as The Nature Conservancy, will reduce conflict and risks that can impact conservation outcomes. These may include fisher opposition, user conflicts, negative socioeconomic impacts, failure to halt decline or increase marine biodiversity, tarnished reputation, loss of funding sources, and more. The intention is to avoid or minimize these risks and conflicts while fostering stronger collaboration and compliance with policies aimed at creating benefits for people and nature. For this reason, The Nature Conservancy wants to better incorporate trust into its strategic planning process to increase the likelihood of achieving conservation outcomes. While building trust, alone, we will not address all the factors that contribute to marine resource depletion and scarcity (Pomeroy R., et al 2016) it is a step in the right direction.

TNC's Bahamas Stakeholder Trust Project used an exploratory approach to understand the perspectives of fishers and law enforcement on New Providence, Grand Bahamas, Andros, Eleuthera, Inagua, Long Island, and Abaco islands to lay the foundation for strategic planning efforts. Existing literature was reviewed to explore the human dimensions of trust in marine conservation. Focus groups were also conducted on each island to reach multiple stakeholders, who are leaders and trusted individuals in the fisher community. This exploratory process led to emerging themes and concepts across the islands that

can be utilized to incorporate the human dimensions of local communities into TNC's strategic planning process and marine ecosystem management measures.

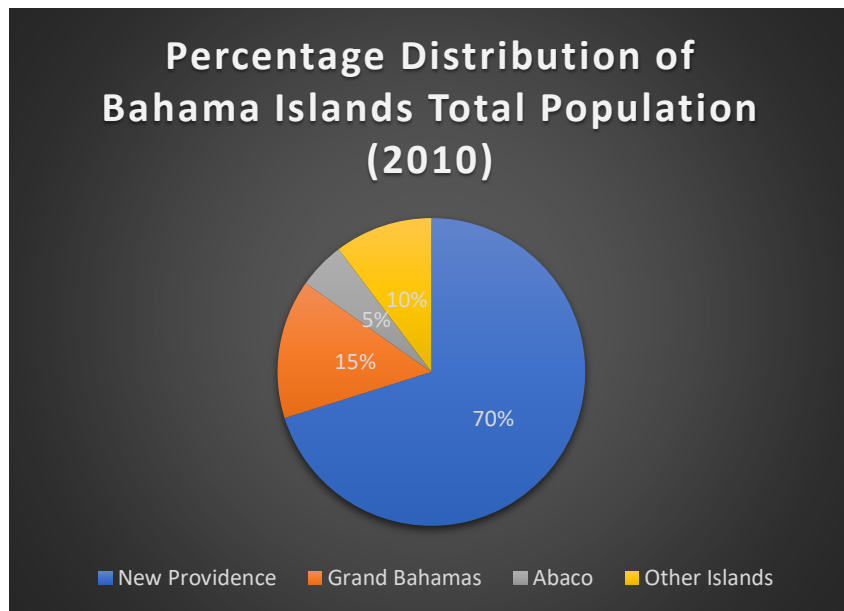
STUDY AREA

The project focused specifically on the following Bahamian islands: Andros, Inagua, Eleuthera, Long Island, Grand Bahama, Abaco, and New Providence. Within these islands, fishing communities were targeted for fisher focus groups. Each of these islands is unique in their culture and history. However, they all represent islands within The Bahamas.



DEMOGRAPHICS

Bahamian population is majority African descent with 85 percent black and 15 percent white and mixed. As of 2010, the male population stands at 170,257 and females at 181,204 with both groups surpassing a 15 percent increase in the past decade. The results of this study is not disaggregated by race, gender, or income. However, it is important to have a general sense of population trends for readers that are not familiar with The Bahamas.



GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of this study is to understand the current perceptions of trust among fishers and law enforcement with environmental NGOs with a focus on The Nature Conservancy. Data gathered from this study will be used to craft actions and strategies that build and improve trust with stakeholders to achieve conservation outcomes for the benefit of nature and people. The objective is to create a report that will help inform The Nature Conservancy on actions it can take to build and sustain trust with fishers and law enforcement over time in The Bahamas.

The study focuses on a few research questions to help ground the approach. These research questions include:

- 1) What is the current status of trust between fishers, law enforcement, and conservation groups?
- 2) What is the best way to engage with fishers and law enforcement when doing conservation and sustainable fisheries work?
- 3) What is the current level of trust between fishers, law enforcement, and TNC specifically?
- 4) What is the best way to engage with fishers after a natural disaster such as hurricane Dorian?
- 5) What is the current level of knowledge about marine policies?
- 6) What is the impact of marine policies and law enforcement on fishers' livelihood?

LITERATURE REVIEW SUMMARY

An extensive literature review was conducted to ground the researcher in past analysis of interactions between fishers, law enforcement, and conservation groups. This included a review of engagement in The Bahamas to ensure that the researcher did not engage in questions with known answers. The full report is available at the end of this report (Appendix 4). The literature review focused on trust research in marine resource management. Many insights were gathered during this process, which informed the interview guide and methodology of the focus group study. Some of the primary insights are below.

Trust has been documented as a critical factor of success for conservation projects in complex social-ecological scenarios where stakeholders have influence and are impacted by the outcomes of conservation projects (Metcalf et al 2015, Burgoyne, C. 2017, Ordonez-Gauger, L. et al 2018). Even when trust is not mentioned by researchers, it comes up as a top social factor for stakeholders when evaluating conservation success (Metcalf et al 2015). The same research details that trust is dependent on scale and time. Smaller projects tend to build trust faster than large-scale projects. This is because larger projects have more persons to engage at once and strategies tend to be broad instead of community specific. The longer a project goes beyond the intended deadline correlates to a decline in trust. The research shows this is due to the frustration of having outside entities disrupting community life longer than needed. People prefer to be engaged until the project is over and then provided the time necessary to adjust to the new normal.

Ordonez-Gauger, L. et al 2018 show that engagement is not executed uniformly across marine resource management projects. In the case of California's MPA engagement process, they hired expert facilitators and yet fishers still did not feel properly engaged. They felt their voices were not appreciated and that while facilitation was effective in the moment, it did not translate into any policy, strategy, or management change. The experts did have an effective way to address conflict in knowledge. Scientific knowledge was deemed more important than local knowledge and little consideration was made to ground truth or study claims made by communities. This research points out a need for equitable participation which means that all stakeholders feel they have a tangible role in decision making and that local knowledge is appreciated. The researchers also document the need for local solutions when addressing a large-scale problem. Because they were not engaged in the decision-making process, fishers felt that the proposed guidelines for MPA development did not consider local ecology. They believed that these local differences would change the size and boundaries of certain MPAs.

The literature review also took an extensive look at the theory known as Trust Ecology which states that there are four types of trust and that these four trust types buffer and engage with each other like a living ecology. In 2015, Stern created a framework to differentiate these trust dimensions and analyzed how they work together.

Dispositional Trust

- Based on personal histories, general hearsay, and innate tendencies
- Rational, Affinitive, and Systems-based can all shift dispositional trust (thus easiest to change)

Rational Trust

- Based largely on assessments of prior performance

- Cost and benefit analysis of likely future performance
- Affinitive trust and Systems-based trust buffer loss of rational trust

Affinitive Trust

- Developed through interactions which are positive and when active listening has been demonstrated
- Disturbances include turnover of personnel and competing relationships
- Rational trust and Systems-based trust can compensate when Affinitive trust is lacking

Systems-based Trust

- Buffers individuals' degree of risk in potential trust relationships
- Lessens the importance of other forms of trust
- Individuals can work together with less interpersonal trust

Although an organization must work on all four trust dimensions with its stakeholders, a large emphasis is placed on systems-based trust because it can stand alone fairly well without much support from the other types of trust. This is because systems-based trust is based on a system of checks and balances that go beyond interpersonal relationships.

The interview guide for this study is built on the principles of the trust ecology to provide The Nature Conservancy with a framework to develop actions and strategies to build trust with fishers and law enforcement in The Bahamas. While trust with TNC is a major focus of this study, the interview guide also engages fishers and law enforcement about recovery and engagement after a natural disaster, knowledge of fisheries policies, and understanding of how fisheries livelihoods are impacted by conservation organizations and law enforcement. The data will provide local approaches to building trust-based on one of the four categories of the trust ecology. For instance, understanding the best approach for helping fishers recover from natural disasters and then consistently completely that approach as described by the community can increase both rational and systems-based trust. Rational because of the consistency and systems-based, because TNC will take an approach outlined by the community.

METHODOLOGY

To ensure the qualitative process was guided by both project needs, and insights garnered from the literature review, the grounded theory methodology was applied. The grounded theory method enables the researcher to develop themes and theories guided by systematically collected and analyzed data generated by the responses of interviewees and data provided by the client (Ramalho, R. et al 2015). Prior research conducted by Professor Marc Stern guided the development of a set of trust-related research questions (*Appendix 2*) utilizing the "trust ecology" theory (Stern M. J. 2008, 2015, & 2018). Additional questions were developed based on the specific needs of the project team. Further, the interview guide (research questions) was not built solely for data collection purposes, but also to help the local TNC team build or renew relationships with stakeholders on each island.

In collaboration with TNC, a list of qualifier characteristics was developed to help identify the type of participants desired (*Appendix 1*). This allowed for purposeful sampling of interviewees with binding characteristics (Palinkas, L. et al 2015). Local leaders on each island were provided with the qualifier characteristics and asked to identify participants for the focus groups. This was done to minimize selection bias by TNC and help expand relationships with diverse stakeholders. Both recreational and commercial fishers were targeted to participate. Focus groups were chosen because they allowed the researcher to engage simultaneously with multiple persons that could provide an understanding of community perception without interviewing all fishers and law enforcement officers on each island. While this study is not meant to represent all people on each island, the use of a focus group is a recognized approach to gain adequate information to make informed decisions about strategies for building and sustaining trust.

To address the research questions, semi-structured interviews were conducted which allowed the utilization of a structured interview guide while providing the freedom to ask clarifying and follow-up questions based on responses and questions from respondents.

Each focus group meeting was recorded and received a unique code to help the researcher identify fishers and law enforcement groups interviewed on each island. Recorded interview files were sent to a third party for full transcription. Any files that could not be transcribed by the third party were transcribed directly by the researcher. No names were provided in any reports for confidentiality purposes. Each transcribed interview was analyzed and coded using NVivo 12 software package, which has been recommended and utilized by social scientists to identify emerging themes and concepts (Romero-Lankao, P. & Norton, R. 2018; Whitten, M. 2019; Phillips, M. & Lu, J. 2018).

The themes identified in Table 1. were identified before analysis and were determined by the interview guide. However, some themes and nodes were identified during the analysis process which allowed for the organic development of themes as explained in the Grounded Theory. After each theme was identified, each question asked is turned into a node that supports understanding the specific theme. These nodes are synthesized versions of the actual interview guide questions. By grouping specific nodes to themes the researcher can achieve a robust understanding of specific themes. These themes and nodes are used directly in the NVivo software package to analyze the focus group data.

Table 1. *Research analysis categories*

Theme	Node
Broad trust with conservation groups	
	Current trust level: Fishers and conservation groups
	Current trust level: Law enforcement and conservation groups
	Historic breakdown in trust
	Examples of building trust
Trust with TNC: Dispositional	
	Knowledge of TNC
	First time hearing about TNC
	Trust in the funding of nonprofits
Trust with TNC: Rational	
	Past work with TNC

	TNC's performance quality
	TNC's integrity
Trust with TNC: Affinity	
	TNC's understanding of Bahamian culture
	Connection with TNC staff
	TNC's consideration of fisher values
	TNC's consideration of law enforcement values
Trust with TNC: Systems-based	
	Ease of contacting TNC
	Knowledge of individual rights
	Rules or guidelines TNC should adopt
Law enforcement specific questions	
	Barriers to enforcing fishery laws
	Law enforcement needs
	Role of law enforcement in conservation
Collaboration after natural disasters	
	Actions to help after a natural disaster
	When to return after a natural disaster
Fisheries policies and laws	
	Trust in science data

After each interview was coded for passages that represented the various nodes, NVivo's analytical capabilities were used to look for emerging themes. Each node was analyzed in one of three ways, depending on the question:

- 1) Word frequency to analyze every passage across islands coded to a specific node to determine synonymous terms most often used by respondents.
- 2) Cross-referencing different responses and expanding passages manually to clarify the meaning and definition of words.
- 3) Manual analysis of themes or nodes to discover outliers that may be of importance to the project team.

The word frequency function in NVivo automatically scans various nodes for similar words (Feng, X. & Behar-Horenstein, L. 2019). A subjective decision was based on expertise of the researcher to use only words that were weighted at 0.60% or higher. The weighted percentage is the frequency of the word relative to the total words counted. When looking at synonymous terms, the weighted data assigns a portion of the word's frequency to each group of words so that the overall total does not exceed 100%. The focus on higher weighted concepts means that actions and strategies chosen by the team aimed at those emerging themes would have the broadest impact on the communities represented by the respondents. Collectively, this was required to provide the highest level of assurance that the emerging themes could translate to strategies and actions that are effective across fishers and law enforcement.

STUDY LIMITATIONS

Geographic Scope

Acknowledging that The Bahama islands are diverse in community needs, perspectives, and norms and cultures; focus group meetings were held on multiple islands covering the north, south, and central portions of the country. However, due to budget and time constraints, our assessments were not conducted on every island and every community. Selected islands represent the geographic, cultural, and economic diversity of the country and include those with impacted fishing communities.

Covid19

Due to the global pandemic, the study was suspended after the first set of focus groups. To protect their staff and study participants, The Nature Conservancy suspended all international and domestic travel for staff and consultants. When focus groups resumed, it was determined they would have to be conducted virtually instead of in-person. This change in communication limited the researcher's ability to build relationships but did allow for the completion of the project on all targeted islands. Through a series of suggestions, it was decided to utilize the WhatsApp app to conduct focus group calls with all the remaining participants. All participants were aware that the call was being recorded and responses were documented. Keeping the focus group methodology allowed the researcher to analyze the data consistently. Instead of conducting multiple focus groups on a single island, the focus groups conducted via WhatsApp consisted of fishers across the island. In the results section, for those islands, the fishers recorded were from a diversity of locations.

Hurricane Dorian

Abaco and Grand Bahama were two of the islands chosen to conduct focus groups since several major fishing communities are found there. Some parts of these islands were also devastated by Hurricane Dorian in September 2019. However, we chose to engage with these communities that had a high dependency on fisheries for a living income. Abaco and Grand Bahama are culturally and historically known fishing communities. While they were impacted by Dorian, we needed to ensure their voices were heard and provided a unique opportunity to help TNC understand how to better engage with fishers after a natural disaster.

Certain communities in East Grand Bahamas were selected for our focus groups. However, upon arrival in Sweeting's Cay and East End, the researcher and TNC staff had their first visual confirmation of the destruction that Hurricane Dorian caused on these local communities. After the site visit, it was determined that the community was not yet ready to participate in a focus group due to more pressing issues resulting from Hurricane Dorian. The researcher and local TNC staff still sat with these stakeholders and asked about recovery and resource needs. Although this was outside the scope of the study, the researcher provided a summary of the discussions for TNC's consideration (Appendix 3).

MITIGATION OF BIASES

The researcher and TNC staff made multiple attempts to reduce bias for this study. Although TNC staff guided qualifier characteristics (Appendix 1), they were excluded from the participant selection process. Qualifier characteristics were provided to local community leaders who identified a group of 10-12 suitable participants. These local community leaders were identified by TNC staff that have either worked directly with these individuals or knew of the leadership of these persons on specific islands. TNC staff chaperoned the researcher to each meeting location but were not present during focus group discussions.

The researcher kept all notes and recordings private. This process was the same for fisher and law enforcement groups.

The location and time of all focus groups were set by local officials, with guidance to choose a location that was neutral for all participants. For this reason, fisher focus group settings were diverse such as an elementary school classroom, gazebo on the beach, restaurant, and church. These locations provided a more comfortable and safe space for fishers that were familiar. The majority of fisher focus groups were held in the evening to ensure fishers did not feel conflicted by interrupting their normal work hours to attend a focus group. Fishers also received a \$40 stipend for participating in the focus group. It is common practice to compensate participants for their time when it decreases the time they could be spending at work or with family and they would not be able to be compensated for their time otherwise. Law enforcement were being paid during their hours of work; as a result, we did not provide them with additional compensation for their participation. Fishers were not told of the \$40 stipend in advance and did not receive the funds until after the focus group concluded. In this case, we did not want fishers to provide answers that were perceived as favorable to receive their stipend.

For law enforcement, since focus groups were held during working hours, many of the focus groups were surveyed at their place of business. However, they were informed in advance that the researcher was willing to meet with them at any setting and outside of regular business hours.

Despite these efforts, there are possible biases to consider when reviewing results.

- To gain access to these communities, it was important to have a local TNC staff person with the researcher to provide introductions and context. Though the local staff person did not stay for the focus group, participants may have felt a need to answer a certain way after meeting TNC staff in person.
- Although we provided our primary contact with the qualifier characteristics to choose participants, the contact's perspectives on conservation and affinity towards persons may have influenced their selection of participants.
- Initially, the qualifier characteristics were designed to help focus the study, however it may also have elicited participants that were more likely to support conservation efforts.
- While there was a desire by the researcher and TNC to have a diverse set of respondents, the participants were primarily male. Male dominance may be due to gender bias when local contacts are considered leaders in the community. Culture may also play a role in this bias as TNC has previously observed that married women tend to defer to their husbands when discussing fisher business. The qualifier characteristics could also request that gender representation is critical.

RESULTS

Table 2 displays each community by island including the number of fishers and law enforcement that participated in each focus group. The dates listed indicates the date the focus group was conducted. On some islands more than one community was engaged. Law enforcement always represents the entire island not specific communities.

Table 2. Number of fisher and law enforcement focus group participants by island

Island	Community	# of Fishers	# of Law Enforcement	Date of focus group
<i>Inagua</i>				
Fishers	Inagua	10		2/17/2020
Law Enforcement			7	2/18/2020
<i>Grand Bahama</i>				
Fishers	West End	11		2/19/2020
Fishers	East End	11		2/20/2020
Fishers	Sweeting's Cay	8		2/20/2020
Law Enforcement			10	2/21/2020
<i>Abaco</i>				
Fishers	Fox Town	12		2/22/2020
Fishers	Cherokee	5		2/23/2020
Fishers	Sandy Point	7		2/23/2020
Law Enforcement			1	2/25/2020
<i>New Providence</i>				
Law Enforcement			17	2/25 -2/27
Fishers	Multiple (Virtual)	5		9/26/2020
<i>Andros</i>				
Fishers	Multiple (Virtual)	7		10/30/2020
Law Enforcement			3	10/2/2020
<i>Eleuthera</i>				
Fishers	Spanish Wells (Virtual)	7		9/28/2020
Law Enforcement			4	10/5/2020
<i>Long Island</i>				
Fishers	Multiple (Virtual)	9		10/20/2020
Law Enforcement			4	10/1/2020

After analyzing each theme and node, key selections were highlighted for use in this report. Special care was utilized to ensure that quotes would not be identifiable to a particular focus group or participant. The results include the relevant selections to elucidate meaning for readers. All results are expressed in tabular form for easy reference (Table 3). Listed below are the result topics based off each node that are discussed in detail for each result.

Table 3. *Tabular results of focus groups*

Node	Results weighted at 0.60% or higher
Current trust level: Fishers and conservation groups	
	Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A
	Agenda of conservation
	Need for understanding
	Five out of ten
	Differences in rating by island
Current trust level: Law enforcement and conservation groups	
	Good working relationship
	Differences by department and island
Historic breakdowns in trust	
	Communication style
	Turtles
	Lack of full community engagement
	“Taking” areas for conservation
	Being “told” to do something
	Frequency of visits
	Too many marine parks
Examples of building trust	
	Working with fishers and law enforcement
	Educating and raising awareness with fishers and law enforcement
	Utilizing campaigns
	Saving the lobsters
Knowledge of TNC	
	Nothing
	Preserve nature
	Have conservation programs
	Not from The Bahamas
	Good things
First time hearing about TNC	

	Individual people (Former TNC-Bahamas Staff D, Former TNC-Bahamas Staff D, Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A, Community Member A)
	Television
	Work groups
Trust in TNC funding	
	Lack of knowledge in funding sources
	Agendas and influence of funder
Past work with TNC	
	Have not worked with TNC previously
	Conch
	Various projects
	Interviews
	Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A
TNC's performance quality	
	Pretty good to Excellent
	Don't know
TNC's integrity	
	Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A
	Don't know
TNC's understanding of Bahamian culture	
	Yes they do
	Hope they do
	Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A
Connection with TNC staff	
	No connection
	Former TNC-Bahamas Staff D
	Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A
	Current TNC-Bahamas Staff C
	Current TNC-Bahamas Staff B
TNC's consideration of fisher values	
	Yes they do
TNC's consideration of law enforcement values	
	Hope they do
	Yes they do
Ease of contacting TNC	
	Phone
	Google/look up online
	Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A
	Current TNC-Bahamas Staff B
	Email
Knowledge of individual rights	

	Don't know or violence
	Government/agencies
	Speak to the person in charge
Rules or guidelines TNC should adopt	
	Have meetings with everybody
	Give advance notice and information
	Contact superior
Barriers to enforcing fishery laws	
	Boats/vessels
	Ability to hand out fines
	Mismatched penalties
Law enforcement needs	
	More officers
	Boats/vessels
	Training
Role of conservation groups in fisheries	
	Education
	Engage government
	Sustaining the fishing industry
	Provide scientific information
	Create regulations
Role of law enforcement in fisheries	
	Enforcing the laws
	Educating fishers
Actions to build trust: Fishers	
	Spend time with fishers
	Clearly articulate areas slated for conservation
	More education on projects
	Stop the poachers
	Be upfront
Actions to help after a natural disaster	
	Environmental cleanup
	Damage assessment to fisheries
	Replace traps and condos
	Create a fund for fishers
When to return after a natural disaster	
	Come anytime
	After emergency respondents
Actions to build Trust: Law Enforcement	
	Provide education on policies and species that are protected
	Share resources and information
	Keep them aware of conservation projects

	Increase general interactions with law enforcement
Trust in science data	
	Conch
	Lack of local knowledge
	Antiquated knowledge
	Yes they trust the science

The responses listed below represent the highest-rated responses (above 0.60% as stated in the methodology section) that should be evaluated as part of the next phase of work to increase trust with fishers and law enforcement. Unless stated, the responses are relevant to both fishers and law enforcement. The following results are also ordered by the frequency of occurrence during the focus groups.

1 Current level of trust: Fishers and conservation groups

1a Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A

Fishers were very quick to mention Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A as the connection between built trust with conservation groups. It appears that Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A has made inroads with fishers through her efforts and activity. Those that reference Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A also referenced a good to a secured level of trust.

- *“We really appreciate all the hard work and effort that Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A and her team has been doing.”*
- *“I would say Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A is the first person that we felt that we trusted honestly in these conservation groups. I mean, that's just how I see it, honestly.”*
- *“Yeah. With the general question as conservation groups and not specifically one, I would say that my experience with Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A and who she represents, there has been a level of honesty and not hidden agendas or a give and take where it's very lopsided or a specific purpose-driven meeting to where they need something, so they want your support.”*

1b Conservation agenda

Fishers referenced a lower level of trust between them and conservation groups because of the perception of a conservation agenda that is consistently pushed. For these fishers, this is perceived as conservation groups only engaging with them when they want something to accomplish their agenda. Some fishers voice a concern that they are forced to comply with whatever agenda is proposed.

- *“I mean, it seems like they want you to push your agenda button. If they have to take 50% from me to push your agenda, that's okay.”*
- *“BNT just comes and put it on you and then they expect you just to accept it.”*
- *“Okay, what is the underlying agenda behind banning a certain thing?”*

1c Lack of consultation with fishers

Fishers felt that conservation groups are making decisions behind a closed door without their input. This also includes ecological assessment without local knowledge input. This lack of consultation makes it hard for them to trust a conservation group's intentions.

- *"But one thing I noticed about this and trust, they need to consult with fishermen before they go about making decisions."*
- *"...but I believe one of the reasons why we don't believe you have our best interests at heart is because we don't understand the focus of conserving land and water. We need to better understand your focus."*

1d Differences in rating by island

When asked the question about the current level of trust. Some respondents made the point to let the researcher know that it would be variable depending on the island. No specific islands were mentioned, but they wanted the researcher to understand that the response to trust levels would vary by island.

1e Five out of ten

When some fishers answered the question of level of trust between fishers and law enforcement, they used a 10-point scale to tell the researcher about the level of trust between fishers and conservation groups. Five out of 10 was the general response and went with the theme that some fishers said 50/50.

- *"On a scale of one to ten I would say probably five"*
- *"I mean they do have the fishers at heart, but if you look at the fishers by the present, they feel that you're taking away from them. So it's kind of 50-50 for me."*

2 Current trust level: Law enforcement and conservation groups

2a Good working relationship

Law enforcement felt that while the relationship between conservation groups and law enforcement is generally good, it is based on a working relationship or systems-based trust. This is a distinct difference between baseline trust because officers feel the trust built is a requirement of working with across organizations versus their individual trust level.

- *"Well, I believe it's a perfect rapport between conservation groups and law enforcement because we got to work hand in hand."*
- *"That's a good question. I think the trust is there. I don't think the trust has ever been breached, to my knowledge. So I think it's a comfortable and a good working relationship, as far as between both entities. That's my personal opinion."*
- *"For the department itself, we have had a very, very good cordial working relationship with the NGO's."*

2b Differences by department and conservation group

Similar to fishers, law enforcement made the researcher aware that the responses received will vary by different departments in law and enforcement and the specific conservation group.

- *"I also think there's variability between the different environmental groups as well. For example, you'd be familiar with the TNC's approach that'd be different from the Bahamas National Trust"*

and BREEF for example. And so depending on the group you'll get a different reaction and it actually, I think it varies tremendously based on the level of engagements as opposed to these groups coming in and saying, this is what it should be, I'll have to do this for you to engage and to get their feedback, interact. They can seem more like a partnership....."

- *"It has merged with that to some extent, but then in other instances, they are pretty far apart. It depends on which department you're working with."*
- *As mentioned, these minor differences can have a major effect on various situations from individuals to the law summarizing the entire community involvement. This communication barrier has a clear impact on various groups which all need to be on one accord for both parties to be understood and build trust.*

3 Historic breakdowns in trust

3b Communication style

Participants spoke about instances where conservation groups tend to come to their islands and tell them about an agenda or project without a true desire to gain local buy-in and knowledge. Participants also mentioned the academic communication style that is used when conservation groups try to explain a particular project. It appears to some participants that the communication style reflects a lack of listening and an indifference to their needs and values in exchange for conservation success. Here is what the participants expressed verbally:

- *"You got to really talk to them simple and clean so they understand that. So that is maybe lost communication because some time you have a professor come and he thinks he is talking to college students, which we not. We're smart but we're not all of that book smart. But if you talk to us in the right way, we would understand exactly what you're saying."*
- *"They were not listening to what we were saying. They were coming and telling us, "Oh, we going to mark this off and conserve this area. We don't want you to go there. We don't want you to go here"."*
- *"And then, I think, also what happened, is that, sometimes the persons who would have come down to pass on the message, their attitude was pretty much, I'm just here going through the motions. I'm really not into what you think this is. And it's been exhibited. So, a lot of times, you'll see the persons, they will come. But then by virtue of the attitude or the actions of the persons who are hosting the event, that completely can skew their view, and then the attitude is not good, and then it just goes down from there."*

3c Turtles and sharks

Turtles and sharks came up in every single focus group at one point or another. There is a strong memory around the historic ban of killing sharks and turtles. For turtles, there is a strong connection to local culture and food. For sharks, there is mention of both cultural and monetary loss. Both species are spoken about as a disruption to the current ocean ecology. Turtles are destroying vegetation and are a food source for sharks while sharks are making the oceans extremely dangerous for fishers. Participants also felt that the decision to ban turtles was based on global emotions from conservation agendas and not based on science for population size. The process of banning turtles or sharks also sets the tone for trust in how conservation organizations set future policies. Respondents express their concern and mention a cycle of events that continue depleting their trust in environmental groups to improve their situation. They tend to repeat the same unresolved issues.

- *"I think overall it's improved but there are some touchy issues I think sometimes drive the requirement. Like the whole issue of- about being able to harvest turtles whatsoever. Also being able to kill the sharks. Some of those issues are touchy and they would feel that the conservation groups prefer those measures to stay in place. And so, I think those lead to tension, and there's a contention between them advocating, about the department, or the government should do to manage those resources."*
- *"Let me tell you why. You start hearing, "Oh, the turtles are so important to the water." They start coming up on the TV. Two months down the road, no turtle. Oh, the sharks, the sharks are being depleted. Depleted? Two months down the road, no sharks! Now you starting to hear the conchs. Two months down the road, I still looking at that TV to see when they coming, because it will be coming. It might sound bad, but ain't got nothing to do with it. Who's doing it? It has to be the conservationist."*
- *"The government of Bahamas went ahead and banned the catch of turtles. Which in, and from the island, if one turtle get catched, that feed a majority of household."*
- *"Thursday I even spared some fish. It's a good thing I not scared diver, I got to feed the shark. I can tell you the truth. I spare fish, I sent them up. My captain didn't see them because he never see them until after they throw the second fish in the boat. And when I had to feed the third fish to the shark."*
- *"Earlier I'm sure, when he was speaking, had to have had turtle in the back of his mind. So something culturally that The Bahamas, in general, has been taking advantage of for years and years and years, at least on a personal level, and then to all of a sudden, because that species is suffering and having issues throughout all the parts of the world, they just came in and said, "Boom. Sorry, that's it." That's a pretty good example right there. But they didn't ask. I don't know that we had ... We definitely didn't have focus groups because I was never part of one of them, on what we should do with regard to that particular species or how we can do it. Now, they are specifically talking about the green turtle."*
- *They are now overwhelming and taking over and turtle grass is dying out ... Or it used to be turtle grass. So you just don't want those types of things railroaded or rammed down your throat, so to speak."*
- *"If that's our bread and butter and you've taken that away from us before when we go we could turtle, shark, all of these stuff when we come in, we good! He said \$800, we make \$1500! Now you got us making little scraps, and you want to regulate and take that away from us."*

3d Lack of full community engagement in decision making

Focus group attendees felt that conservation groups only engage with a few people and don't get a full community perspective before making their decisions. Because of a lack of understanding of fisher schedules, many fishers would be out on their boats for the season or would have to choose between going out on the water or engaging in a community meeting. They feel that conservation groups are not engaging fully with the diversity of views in a community. There is also the feeling that decisions are made behind closed doors without communicating with communities.

- *"Sometimes without contacting or consulting a certain community and the community was striving and moving along quite fine without government intervention. But the first time when The Nature Conservancy came and they kind of put a roadblock on our community in some ways. Everybody now has this discussion to say "What is this group? Who gives this group certain power? Or certain rights to stop me from going here or from going there?""*

- *“Okay, so I'm thinking that one of the barriers that we have is probably communication. I think groups tend to talk in their group to discuss things within their group, and even make decisions within their group before other places are involved, so there is the best communication of what the agenda is.”*
- *“And then sometime they feel like, okay, you're trying to take it away from them. It's just if you can have more community meetings, and reach out to them and let them know what is what, and what you are trying to makeup, it'll be better. Because I know about that meeting, especially with the parks, it's a very delicate topic, and it just needed more community input.”*

3e “Taking” areas for conservation

Respondents discussed the feeling that conservation groups simply want to take areas away for conservation purposes without considering the fishers and communities. This portrays conservation groups as wanting to take land and jobs away from Bahamians without considering the cultural impact.

- *“When you bring conservation in because of the times changing, very few consider the culture in which this change will affect. Most conservation is just wholly and solely by numbers and opinions more than a connection to understand, what culture are you trying to change? And when you're trying to change culture, that causes a lot of negative feedback because you're not going to take some of the four communities in this country where their grocery store is the sea and say, “Well, now, it's illegal for something that your grandparents lived off of to take,” period. All you create is honest people will now become dishonest. It's one thing to regulate, but it's another thing to make it illegal and that's where a big disconnect as far as proper conservation.”*
- *“Where they come in and they just block off certain areas from you fishing without educating people....”*
- *“My biggest breakdown after speaking with so many other fishers in the community is that it seems the conservation was taking so much away from our resources. It's limiting the fishermen from making an honest living because that was all we do, and then conservation came in and they set up tarps and all the other different stuff. So most of the fishermen got kind of disgruntled after that.”*

3f Being “told” what to do

This goes along with communication style but was brought out separately by some respondents. In this case, people specifically felt that conservation groups just come into the islands and tell them what is going to happen instead of effectively engaging or listening. This has also led to a decrease in trust with conservation groups.

- *“They were not listening to what we were saying. They were coming and telling us, “Oh, we going to mark this off and conserve this area. We don't want you to go there. We don't want you to go here.””*
- *“BNT will come with us in a meeting. Everything is already signed and put out for the fisherman's supposed to obey, but they “bringing it to the stakeholders”. They literally talk to us and ... We literally, like we just have to go with the flow. And at the last meeting, not say talking about The Nature Conservancy, but how did you ... Okay, how would you feel if I came to your job and say, “You got one more month to do your job. You need to find another job.” That basically what they tell us in other words. “”*

- *“You see, that's the problem right there with the Department of Fisheries with the Nature Conse- I wouldn't say the Nature, I would say these environmentalists or whatever you want to call it. They get together and they decide what's best for the fisherman and fishing grounds. And they don't come to the island to the fisherman who's out there fishing every day, they don't get no input from them. They only come there and tell them, “Okay guys, this is what they decided to do and you guys just going to have to live it. Simple as that.” I have a problem with that.”*

3g Frequency of visits

Respondents talked about the frequency of visits. There is a feeling that conservation groups don't come frequently enough. They may see certain groups once a year or even worse they only see them when they want something from the fishers or to block off certain areas. This lack of frequency in interactions is related to their decrease in trust with conservation organizations because they don't know what is going on with them until they show up to push an agenda.

- *“When they needed something, they came. When they're looking to expand the parks, they come and talk and they ask questions and they leave. But for a very long time, we had no connection with regard to it and no voice. They ignore us in the cries that we continually put out over the last 20-plus years. We've been suffering when it comes to foreign and domestic poaching. So I think right there is the matter.”*
- *“And when you're just trying to meet a quota for whatever conservation group you represent of your yearly to-do list per se that you want to get done. And so you go, “Hey, could we come up and talk about whatever?” But the decisions when they're actually presented to government or policies changed, we hear after they're already done. We're not a part of the conversation.”*
- *“Hard to say. Like I said, we don't see none of them. Not for the last 10 years. That don't make the slightest bit of sense because if they only go out once every three years, what are they going to be doing in that three year?”*

3h Too many marine parks

This discussion is not only about conservation taking areas away from fishers, but also includes the concern that conservation groups continue to expand marine parks without being able to fully enforce the laws on the current marine parks. For respondents, this shows that it is only important that quotas are met, and that the actual protection of resources is not the top priority. This furthers the perception that there are some secret agendas. Respondents felt that conservation groups should focus on fully implementing the protection plans for the marine parks already on the books.

- *“They're putting in too many parks. You can't fish. They seem to pick the best areas that we used to fish to make into a nice park and then you can't go there no more.”*
- *“One, they want to introduce the parks. And they all over the Bahamas.”*
- *“The thing we don't support is wanting to do a land grab based on a quota when you can't manage the ones that you have. Or police the ones you have, but yet you want to grab more and restrain Bahamians from using those when you can't manage the ones you have now.”*

4 Examples of building trust

4a Working alongside fishers and law enforcement

Both fishers and law enforcement pointed to examples of conservation groups working alongside them to accomplish goals as the primary reason some type of trust had been built.

- *“Yes, I also work with them too. That's why I kind of... I wouldn't say I'm educated, but that's why I kind of agree with some of the things they come up with. Because then I can... They kind of thought me and showed me some things, why it's important to have Nature Conservancy.”*
- *“So just being out there and seeing fishermen with this equipment tells me that the work that they were doing, NGOs, definitely was assisting me.”*
- *“And so partnering with them and looking at the work would have done after Dorian, even though their office was completely destroyed, they're still on the ground working. They've been bringing in scientists to assess the reefs, some of the marine parks. They've been doing that on their own, you know?”*

4b Educating and raising awareness

Both groups pointed out that when NGOs took the time to educate and raise awareness, they were also able to build trust.

- *“My biggest breakdown after speaking with so many other fishers in the community is that it seems the conservation was taking so much away from our resources. It's limiting the fishermen from making an honest living because that was all we do, and then conservation came in and they set up tarps and all the other different stuff. So most of the fishermen got kind of disgruntled after that.*
- *“But after being educated about why conservation came into place, it helped me to understand that it would increase my way of living by not destroying some things. So that was one of my breakdowns and one of my benefits from it.”*
- *“I believe, now more than ever, I believe they're starting to communicate more because I think the awareness has been raised as to the threat on our resources in terms of fisheries.”*

4c Utilizing campaigns

The use of campaigns for particular initiatives seems to be a term that resonates with fishers and law enforcement. They can remember these campaigns and the ones that were mentioned were considered to build trust. This may also connect to raising awareness and education about conservation issues.

- *“Once they got the information from the fishermen, they launched a campaign based on what the fishermen told them-“*
- *“But they were receptive, and so on Abaco, I could safely say that the fishermen throughout the island really partnered with Friends of the Environment and their campaigns.”*

4d Saving the lobsters

Again, while this is related to also raising awareness, there appears to be something about the approach taken to protect lobsters that were well received. Though conversations didn't explore specific reasons.

- *“..was the most important aspect saving the lobster fishery, which was the harvesting of the undersized lobster. They did workshops throughout the island bringing awareness.”*
- *“They did some sample surveys concerning fishermen asking them, “What did they feel was the most threatening thing to the lobster? Which is the most important fishery.” Once they got the information from the fishermen, they launched a campaign based on what the fishermen told them.”*

5 Knowledge of TNC

5a Nothing

Most of the respondents for both fishers and law enforcement admitted to not knowing anything about TNC before this specific meeting. Some were able to speak to these questions, but more persons in the focus groups felt they didn't know about TNC.

- *"The Nature Conservancy, no, I honestly can't say I've heard too many things, or it's rare, if anything, that I've actually heard something about your group."*

5b Preserve nature

Some focus groups respondents mentioned that The Nature Conservancy exists to preserve nature. This is what they heard about TNC before ever meeting someone in person or working alongside them on a project.

- *"Even when you think of preserving, your mind go on many things, even right down to... You want to save something what you like what you is eating for tomorrow. You put that in a Ziploc bag and you put that in the fridge. You keeping that problem for the next day. It's basically the same. The name says it all, you know? The name says it all."*
- *"I can say that before I met anyone from the Nature Conservancy, what I heard was students who were interested in preserving marine resources and anything that appeared to be diminishing from our resources those person in school interested in trying to preserve what we have before it's extinct and I thought that was so unique because the public at large does not care if we don't have any more..."*

5c Have conservation programs

Respondents pointed to their perception that The Nature Conservancy has a multitude of conservation programs and that they have programs that are diverse in their approach ranging from direct protection to working with youth.

- *"And programs, I see they put forward especially at the schools, the high schools. They did about the last [inaudible 00:24:14] and the crawfish. Had a lot about conservation. I heard very good things about them."*
- *"...some of the programs that were initiated through Atlantis. You hear about those because they're pretty much always on some community program or you see bumps and commercials on YouTube, where they're talking about these. So, I'm familiar with those programs."*

5d Not from The Bahamas

Respondents referred to The Nature Conservancy, as an organization, as coming in from somewhere else. In most cases making the point that TNC did not originate from The Bahamas. This statement was highlighted more after the interview was over when attendees asked a TNC employee that accompanied the researcher if they were from The Bahamas.

- *"Well, I think for the department, well there was no form of relationship or prior to. I don't recall, again, prior to the introduction to The Bahamas, [inaudible 00:34:38] work, or being engaged in any way with TNC. It was only after they came to The Bahamas."*

- *“They just make money from it too. Where that money goes? Do you know that they own or they control more land than what people actually live in The Bahamas?”*

5e Good things

For those that had heard about TNC in the past, some felt that what they heard were primarily good things in support of TNC. This may have come from an ex-employee or from someone that worked with them directly.

- *“So, I heard a lot of good stuff about them. I endorse what they're doing, I encourage them until we as officers need to continuously enforce the public at large who are not educated in the fact that we are just trying to preserve what they have before it's all gone. And so I had heard a lot about them before I even met people from the Nature Conservancy.”*
- *“That's the most I heard because Community Member A first and give us some really good insights about y'all guys. And thumbs up to Community Member A for that”*
- *“I heard very good things about them. They was doing an excellent job where they worked. So, I recommend them for the community and Bahamas as a whole.”*

6 First time hearing about TNC

6a Individual people (Former TNC-Bahamas Staff D, Former TNC-Bahamas Staff D, Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A, Community Member A)

Focus group participants seemed to hear directly from individuals. These range from current TNC employees, ex-TNC employees, and community members that have worked directly with TNC.

- *“No it's not my first time, I think I've known about the conservancy for over 20 years. Yeah. [crosstalk 00:17:48]. What's the name? It was...Former TNC-Bahamas Staff D”*
- *“Anything that I learned about them was since Former TNC-Bahamas Staff D joined them and our relationship has developed over the years.”*
- *“Myself, no bad, a bit of good because quite a bit of good. I think you might be familiar with Former TNC-Bahamas Staff D?”*
- *“For me, it was when Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A came with another guy who did a presentation...”*

6b Television

Respondents mentioned hearing about TNC through media advertisements. Mostly on television and online. Sometimes they just described hearing about TNC on the news.

- *“Well I heard about them before, they had fliers and they used to have advertisements and stuff on the media on TV and so forth.”*
- *“A couple of years ago. I heard about it from news. Yeah the media.”*

6c Work groups

Some fishers and law enforcement mentioned they had not heard about TNC until they were enrolled in a TNC working group.

- *“So I'm actually 40. Thank you. But I was lucky enough to be a part of the spiny lobster work group. So for me, that would have been my first connection with the Nature Conservancy because they were also a part of that.”*

7 Trust in TNC funding

7a Lack of knowledge in funding sources

When asked how much they trust TNC's funding like other NGOs, most people first responded by asking the question of how TNC is funded. They felt that they had no idea where TNC or other NGOs received their funding.

- *“So, we'd like to know who is funding you in order to be able to trust you...”*
- *“No, because see we don't know where the money's coming from because most of us know that there are some big people in the industry, right.”*
- Interviewee 2: *I don't know how they're funded.*
Interviewee 1: *Exactly. I was just going to say that.*

7b Funder agendas and influence

Many of the discussions about trust in funding seemed to be based on a concern about the hidden agendas of the funders themselves. Many of the fishers and law enforcement simply didn't understand the reasons these funders or individuals were donating money. Fishers were more skeptical in this category than law enforcement. While law enforcement resigned to just feeling they had to trust the political process of how TNC receives their money. The assumption for them was that TNC would have to show their paper trail to the government and thus the government would handle any discrepancies.

- *“...and I strongly feel that if man give you something, he want something in return, so nobody's ever found an organization without looking for something in return.”*
- *“No, because when you say nonprofit, I figure you got money, enough money, you like a Donald Trump, you got enough money to do what you want to do. You're just taking time out now to give back.”*
- *“You can't guard against crooked people, they could be in any organization. But, overall I would say there's general trust in the protocols and The Nature Conservancy. Having learned what I have about them since they first started, I consider them trustworthy.”*
- *“Sometimes people that fund you forces your hand. They have an agenda and they usually come now to small nations and stuff like that, and as you say there's a lot of, "If you do this, we will give you this. No, we want to give you this and you got this. We got this money for you, but you have to ban the killing of turtles." So, we'd like to know who is funding you in order to be able to trust you, because they might have a hidden agenda.”*

8 Past work with TNC

8a Haven't worked with TNC

The majority of participants stated that they had not worked with TNC in the past. However, they did mention BREEF and The Bahamas National Trust. Below are responses from the few fishers that had directly interacted with TNC.

8b Conch

For those that had worked with TNC, a few mentioned working with them directly on the project to protect the conch or on campaigns to raise awareness of conch protection.

- *“We did a project on conch in July. That was very educational because it gave you a chance to be able to understand more about the conch. We see the conch every day. For me, I didn't know that look at that difference between what you're taking out and the gut, what we call the gut. And so that was a good experience.”*

8c Various projects

Some of the focus group attendees did not name a specific project such as the conch but instead kept it general and said they worked on various projects with TNC or training that may have been sponsored or taught by TNC.

- *“Yeah, some of their projects that they would have asked me to assist them with.”*
- *“I do believe they work as, I don't remember exactly but I remember that course we did, you were there too?”*
- *“They was trying to educate fishermen about poisoned crawfish.”*

8d Interviews

The respondents remembered that TNC had conducted surveys on various islands. They couldn't always state it was specifically TNC that conducted the surveys but felt strongly that TNC was involved. Some of those that worked with TNC on this project specified they assisted in some way to bring the groups together.

- *“Yeah, just making sure ... I mean, she would have planned to say, “We're going to be there next month. We really wanted to interview some fishermen in the north and in the south.” I would make contact with fishermen who I know would be receptive to assisting, just to make sure everything was set up.”*

8e Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A

Some respondents specifically spoke to working with Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A as their experience working with TNC. In this case, they may have not been working on a specific project, but they consider their interactions with Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A as “working with TNC”.

- *“I think that poses a challenge. I think since meeting Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A, I think she is serious about what it is she wants to see happen and working closely with the fishermen and what have you. Moving forward, I see it being very beneficial.”*
- *“One of them was working with Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A, with queen conch project, where they wanted to interview some fishermen throughout the island, and so I assisted in that regard.”*

9 TNC's performance quality

9a Pretty good to excellent

When asked about TNC's ability to meet their goals, most participants felt TNC's scores as pretty good to excellent. This is even from those in the focus groups that had not worked directly with TNC in the past.

- *"I think they are pretty good. I mean sometimes the shortfall is on our end, not living up to what we agreed or being able to follow through, but by based on what I've observed with them, they seem to be pretty organized and pretty good at meeting their goals. It is apparent to me that they received training on organizing leading, interacting with people, and setting goals, meeting them, segregating how much time they can spend on different projects."*
- *"Very good, they do an excellent job. Very good. And they're very well sought out. They have meetings on time, they have a schedule, they have agenda, they stick to it, they're doing an excellent job."*

9b Don't know

The rest of the respondents simply stated that they don't know, but nobody gave a negative response to the question.

10 TNC's Integrity

10a Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A

Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A came up the most when asked about TNC's integrity. Most talked about their direct interaction with Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A.

- *"...and that might be because I don't know how they work at other places, but most of the folks that I've met here that work with Conservancy are very good folks like Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A. I think integrity there's quite a bit in that."*
- *"Not to my knowledge of anything dealing with The Nature Conservancy that they have put forth for what they would like to see. I think Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A and her crew ... and I keep referring to Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A because that's who we recognize in Nature Conservancy here. They've done or stood up and held to everything that they said."*

10b Don't know

Once again, the rest of the respondents stated that they didn't know how to answer the question because they lacked interactions with TNC. However, nobody gave a negative response to this question.

11 TNC's understanding of Bahamian culture

11a Yes they do

When asked about TNC's understanding of Bahamian culture most of the respondents stated that they believe TNC does indeed understand Bahamian culture. Many of this comes from their perception that TNC employees are Bahamian.

- *"Yes, I do believe they do."*
- *"Yes. Very much so because again, we've been fortunate that basically, on the support staff from the leadership, are locals who have an appreciation for things that are Bahamian and our culture."*

- *“Yes. We answer that in terms of just knowing that all of the employees that they have right here are from here. I think they definitely understand Bahamian culture and the difficulties associated with dealing with Bahamians, you know?”*

11b Hope they do

For those that were not sure, most of the responses stated that they “hope they do”. While they couldn’t say that TNC did fully understand Bahamian culture, they didn’t want to believe they lacked understanding.

- *“I hope they do if they're working here.”*
- *“I would hope so, Nature Conservancy being Bahamian, I hope, is it?”*

11c Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A

To confirm their statement that TNC must understand Bahamian culture, some respondents spoke directly of Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A and her connection to The Bahamas.

- *Speaker 1: I feel like Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A does.*
Speaker 2: Yeah. She does.
- *“Yeah. I think they do. You got folks like Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A understands pretty well. She's born and bred.”*

12 Connection with TNC staff

12a No connection

The majority of respondents said they had no connection although all respondents had mentioned Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A’s name at some point earlier in the interview. This question was asked in such a way to see if they had any close friends or family that worked for TNC so it may not have sparked a need to call out Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A. However, some did and will be mentioned below.

12b Former TNC-Bahamas Staff D

One of the staff members that came up was Former TNC-Bahamas Staff D. Not just in this question but other places throughout the focus group responses. Most of the responses about Former TNC-Bahamas Staff D did come from law enforcement.

- *“And like Mr. Bethel would have mentioned Former TNC-Bahamas Staff D left his department and joined. She and I, we went to college together.”*
- *“Yeah, I pretty much know everybody. Former TNC-Bahamas Staff D worked in here.”*
- *“Yeah. Officer Former TNC-Bahamas Staff D. She left us, for us it was a great loss. We would have heard about TNC, mainly through her. In fact, that was the TNC's first introduction to the [crosstalk 00:32:56], she became the focal point.”*

12c Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A

Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A was mentioned by both fishers and law enforcement. However, more fishers than law enforcement seemed to have a connection with Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A.

- *“In fact, Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A, well, I only met her while she was working at the Nature Conservancy, but her parents are from Abaco.”*

- *“Yeah. She's actually a cousin of mine, and she got me hooked up with the Conservancy. Honestly, if I could, I'd let you know. I think Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A knows that, but I can't recall any negative at this point.”*

12d Current TNC-Bahamas Staff C

Current TNC-Bahamas Staff C came up as a person that is known at TNC. However, this was among law enforcement and not with fishers.

- *“I actually Current TNC-Bahamas Staff C now, I actually met her before she joined the Nature Conservancy because I originally met her when she was working for BREEF, yeah, with Casuarina McKinney-Lambert. That was where I first met her, and so, yeah, I pretty much know”*
- *“The young lady who heads it up now, Current TNC-Bahamas Staff C, she worked with us for a period or so. We've come to know each other, and I think a big part of the trust speaks to those former relationships that we would have had or developed when those individuals were working here.”*

12e Current TNC-Bahamas Staff B

Current TNC-Bahamas Staff B (also known as Current TNC-Bahamas Staff B or Current TNC-Bahamas Staff B) came up as a personal connection. As with Current TNC-Bahamas Staff C, Current TNC-Bahamas Staff B's name only came up with law enforcement.

- *“Well for me today, I think that relationship has been a very good one. One that we continue to build on. Just like Current TNC-Bahamas Staff B indicated, we're very much familiar with the faces and Current TNC-Bahamas Staff B who is a former officer of his department also.”*
- *“I'm sure I could send Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A, Current TNC-Bahamas Staff B, anyone of them an email and they're going to respond in a timely manner.”*

13 TNC's consideration of fisher values

13a Yes they do

When asked whether or not TNC considers fisher values in their decision making, the majority of respondents felt TNC does indeed consider their values.

- *“I'll say the same thing. I think Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A understands us and I think if she's speaking on our behalf, I think she does. Yeah. She's representing the Conservancy, so I'd say yeah, if she's dealing with it.”*
- *“Yeah, I think so. I mean, like I say for the short time, yeah. I think over the long term, we'll see...”*
- *“Yes, I would venture to say because they're Bahamians. They know our fishermen, especially in Abaco. Yeah, I think they definitely consider the fishermen, their perspective, their values, and their opinions.”*

14 TNC's consideration of law enforcement values

14a Hope they do

When asked if the respondents believe that TNC considers law enforcement values when making decisions, the majority of them stated that they “hoped” TNC considers their values.

- *"I would hope so."*
- *"I would hope they take them into consideration when it comes to forming policy. I think they should."*
- *"I just hope so."*

14b Yes they do

Other law enforcement felt that TNC did indeed have their values in mind when considering conservation actions. However, some of those comments were still stated with some hesitation.

- *"Well, they trying to preserve it so more likely they do. Yeah."*
- *"Yeah. I think that they would, as a matter of fact. Yeah. I think so, but they ought to if they're not doing it."*

15 Ease of contacting TNC

15a Phone, Google, Online, Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A, Current TNC-Bahamas Staff B, Email

When asked how they would contact TNC, if needed, the primary way people stated was to contact TNC by phone. They also mentioned Googling online, contacting Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A, and a few mentioned sending an email. The results of this section are lumped together because respondents listed them in single responses. Of the multiple responses, email was the least mentioned. Those that mentioned Current TNC-Bahamas Staff B's name were specifically law enforcement.

- *"As mentioned, shoot, I still have Miss Phillips' phone number. I have Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A's phone number and Current TNC-Bahamas Staff B's phone number. I have their emails contacts."*
- *"Get on the phone and call them. I'm sure I could send Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A, Current TNC-Bahamas Staff B, anyone of them an email and they're going to respond in a timely manner."*
- *"I guess, email, phones. I probably... If they're online, I'd go up there and go out and Google it or something like that."*
- *"Yeah I mean, we're not as bad as some people may think we are because everything now is at your fingertip or swipe of the phone so we'd google you up if it comes to that so I think we can find if we need to."*
- *"Google or Ms. Miaoulis"*
- *"Oh, like me, I probably, the first you got to do is try to look it up online."*

16 Knowledge of individual rights

16a Don't know or violence

When asked if they knew what actions they could take if they didn't approve of a particular action that negatively affected their livelihoods, most respondents didn't have a response. They felt a person wouldn't know what to do. However, in the same statement, they are likely to talk about violence

- *"Sometimes a regular human wouldn't know what to do so they would pick up their machete or something to try and drive them out."*

- *“So they won't know how to respond to something that negative only by violence rather than us coming together and making a letterhead or form some organization or something like that. We could do it but we ain't doing it yet.”*
- *“We'll try find a way around physical confrontation. Then if we can't then I just don't know”*
- *“Bahamian people are like this. What could we do? What could we do?”*
- *“You see, when people fool with my livelihood is trouble is going to happen.”*

16b Government/agencies

People did think of the government and other agencies as approaches to dealing with the issue. For law enforcement, they felt that their hands would be tied and that the government would be in charge of all concerns raised by law enforcement. For fishers, unless there was a formal group of fishers on the island, the government could be a source of help, but they're also appeared to be concern about dependency on the government. If the island had a fisher's association, they were more likely to think that the government could assist them in resolving the problem.

- *“See somebody has to know how to speak to the government agency or to Nature Conservancy to say we don't like this or this is what we going to do. Sometimes they cannot speak the language, so the only way they speak sometimes is by action.”*
- *“Let's be real about it. We can't sit back and expect the government to do everything, you know? Because the government ain't doing shit as it is. You understand what I'm talking about?”*
- *“We basically led by the mandate of the government, the administration of the day and what their priorities are. In the case of fisheries, every administration would come in with some priority areas. Our job as public officers or members of the Department of Marine Resources is to carry out their mandate. Now while we may not agree as technocrats, it is our job. While others may not agree, if the government is not so moved to reverse or change their position, it is our job.”*
- *“Before any consultation with the Department of Marine Resources, the agency with responsibility for management, the government made a decision which we are more or less mandated to follow.”*

16c Speak to the person in charge

This option was only provided by law enforcement and islands that appeared to have a formal group of representative fishers.

- *“You'll have a meeting and see what's going on. We talk about it and see what is what.”*
- *“You have a proper dialogue. If they have an agenda and it's going to affect our fishery, you would think if they have our best interests at heart, that they would, first and foremost, contact us and want to have an open dialogue explaining why, and then hearing our side on if we agree or disagree with what their views are.”*
- *“Well, I think first and foremost, you would need to educate yourself on what exactly they're doing. You have to understand what they're doing and why they're trying to do it. And then, of course, you would use the relationships that you've built, hopefully, to either work through it, possibly maybe not disband the whole thing, but I mean, I think that's what it comes down to. You'd have to sit down and discuss this whole thing, find out what the reasons are.”*

17 Rules or guidelines for TNC

17a Have meetings with everybody

When asked what rules or guidelines TNC should follow when entering into a community to discuss conservation, it was said by both law enforcement and fishers that TNC should do their best to include as many persons as possible in the initial meetings. Many of this surrounds the concern that fishers are out doing their work and aren't given the opportunity to participate.

- *"...and try to get all the guys together one time and one place."*
- *"And I'll say most of the fisherman guys on the island, we go on trips for two weeks, so if you guys coming up, then you could make preparations so that all of the fisherman boats will be in or everybody could be at the meeting one time, not just a few guys and then you still have majority of the guys out to sea and they're not getting no part of it, no meetings."*

17b Give advance notice and information

- This response seemed to be in line with the concern above that fishers need to be available to attend the meetings. There is also a desire to see more information provided before the meetings so that fishers do not feel bombarded with large amounts of information without the chance to digest and accurately respond.
- *"But we still have more guys going fishing on smaller boats what we call camping boats and stuff, so we'd like to get a heads up and Community Member A can make preparations, let everybody know that you guy's coming up so everybody could be in place. Everybody could voice their opinion and have a good meeting, you know?"*
- *"And you know what you're having an exam on, you can study a particular project. But if they're giving you exam and you don't know what they're giving on, they hit you by surprise. So, it's more about consultation, we are more open, be more ready and be more about helping."*

17c Contact superior

For law enforcement, they simply recommended that TNC follows the proper chain of command to set up meetings or if in any way it will take officers away from their day job.

- *"If it's going to involve our time, they have to contact our director expressing your interest in A, B, or C fisheries officer, and what your plan's all about. Because it may involve the time that I have to spend in my department so there has to be some clarity to the director or the minister before you can continue. Once you clear that with the officers on the island then proceed to the higher authorities as to what your interest are."*
- *"Right through headquarters in Nassau, my director, so they know what they intend to do, and how they require immigration assistance in the matter."*
- *"Well, any, let's say, interview or information it should be passed to I'll say our department head and then they'll filter it down to us."*

18 Barriers to enforcing fishery laws

18a Boats/Vessels

When asked about the barrier to enforcing fishery laws, the primary answer given across all law enforcement is the need for a boat or vessel. Some law enforcement officers had not been out in

months because they lack working boats. This comes up more in the results when asked about the needs of law enforcement.

- *“But it goes back to the resources are not there. If the first boats come, they have a large vessel, I think they have two of the smaller rafts. It's not enough to protect the southern border. Additionally, the type of boats that they have is not conducive to the type we already have here. We operate within the reef, these guys operate outside, the poachers operate outside. They don't have the resources.”*

18b Mismatched penalties

Officers were vocal that the penalties do not match the crime. Poachers seem to continue to return because they don't find the fines harsh enough. In other cases, officers felt that arresting local fishers was too harsh and that education and fines are more appropriate. However, officers are not able to give fines directly to fishers.

- *“Yeah, I think more, like you say, it's not enforcement and raising awareness of the threats. I don't think it's been even across the board with people who are being caught as a threat towards our fishing industry. I think more attention... We're quicker to penalize and realize what the local fishermen doing, who have a right to fish here. For instance, if someone is being caught poaching or whatever or causing a real damage, I think they just get a slap on the hand.”*
- *“...but the people don't really pay any mind to it, because some of the laws are on the book from way back that in which the fine may be three dollars.”*
- *“You have a whole crew, [inaudible 00:34:55] and get caught for poaching with all kinds of fish. And you just give them a fine and send them back home and then they come back again.”*
- *“With the same vessel. Even if you confiscate the vessel you still have to pay to depot. So we pay more than their fine. And then they come right back again, they recycle the same guys back over again and then they go on a different boat. Back for round two. So like I said, stricter penalties reform some, some changed legislation, legislation change, and that's like how they're doing now with the ticketing.”*

19 Law enforcement needs

19a More officers

When asked about the needs of the law enforcement, across the focus groups officers mentioned the need for more officers. Without the bodies, they felt it would be impossible to enforce laws at the scale of The Bahamas.

- *“We could've used easily two officers in each one of those communities. We could do with two or three officers. We have an officer there now, but two more officers easily.”*
- *“We've already gotten approval from the Cabinet of the Bahamas for the appointment of new officers who will be deployed throughout the family islands and we got nine new ones here just January, last month. So it's a work in progress much more than we've seen in recent years, but we're moving towards that goal.”*
- *“I think personnel we need much more officers than we have now in order to police our resources with any type of... If we had the personnel, the equipment... we could do pretty well then.”*

19b Boats/vessels

If money were no object, officers would like to receive more boats in order to do their job properly. Some discussion would need to be had regarding the size and speed of these boats as that matters significantly depending on the type of fishery activity they are enforcing.

- *“Grand Cay, from central Abaco, I drive to the northern end, 60 miles. Grand Cay by boat is an hour in a speed boat, so it's really isolated. Yeah, yeah. So better to have something there instead of having to go.”*
- *“I'd really invest in a boat, so I could get out on the water more. Because I know there's a lot of activity on the waters around. I would like to get out on the water. Because I'm here in the office, and I move up and down. But when it comes to fishing, there's a lot more things can be caught when out on the water, rather than just being on the land.”*
- *“Because you will never have enough official boats. You can never be everywhere at all times. We've all experienced the fact that, a lot of times, fishermen see stuff that law enforcement will love to interact with and deal with. And sometimes, a lot of times, we catch on to it and deal with it, but there's always that one or two that slips through the cracks.”*

19c Training

Officers would like to receive more or better training on how to handle difficult situations on the water that could lead to violence. Officers would like to also increase training with firearms with hopes to have more access to them when they are in dangerous situations on the water.

- *“It's just a matter of training. We have police officers that train. We have defense force officers. We now have of customs officer [inaudible 00:55:58] different port. In my opinion, they deal in less hassles than I would dealing with any of the fisheries offices, because when I go to that dock there and stop somebody, it's almost certain he has a weapon. That's his tool of trade.”*
- *“With unlimited resources, it's so much more we could do. Things like just simply monitoring vessels, vessel monitoring systems, radar or drones and the like, the resources to train and acquire the persons, and even simply being communication.”*
- *“So it's never once going to be the same persons, but if they come in and train them properly, what is expected, what is incumbent, what they can and cannot do.”*
- *“I think also in a lot of departments, training is a big issue because in most of these departments, sometimes we run into the life-threatening issues, and in some cases, I think even the issuance of firearms, and firearms training. Of course, we know that in order to be in possession of these things, you have to have proper training, but it is something that I think we need to begin taking a real look at.”*

20 Role of law enforcement in fisheries

20a Enforcing the laws

For many respondents it seemed clear that the primary role of law enforcement is to enforce the laws that are currently in place.

- *“They have the right laws; they just have to have people there to enforce it.”*
- *“Enforce the laws, so if anybody's in violation, especially with fishing or whatever ... Just enforce the laws.”*

- *“I think there's a lot of laws out there regulating stuff. I think if we can enforce the laws, regulations that we have on the books now, as well as looking into changing some, I think it's presently being looked into by a lot of the conservation groups, marine resources.”*

20b Educating fishers

Law enforcement also felt very strongly their role is to educate fishers on the current policies. They would prefer to do this instead of giving harsh penalties in some cases with the hopes that the knowledge will deter the fishers from repeating the offense.

- *“They don't know. How could you go and lock them up as no one ever educated them and teach them? So, our role is to really educate them and if you find those persons in those infraction again, then I can see you enforcing and placing them before the courts.”*
- *“The law I think, all the law deal with the fish. Like the fishery officer, okay, if you're breaking the law that's their time to let you know. I didn't come here to lock you up, I come here to tell you that this is your land, but you got to take care of it. So, don't let me come here again and meet you here and you're breaking the law. So, I'm not going to tell it to you twice. Education is the key.”*
- *“Along the lines of conservation enforcement also plays a role along that line. Because we-enforcement is involved in educating. Public educating. You're explaining to general public as to the relative abundance of the stock or the lack of rather abundance of stocks, but as your stock is being depleted and then the necessity for enforcement to play a role if, if you can't make the adjustment.”*

21 Actions to build trust: Law enforcement

21a Provide education on policies and species that are protected

Officers requested that conservation groups spend more time with them educating about the conservation practices and specific protected species. Their perception is that by conservation taking the time to educate them, it helps them do their job better and in return builds trust. They also believe it will improve enthusiasm.

- *“You have also, well it's really more of our, as I say, education awareness issue. Where when it comes to queen conch, it's a touchy topic with local fishers and local conservation.”*
- *“I believe educating law enforcement what they do, meeting with us, understanding what we do is a way to improve the trust. We work together, basically.”*
- *“Yeah. I think it just boils down to awareness. For example, if you're in a department that you're looking for drugs and ammunition, you may jump more to that because that is what you are looking for; though you may not appreciate the conservation part of it because it's not something that you have much interaction with. So you may get more enthusiasm from that sort of stuff as it's defined or as opposed to an officer who is just getting into the feel of this on the periphery the conservation.”*

21b Share resources and information

Respondents in the law enforcement focus groups would like to see a better sharing of resources (boats, staff, etc.) and information. Building a system of resource and information sharing would improve trust with law enforcement.

- *"I believe that just to work along with them to share resources, share information would make it a lot more ideal. We don't get [inaudible 00:13:26] offices, and do all their work, and they all do ours, but if we can share information and share resources, it would be a whole lot better for everybody, I suspect."*

21c Keep them aware of conservation projects

Similar to providing education, they would like for conservation groups to raise the overall awareness of law enforcement before, during, and after conservation activities and policies. This will help them feel more connected to conservation organizations and their initiatives.

- *"Even in terms of seminars, more seminars, and stuff to raise the awareness because when we go, we go out with a purpose, to patrol."*
- *"Let's take crawfish, just for an example, right? Now, everybody knows what size crawfish, but just more awareness."*

21d Increase general interactions with law enforcement

Law enforcement would like for conservation groups to increase interactions with them so that when policies are created their voices can be heard. There is a feeling that there is not alignment and that is due to a lack of interaction. There is also a feeling that conservation groups are only dealing with one department and not all of the different departments.

- *"Now, we might be more liberal than what we would allow the fishers to do. Whereas conservation groups, they might be much stricter. They say you can take much fewer resources, or this fishery needs to be closed forever. And so, although we have very similar goals of conservation, I think there could be better trust if conservation groups would work more in line with what we're thinking."*
- *"And so for example, going back to the turtles above sharks, I think the departments' opinion was that subsistence fishing should have been allowed at first, then maybe you close that down as well. But at the end of the day there was pressure up to just close the fishery completely that, that is what resulted. So, although we had a common goal of protecting sharks for very, very good reasons, we didn't necessarily agree that such draconian measures were needed. I don't know if that would have a perfect alignment of our goals, but I think that is where we could build trust and we know they're working towards the same thing. That they're not just simply seeking to close down and stop fisherman, those types of things."*

22 Role of conservation groups in fisheries

22a Education

Focus group participants pointed out that education was the primary role of conservation groups in the fisheries. Specific education was not often mentioned but hinted at educating fishers, law enforcement, and the general public about conservation issues in The Bahamas.

- *"I think their best role is as an advisory position on the educational front. And then, of course, if they have an agenda or something specific that they want to work towards, it's going to come from those two things; education and advising people and telling people why it is."*
- *"I think their key role is education. I'm speaking based on [inaudible 00:47:52] at the workshop. They really give you a lot of education and a lot of stuff you don't know. It's always more you can*

learn from them because they are professional people that really study this so they just impart that knowledge and information on to fishery officers and some of that we bring back into our community.”

- *“My still total observation of any kind of conservation group or national trust and all that other good stuff is just educating people about what the true value of their resources are and I think that would help bring a lot of things back because some people don't understand by moving a juvenile group or juvenile conch this is what it does. So it all boils down to one thing, educating people on what the destruction are and what the benefits are.”*

22b Engage and assist government

Participants felt that conservation groups had a lot of leverage with the government and should use it to bring their voices to the government on issues about the fisheries. Conservation groups should also be sharing their resources with the government to make them more effective in the conservation space.

- *“I also think that the Nature Conservancy can be an advocate. Once they listen to the needs of the community, especially those of us in the fishing industry, and seeing what we practice, what we preach, and that also, we know when we talk. I think the Nature Conservancy could be a big advocate as far as anything that involves ... Like if you've gone to Spanish Wells to deal with the fishing industry, I think they could be a big voice on behalf of the people of The Bahamas.”*
- *“Assist the government in controlling those areas either by boat, by drones, by whatever. Whatever means necessary.”*
- *“...so they make recommendations to the government.”*

22c Sustaining the fishing industry

Some participants felt that conservation groups should play a role in sustaining the fishing industry overall. They believe that should be part of the purpose of conservation groups that work with marine resources and set certain standards.

- *“...they have to put some measures in place in order to sustain the fishing industry, so they play a vital role, also with law enforcement.”*
- *“They pretty much supply the scientific information to the government for them to make decisions, with regards to either opening or closing of seasons, lengthening the times of seasons.”*

22d Provide scientific information

Providing scientific data seemed to be a powerful role that conservation groups like The Nature Conservancy can provide to help convince fishers, law enforcement, and the government.

- *“So it may be that they need to bring the science, but they also need to show the numbers.”*
- *“And last thing, it should be also based on science, because you could look at the [inaudible 00:40:10] get bigger, [inaudible 00:40:11] get smaller. And the next thing need to be regulated too is about the spawning of the crawfish. I noticed that they need to do more research into that too because I noticed that sometimes crawfish spawn straight through the year. They need to look at that also because that's about conservation.”*

22e Create regulations

The perception is that conservation groups can push through regulations. For this reason, they believe that conservation groups should create regulations to help protect the fishing industry.

- *“I would say you got to bring it to the table what y'all's role is as well what y'all do. I mean, I know it's to conserve, but you need sizes and laws. You need regulations on fishing.”*
- *“Regulating the whole system. Because then these guys are taking more fish. Like the fish is going to decline.”*

23 Actions to build trust: Fishers

23a Spend time with fishers

Fishers would like for conservation groups to spend time with fishers outside of making requests. Get to know their trade and understand how they fish for a living. Through this process, they feel they can provide more input, and if they feel like they are being listened to and in the process build trust.

- *“To piggyback on what he's saying, building trust is we getting to know them a little bit better and them getting to know us rather than being strangers. That builds a whole lot of trust because if I know you and you know me and you know what I stand for, you know what you stand for. Then it builds better working relationship with both sides.”*

23b Clearly articulate areas slated for conservation

Fishers are concerned about the looming threat of cutting off areas for conservation. Without education about the benefits of this process, they believe it is going to simply hurt their livelihoods.

- *“Yeah, please don't take away and try for some conservation here [crosstalk 00:07:41]. Listen to me son, is that Sandy Point, listen to me [crosstalk 00:07:46] do not let them put conservation.”*

23c More education on projects

Fishers felt that they need more education about projects to make decisions. When conservation groups swoop in and show a few slides, it doesn't give them a chance to grasp the concept. The concern is that conservation groups had many months or years to think about this and they expect fishers to understand in a 2-hour presentation.

- *“I think they need to educate the people first on what they ... what their plans are, what their intents are. Get the input from the people, because like I say, for small guys like us, who fish on a small scale, if you come in and try to take away from us our only livelihood, that's not going to be good. That's going to cause problems.”*
- *“That's my theory on it. Educating the fishermen, and they the help. They the main help of preserving anything.”*
- *“That's why back to theory of even educating the fishermen is great. Which in some of the fishermen are educated and don't even know it.”*

23d Get input before making decisions

Some of the fishers felt that conservation groups lose trust because they make decisions before coming to the islands to discuss the approach. Building trust would mean talking to fishers in the idea formation stage or asking for their opinion instead of saying that you have the solution.

- *“...that was an area wanted to be protected, and united with the fish there. So, I just think sometimes it's best to have feelers on the ground before you decide on those other things, so you know...”*
- *“So it's more about not making decisions before coming to the community and talking with the various fishers”*
- *“Yes. Before they make decisions, they should come in and gather input from us.”*

23e Give resources and jobs as alternatives

Fishers felt that if conservation groups are going to take away their livelihoods then they should compensate them for not being able to provide for their family. This could mean providing jobs from tourism or direct money as alternatives to compensate. It could also mean finding a way to get tourism money to reinvest in fishers.

- *“One way to build trust, also ... the fact that this is a tourist destination so they can bring in the money. You know that. Conservation groups don't care just about themselves. First, you got to replace the money.”*
- *“We done get mash-up with the hurricane. Show some of that. We didn't make all this money carrying out tourists and all these tours every day. Invest a little bit of that into West End, into the fishermen in West End and this will bring trust with them.”*
- *“Just coming to Andros, hosting a meeting, and say well we going to put a park you guys can do this or you can't do that. Give somebody a job.”*

23f Stop the poachers

One fisher stated that if The Nature Conservancy could play a bigger role in stopping poachers, like the Dominicans, it would raise trust tremendously.

- *“Well, to be honest, we like you guys and also with BNT to work with government enforcing these laws with the Dominican. fisherman coming into the country and fishing out of our waters with Bahamian fishing boats. Everybody knows that is something is under the table. So, if your guys could work with the government on our behalf as the fisherman, then you all can get on our trust 100% plus.”*

23g Be upfront

One fisher stated his concern that conservation groups come into the area and do what they want without sharing their agenda. This causes fishers to distrust them and withholds information.

- *“But concerning the trust factor is that, and the largest trust should be upfront with the fisherman. The fisherman will be more open to them, I give them more suggestions.”*

24 Trust in science data

24a Conch, sharks, and turtles

When asked about their trust in scientific data, both fishers and law enforcement pointed specifically at examples such as conch, sharks, and turtles as a reason they distrust in science. For law enforcement, science has been a great tool to enact fisheries laws, but they haven't been updated. For fishers, the science is not always accurate (i.e. conch) or is used to support global emotions to avoid killings (i.e. turtles and sharks).

- *"I think the laws that are in place now, I personally don't think it was a lot of scientific data use. I think it was just more of a personal opinion and what they thought more than scientific data. So you're asking if we trust the scientific data, I don't think it was much of it used in the present laws that we have in place."*
- *"I mean that like the turtle, right. Green turtles or the Hawkbill right, from I born I don't like them, the loggerhead, the big ones they have thousands, million eggs so the whole water is full of them so I wonder why they banning all of them."*
- *"They didn't mention it when I was in the meeting. They were taking the survey of the conchs. See, there were people who were coming who only was playing these people's good side. You see, they were not looking at the interest of everybody, because they said how they just come and just so the come. They go out there right, and they didn't explain to the people about all of these different conchs. You see they only bringing you say two species. But what they didn't realize it's hundreds of different species of conchs. So when you're going to talk about these things, you have to know exactly. They look at one conch, they call it the queen conch."*
- *"Yeah, some of it. When I look at our current queen conch law, the Fisheries Act came into being in 1977. The regulations came out in 1986. The queen conch law regulations that tells us about the well-formed lip. That's been in effect from 1986, and so as he mentioned, back then ... what's that? 35 years ago. That's what they had, and that was best. Today now, we're realizing that you know what? We really need to change that if we want see survival of this industry."*

24b Lack of local knowledge

The fishers stated that science is not rooted in local knowledge. Their perception is that they can't trust science because it doesn't consider knowledge outside of the academic field.

- *"For me, no. Because a lot of the local knowledge are not gathered, and they put some regulations out without people understanding some things that affect the fisheries industry."*
- *"Everybody in the world ain't fat, you've got some skinny. Do you understand me? Their ways and theory of finding out, okay, say how old or how mature a conch is, for instance, any fisherman around here will tell you that you could go right out there on any one of those bars and you could find some conch. Some of them are old. They grow no bigger than what they is."*

24c Antiquated knowledge

Both fishers and law enforcement agree that old data is being used to drive current policies. There appeared to be a need to update conservation practices with more accurate data.

- *"I mean they should still be operating from old data, just for example even [inaudible 00:41:41] these maps that is boaters use. These were charts made 30, 40 years ago and they're just putting them into these electronic software and what have you as brand new information. And the agencies I think should be watching these people doing these things, because somebody has to take something they find, they put into these software and selling it as current information, and it's old."*
- *"Yes, but to a large extent as a scientist, I realize too that we don't know everything. We continue to discover new things that should guide our laws and policies. So, it's possible that some of the measures we have are not quite on point. For example, the one with the flare of the lip that I mentioned. It was previously thought that the vast majority of conch are mature once*

you see the flare of the lip there, but more recent research shows that that isn't necessarily so, just a proportion."

24d Yes, they trust the science

While more respondents used examples such as the conch, turtles, and sharks as examples of their distrust in science, a few respondents also felt that they could trust the science.

- *"Well it's working fully so yes I do have trust in it. Yeah, it's working. It helps me to do my job so yes."*
- *"I think the crawfish, they have it pretty accurate on the crawfish because various UCL profit on the five and a half inches, the egg bearing, or whatever and then... Yeah they have the size limits right."*

25 Actions to help after a natural disaster

This section is explained because the researcher initially started this project shortly after Hurricane Dorian. On top of this, the global Covid19 pandemic added to the pressures on local fishers and law enforcement. It provided a chance to connect with these individuals after and during a crisis, while also presenting an opportunity to better understand how conservation groups can play a better role after a natural disaster. The last two categories of results "Actions to help after a natural disaster" and "When to return" are products of our questions about natural disasters. These sections are also supported by unofficial interviews with fishers that were severely impacted by Hurricane Dorian such as Abaco.

25a Environmental cleanup

Fishers felt that to help them, environmental groups can start by immediately conducting environmental cleanups of areas heavily affected by pollution and debris. This would help the safety of boaters and for families on the land.

- *"Maybe in the clean up?"*
- *"In terms of pollution, clean up, like you said nets and other things that might be polluting the environment."*
- *"In terms of clean up and returning the environment back to normal."*

25b Environmental damage assessment

Fishers thought that conservation groups should do a full environmental damage assessment to document how bad things were in the ocean after a natural disaster.

- *"And so partnering with them and looking at the work would have done after Dorian, even though their office was completely destroyed, they're still on the ground working. They've been bringing in scientists to assess the reefs, some of the marine parks. They've been doing that on their own, you know?"*
- *"So for science groups and research groups to do that assessment, that underwater assessment, to see how bad the fishing industry was affected, get stuff like the mine rules and all that different stuff back to some sense of normalcy."*

25c Damage assessment for fishers

Some fishers felt that agencies didn't truly understand the impact on the fisheries when they were trying to help rebuild communities. Fishers and law enforcement believed that conservation groups could play a role in helping fishers by taking inventory for fishers and providing this information to government agencies to help them quickly recover damaged items. It seemed difficult for fishers to provide proof of their damaged equipment because they don't have receipts. But having conservation groups certify that they had an assessment of their equipment would go a long way in convincing agencies to release funding for massive needs such as boats and boat engines.

- *"I was going to say, provides a list of fishers that we know, our fishers and the resources that they lost. That would help us doing damage assessments as well. What did they lose in terms of their equipment and also damage to the environment as well? And that will help us come up with a response, source resources to replace vessels and lost livelihoods and the like."*
- *"Damage assessment, in terms of how to rebound after. Because you know that obviously, a hurricane is going to do some damage to the fishing industry. That's the livelihood of most of the island people. So that's a major industry for us."*

25d Create a fund for fishers

Fishers and law enforcement believed that there should be a separate fund that conservation groups manage to help fishers after a natural disaster. There was concern about the local government having complete control over the funding for fear of corruption.

- *"We can start it now, as soon as tourism gets back on it's feet, we can implement a tax system that we can start putting money aside for it, rather than waiting until something happens. In the fly fishing industry or in the sport industry, let's put it that way, a lot of them come in and they do a lot of stuff to our natural resources. They could be charged two dollars, three dollars, up to five dollars, some of them say they're willing to pay twenty dollars for certain things. Depending on what these things are, and some of them don't mind paying it because they know what it's for. So it's on a sheet, hurricane relief fund, whatever that is, or the entire Bahamas, and I'm sure that a lot of them would just pay. But I don't want to start that cookie jar stuff because then money goes somewhere and it gets re-routed."*
- *"More like a fund that actually pulls certain resources in that's matched by the conservationist groups, so that when there's catastrophic loss of boats, et cetera, they can actually still have something there that doesn't require then they have to go ahead and get major loans or anything that will put them in the hole. Probably setting up that type of thing. This is just what I've observed, could be a number of other things."*

25e Replace traps and condos

From the fishers that were heavily affected by Hurricane Dorian, there was a request to help with the replacement of traps and condos. These are generally lost by the hurricanes. However, with the help of conservation groups, if they were quickly replaced, they could get back to a sense of normalcy with their fishing.

- *"For instance, you want to know if Mr. Macintosh has some traps or some parts, or whatever the situation is. So they could keep a record and then, therefore, it wouldn't be hard for them after any disaster. They say "Well, okay, I know Mr. Edgecomb, the last time we checked with Mr."*

Edgecomb, Mr. Edgecomb had 200 traps. Natural disaster took place. I believe that he lose them". Okay, Mr, Edgecomb, we're going to try and assist you to get back at least a hundred of them. A start. That would make him feel comfortable on his side, you know?"

26 When to return after a natural disaster

26a Come anytime

When asked, when a conservation group should return, overwhelmingly respondents felt they could return at any time. Showing up at all after a natural disaster shows caring on the part of conservation groups. However, if they are coming, they should bring resources and capacity to help. Even if they want to talk about their conservation agenda, it still helps provide a sense of normalcy to fishers. Also, if they are coming, they should have already built up a relationship and not use this as the time to build new relationships. This just means that the intent should just be on helping established partners and not using the event as a targeted engagement strategy.

- *"I think after you start the clean up campaign and the recovery they can filter in at the same time. Because in reality you can't just put a time mark, when to start."*
- *"I guess they don't really know until they come here."*
- *Speaker 5: Anytime they can come yes.
Speaker 6: Anytime they can come and talk.*
- *"Everybody in the community really is relying on the fishing. So even those persons that do not particularly go to sea like myself are still heavily involved and relying on the fishing industry. So we all need to be a part of that effort. So anytime would be a good time."*
- *"Before the next one [hurricane] happens. Yeah. So I guess anytime between now and whenever."*

26b After emergency responders

Some respondents felt that conservation groups should not return until after life and property emergencies were addressed by emergency responders.

- *"Well, like I say, once the government take inventory or assess the situation, it's on them. What are you going to do. Once they see the system, see who needs this and who needs that, you understand that. So whatever foot they put forward, we appreciate it."*
- *"So I guess once the human aspect, the humanitarian aspect of it is dealt with, and then second to that would be the environment."*
- *"Everyone is given shelter...and lives accounted for and personal property is accounted for. And then as soon as the cleanup process begins would be the chance to try to restore the normalcy to the environment and this stuff."*

DISCUSSION

In this section, we will discuss the various high-level emerging themes that were explored and, using both the results of the section and researcher observations, discuss the results in more detail. This is a synthesis of results by emerging themes.

Broad trust with conservation groups

Overall, there is a great need for building of trust. People gave qualitative and quantitative examples that would place overall trust with conservation at about five out of ten on a ten-point Likert scale. This means that there are great opportunities for The Nature Conservancy to move the needle in creating new and lasting trust with both fishers and law enforcement. This could greatly impact the likelihood of success of future conservation projects.

The responses in this section varied depending on the level of past engagement with specific islands, whether or not there were historic tensions, and whether or not a person could identify a specific person from that conservation group. Where trust is highest people could point to a single contact such as Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A. This reflects the need for consistent contact with both fishers and law enforcement. Even if it is not the same person, knowing that there is a liaison between these stakeholders and conservation groups seems to be a benefit in building trust.

Fishers and law enforcement talked about feeling as though conservation agendas are constantly being forced on them without much input or collaboration. This is different than simply providing academic presentations to these stakeholders. The attitude of the presenters also set the tone for whether or not attendees will engage. There is a belief that presentations are just a task that needs to be met in order to complete the project and not truly meant to be a two-way communication meeting with validation of local knowledge. They would like more input in the process and the idea creation itself if it is going to impact their island in any way.

Respondents gave many examples of how trust has broken down with conservation groups. This information is helpful in understanding if any historic wounds can be addressed. An example of this is the banning of sharks and turtles. This ban created a wedge among all respondents and environmental groups. Creating actions to address some of these historic concerns may be the first step in rebuilding trust.

Fishers and law enforcement mentioned that while they had not been engaged in focus groups in the past, this approach was one of their best examples of conservation groups building trust. Many of the stakeholders came up to the researcher after the focus group was over to express the high need for the smaller group setting so that they can actually feel heard. This was still tempered by the need for information to be provided to all fishers so that nobody feels left out of the conversation.

Law enforcement took a unique approach in identifying that the trust between law enforcement and conservation groups is a “working relationship”. While overall the level of trust stated was good, it was seen as necessary for the two groups to work together. There was mention that the relationship is symbiotic in that the conservation makes recommendations for policies and law enforcement must enforce them. Law enforcement talked less about individual trust and more about inter-organizational trust.

Trust with TNC: Dispositional

Before meeting The Nature Conservancy most respondents said they hadn't heard anything about The Nature Conservancy. Showing there is a clear need to better promote TNC's brand throughout The Bahamas. Other people referenced hearing about TNC from advertisements, schools, past projects, and from individuals that once worked for TNC. While there are other avenues to explore for increasing

dispositional trust, it is important to spend some time exploring how to strengthen current communication channels.

There are fishers and law enforcement that feel TNC is doing excellent work throughout The Bahamas. However, the sentiment is not consistent, and some people can't determine if TNC should be the recipient of praise or another organization. There seems to be a need for TNC to truly individualize themselves as most people's current level of trust and knowledge of TNC may be based on other similar organizations.

Fishers and law enforcement are very unclear about how TNC is funded. It was difficult for respondents to respond to the questions about the trust in TNC's funding because the common response was "Well how are they funded?". This lack of understanding of funding sources leads some stakeholders to wonder if there is some sort of "nefarious" plan from conservation groups that are being controlled by outside interests. The concern appears to originate from the amount of influence these funders have in the conservation process.

Trust with TNC: Rational

This section explores how respondents consider trust with The Nature Conservancy based on prior performance. The majority of the stakeholders had never worked with TNC in the past which limited the depth of this section. However, for any respondent that had worked with TNC, the responses were very similar which was that TNC was great at meeting their goals and following through on their promises. This is a very strong point for The Nature Conservancy and will serve them well in their effort to build trust among the other three types of trust.

Most of the great comments about TNC's ability to have rational trust is based in direct engagement with individuals such as Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A and others. This shows that while it is important to continue meeting goals and following through on promises, it is critical to have a person on the ground that is the connection between those results and the community. Individuals also were drawn to particularly successful projects such as conch, crawfish, and being engaged in interviews.

The one-on-one engagement received by interviews and focus groups appear to factor into rational trust even though alone they are not a measure of a tangible conservation success. This supports the theory that success of a conservation project is informed by the perception of success. For these respondents, being heard and engaged effectively translates to rational trust because they feel they played a part in the success of the project. By feeling as though they played a role in the success in the project there is a higher chance of building rational trust.

Trust with TNC: Affinity

While there was some discussion about TNC being a foreign organization, respondents did recognize that staff was from The Bahamas. However, there was still uncertainty that TNC truly understood fisher and law enforcement values. Either a respondent fully believed TNC understood their culture or they just "hoped" that TNC understood their values. This seems to stem from a lack of interaction with TNC or from infrequent meetings that don't last long enough for them to truly get to know TNC staff. Islands, where individuals could identify specific staff, seemed to have a higher level of trust in TNC. These relationships were a clear indication of whether or not affinity trust was capable of being built.

A great discovery is that individuals are connected to more of the staff than expected. However, the connections are very specific. For Former TNC-Bahamas Staff D, Current TNC-Bahamas Staff C, and Current TNC-Bahamas Staff B there is primarily a connection to law enforcement. Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A was connected to both fishers and law enforcement. However, she had a stronger presence in the fisher community. There may be a link to personality, background, and experience that helps certain individuals feel more connected to others. This is another reason that TNC should spend the time to get to know individuals beyond the job title and also take note of which individuals engage better with certain stakeholders. Strategically, sending in the best messenger for each audience would be ideal. Even if the individual is not the expert, they should be informed enough to present on data and findings and will more likely do so in a way that is best received by the target audience.

Trust with TNC: Systems-based

There seems to be a lot of opportunity in this type of trust. Most respondents felt like they could contact TNC if necessary, but they didn't have a consistent way of doing so. People felt like they could contact an individual like Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A, look it up online, or ask locals that had interacted with them in the past. But, again, there is no consistency. This information should be easily accessible, and everyone should have access to the same information.

There was a significant difference between islands with an organized fisher group, law enforcement, and islands without organized fisher groups on how they understood their individual rights. For islands with an organized fisher group, they felt very empowered to act if a conservation action impacted their livelihoods. This sense of empowerment made them feel the most engaged and they were more likely to have better things to say about The Nature Conservancy regarding trust. Law enforcement felt they could engage in conversations, but it was very restricted because of the organizational structure of law enforcement. In order to raise a grievance with higher authority and the superior would represent them in engaging The Nature Conservancy. More interactions with law enforcement officers would remove that barrier because they could talk to TNC directly when the opportunity arises instead of just filing a formal complaint that may or may not be addressed with TNC. For islands without organized fisher groups, they were more likely to speak about violence as an approach to deal with any grievances. This seemed to stem from feeling powerless in the entire process. This is a very critical point that must be addressed by all conservation groups simply for safety reasons.

In this section, participants mentioned an overall need to engage more individuals in every community. While it is impossible to meet with everyone on the island, it is important to ensure that as many people as possible have access to the meeting. A connected concern is that individuals are not given enough advance notice. Also, they would like to have an advance summary of the information that will be discussed. This will help them prepare mentally and intellectually for the conversation without being felt as if the information is being sprung on them and then being asked to react. For law enforcement, they would just like TNC to continue contacting their supervisors. Though it may still be useful to have a written summary of what will be discussed.

Fisheries policies and laws

The only pertinent question is the trust in the science used to guide conservation decisions and policies. Overall, there was a distrust in science. Respondents pointed to specific species such as conch, sharks, and turtles to highlight their concerns. For conch they brought up that science is not always up-to-date

and that there have been changes in what is considered to be an adult conch. This change in science brings distrust. Perhaps respondents felt that science should be consistent and true no matter how much time passes. For sharks and turtles, participants felt that the law was based only on emotions and not science. For some, this meant that science can't be trusted in the decision-making process because there is no way to determine if science or emotions are driving outcomes.

Fishers also feel that local knowledge is not being considered. They report having brought up certain topics such as the graveyard of conch shells that is destroying the ability for conch to return and they are not being researched. They are also concerned that policies and laws are being applied without considering regional knowledge and diversity in the ecosystem. This leads to fishers distrusting science because it seems like scientists are not visiting different areas. They are extrapolating using information from particular areas. More involvement with fishers in the science process and topic selection would be a huge help in building more trust.

Law enforcement specific

Law enforcement has a better relationship with conservation groups overall because of the working relationship. However, this does not mean that trust does not need to be built. Like any other job, employees work harder when they trust in the work they are doing. Currently, there are barriers for officers to enforce fisheries, and part of it comes from a lack of trust due to minimal training they receive on the specifics of fisheries laws. It is uncommon for any officer to focus solely on fisheries laws. With other priorities such as drugs and violent criminals, officers do not feel they are fully equipped to address fisheries policies unless their primary job is to enforce fisheries laws. This points to a concern that was raised by officers in which conservation groups only engage certain sectors of law enforcement and not all of them that have boats and are on the water enforcing Bahamian law.

Law enforcement also sees the trust between them and conservation groups as a "working relationship" trust. In other words, they don't have much choice except to trust conservation groups because they, indirectly, set the mandate for their work by proposing and pushing through fisheries policies. This perception minimizes their ability to build trust because it feels as though it is strictly inter-organizational and not personal. With that being said, TNC has an advantage in that officers can point to specific individuals with TNC that they connect with including Current TNC-Bahamas Staff C, Current TNC-Bahamas Staff B, and Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A. There is also a strong affinity with Elanor Phillips. Leveraging these relationships will be key moving forward.

Many of the law enforcement officers that participated in the focus groups also consider themselves fishers. They are integrated into their local community. Since law enforcement considers themselves fishers as well, it makes it difficult to enforce current penalties on local fishers which primarily include jail time and confiscating a fisher's boat. Consequently, to confiscate a fisher's boat felt like the destruction of fishers' livelihoods. Instead, they would prefer to educate fishers that have violated the law to ensure they are not breaking the law unintentionally. If that doesn't work, they would prefer to have the ability to issue a fine. Issuing a fine is not currently an option but would be ideal if possible.

The officers with the sole job of enforcing fisheries violations also expressed safety concerns. They are dealing with a variety of individuals and cannot arm themselves with a gun or have a vehicle with safety measures such as bulletproof glass or other protection. They felt that to effectively engage in stopping violators they would need access to these critical protection equipment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

A comprehensive approach to stakeholder engagement will be developed in phase II of this work and will be discussed in the next section. These recommendations are applicable across The Bahamas. The scope of the project was not creating individual strategies per islands. However, the recommendations can be tailored for each island. Applying these recommendations on any island should be met with minimal to no resistance based on the overall responses that were aligned with the qualitative data captured across all the islands. These potential strategies and actions will be used as a starting point for discussion and are limited by the researcher's knowledge of TNC's ability to reallocate staff time, hire new staff, funding stream, availability of resources, and current capacity to incorporate new trust strategies. Each recommendation is categorized under the four types of trust outlined by the trust ecology.

Dispositional Trust

Dispositional trust is based on information received by people before ever meeting the organization or individual. This is the foundation from which *all trust will be developed*. It is possible to have conflict with individuals before ever meeting them because of rumors or information they have learned from sources not coming directly from the organization or individual. If an organization has conflicts before engaging, they must first tackle conflict resolution approaches before engaging in trust strategies. For this reason, it is important to have a presence in local communities through various channels to begin building trust with the general public. This will increase the likelihood of success of all trust strategies.

- 1) Increase web presence. This includes creating a webpage for TNC-Bahamas that is housed under or separate from the TNC-Caribbean website. This may improve the perception of any fisher or law enforcement worker that wants to find out about TNC-Bahamas. Viewing TNC-Caribbean's website does not help the perception that local staff are from The Bahamas and thus increases the perception that TNC-Bahamas does not understand Bahamian culture. This perception was stated as a concern that decreases trust with local stakeholders. This will also help with affinity trust.
- 2) Develop a commercial for The Bahamas that talks about TNC's mission and local staff.
- 3) Get interviewed on popular radio stations so that more people are aware of TNC's name, mission, projects, and approach. This is not limited to news stations, but also popular music stations to reach a wider audience.
- 4) Focus on what little they do know about TNC such being a conservation organization that has programs that preserve nature. It is also important to also talk about the fact that TNC educates audiences through science.
- 5) Invest in education in the classroom. Teaching kids seems to be a direct channel to adult fishers.
- 6) Assist in the purchase of a specific community need and then brand it with TNC. Examples of this include helping to rebuild a section of school in Inagua and having an artist put the TNC logo on the side of the building or make it an ecology classroom with TNC logos.
- 7) Purchase a few boats for law enforcement and have it specialized for helping officers apprehend violators. This could include a fish table with a variety of measurements already prescribed for certain species so officers can just put the fish on the table, and it will immediately determine if the species is over or under size. Brand the boat with TNC logos and charts so the officers have a constant reminder of the TNC name even if they are not interacting with TNC personally.

- 8) Build a special fish cleaning station at the docks for fishers. Brand this fishing station with TNC logo and education. This both helps the fisher be more productive and is a constant reminder of TNC.

Affinity Trust

Affinity Trust is built when we get past professional barriers and begin to find what connects us as humans. This is done through interactions that show listening and understanding was achieved. Creating safe spaces where dialogue about personal life can be achieved is critical. In this category of trust, we want to find how individual and organizational values align. If fishers or law enforcement find an affinity with particular staff, it will increase their trust with TNC and will increase the likelihood of engagement and support. This type of trust does diminish over time as staff leave and new staff are hired. For this reason, it is important to find regular events that allow for frequent engagement.

- 1) Include web bios and videos of each staff member. These should be limited in the talk about skills and should focus on where you were born and your life in The Bahamas (as much as you are willing to share). It should be as personal as possible.
- 2) Include web bios and videos of each Board member for TNC-Caribbean.
- 3) Have Current TNC-Bahamas Staff B play a lead role in developing relationships with law enforcement. Since he has already worked in a law enforcement branch, he will have more credibility and trust.
- 4) Host, fund, and/or attend law enforcement events to show solidarity. Ideally, this event will be relaxed and involve eating food. There should be little to no discussion of TNC work. Instead, the time should be spent getting to know more about law enforcement officers and building connections.
- 5) To show your connection to fishers, The Nature Conservancy should consider conducting a Bahamas-wide turtle and shark population study. The intent of the study should be to show if subsistence hunting and local sales should be allowed in the future. Fishers are not looking to sell these fisheries outside of The Bahamas. The ban on the export of sharks and turtles should still be the law.
- 6) Allow fishers to determine one or two science research projects to increase their understanding of the scientific process that TNC utilizes while also showing that TNC cares about fisher values.
- 7) Provide stipends to local community members to conduct work for TNC.
- 8) Hire temporary employees for specific islands.
- 9) Expand the diversity of departments engaged within law enforcement. Don't just talk to the officers that have a designated role to enforce fisheries laws. All officers can do this, but without proper training; they are going to avoid enforcing fisheries laws when they are searching for drugs and violent offenders.
- 10) Help law enforcement by providing critical personal protection equipment to keep them safe on the water when engaging with criminals. This could include advocating for firearms for officers and providing with bulletproof vest and equipment when they encounter criminals with guns.
- 11) Help immediately, when possible, after a natural disaster. This could be cleaning up debris at the docks or doing an ecological assessment to help fishers navigate the damage in the places where they fish.

Rational Trust

Rational trust is determined by performance. To monitor rational trust, it is important to have documentation of interactions during and after every project. This will help TNC have a better understanding of the level of rational trust they have with stakeholders on every island and with every project. Rational trust is the easiest to monitor over time with a simple electronic survey of every stakeholder engaged during a project. Here are key elements to consider for raising rational trust:

- 1) Provide an open-source online storage for people to find and download any project's final report.
- 2) Provide strategic plans for the year that are available to the public.
- 3) Provide a web page that lists all who funded TNC every quarter and the website to their missions/goals.
- 4) Provide a place to breakdown the percentage of where funds are spent for the year for TNC-Bahamas as a whole. This might include how much was spent on projects and where the projects were implemented. It could also show how much money was spent on staff time or contracts. Explain for each to justify the need to spend money on specific buckets.
- 5) Provide a list of projects and project descriptions on the TNC website so persons can see all projects conducted by TNC-Bahamas. Perhaps a star rating that could be evaluated by partners and stakeholders for each project.
- 6) Provide a feedback form to project stakeholders to help evaluate TNC's performance on meeting deadlines, following through on promises, communication, and how well TNC worked with local communities.
- 7) Send in the correct communicator. For example, if Current TNC-Bahamas Staff B is best suited to talk to law enforcement then he should be informed enough about a particular study that he communicates to law enforcement groups instead of the actual expert. The expert can be in the room to answer questions, but Current TNC-Bahamas Staff B is more likely to resonate better with the target audience than the actual expert.

Systems-based Trust

Systems-based trust requires accountability and systems in place to ensure clarity if a conflict arises. This provides persons with the safety net that they have direct actions they can take despite any promises made by TNC. This safety net is the fastest way to achieve trust with every stakeholder as they will fall back to the document, policy, etc. as the anchor for their wavering trust in TNC. No matter the vehicle used to create Systems-based trust, it must have some binding components and must be approved by all stakeholders. This agreement is strictly between the stakeholders and TNC. Meaning the document will outline how TNC will work with local stakeholders. This document will provide information such as project manager, contact information, and name of the supervisor and/or external oversight partner that can be an advocate if fishers or law enforcement feel their voices are not heard. The agreement should be between a TNC project manager, the project manager's supervisor, and one or more community leaders. A collective resolution will help create a sense of safety that stakeholders will use to trust TNC when other trust factors are low or nonexistent. Below are some initial approaches to achieve systems-based trust.

- 1) Create a working agreement and/or communications plan signed by TNC, fishers, and law enforcement leaders (preferably persons connected to and supervisors on-the-ground and not a person in an office that doesn't go into the field) to drive accountability and increase the credibility of the document. The document should include conflict resolution approaches, ways

to contact TNC's project manager, and project timeline. The objective of this document is to give power to the communities to dictate how they want to work with TNC and they have a document to keep TNC accountable.

- 2) Record all final project presentations and provide them online for the general public to download and watch.
- 3) MOU with law enforcement that you will approach them first with ideas about laws and policies before they become a full concept. This MOU should include a clear platform or invitation for involvement in the whole process.
- 4) MOU with island administrators, local law enforcement, and local fisher associations (if present) about how you will contact them when you plan to arrive.
- 5) Create a fisher's database to help with natural disaster recovery efforts. This could include which fishers have boats and the size of their engines. It could also account for the number of condos each fisher put into the water.
- 6) Draft an MOU with Nassau law enforcement, that discusses a quarterly meeting for law enforcement leaders in Nassau that is held at the TNC office. This meeting should be used primarily for law enforcement leaders to ask questions and get to know more about your projects. So perhaps 30% time for presentations and 70% time for questions and answers.
- 7) Be consistent with terms such as community meetings, focus groups, interviews, and town hall. Armed with this information and the outcomes of each type will be a huge help in fishers and law enforcement feeling better about the different engagement types. Perhaps write up a document and provide it to community leaders.
- 8) Be consistent with where you provide your contact information and update frequently so people know who to contact depending on the situation. An example would be Current TNC-Bahamas Staff A for fishery-related concerns, Current TNC-Bahamas Staff B for law enforcement related concerns, and Current TNC-Bahamas Staff C for policy-related concerns.
- 9) Establish an organized fisher group on every island. Provide them with updates that relate to their regional (North, South, Central The Bahamas).
- 10) Record meetings and upload them to TNC's website. Also, send the link to a WhatsApp group or the community leaders.
- 11) Work with law enforcement officers in the field to revise the penalties for violating fisheries laws. The tiered approach of education first, fines second, and then jail time third for local fishers. For poachers from other countries, there needs to be harsher fines, longer jail time, and further consequences for repeat offenders.
- 12) Provide public awareness to, a calendar of meetings that are held on specific islands. Months in advance would be ideal. This calendar should also show all fishery seasons and possibly law enforcement events to show that you are taking these into account.
- 13) Advocate for a fishers' fund to help provide funding and resources to fishermen and women after a hurricane. The funds could be an additional tax on visitors. This fund should be created by donors to TNC-The Bahamas that want to help fishers recover quickly, specifically after natural disasters.

CONCLUSION

There are many opportunities to build as well as sustain trust with fishers and law enforcement in The Bahamas. Through this document, The Nature Conservancy has a variety of options to choose from to

take on this important task. As stated in the literature, trust and engagement are the two greatest social indicators of successful conservation in a socio-ecological landscape.

The next steps for TNC should include a workshop to evaluate all the possible strategies suggested in this report and come up with an innovative approach to building trust. This should be done both internally and alongside external partners. The actions TNC takes in developing and sustaining trust could have a long-lasting impact not just in The Bahamas but for conservation globally.

The researcher recommends that TNC continues to explore the social dimensions of fisheries in The Bahamas to continually improve how conservationists engage vital stakeholders. It may be important to start a study that evaluates, quantitatively, how trust is changing over time on the islands where TNC chooses to apply these strategies. That should also be evaluated against which islands do or don't successfully adopt conservation practices. This will further the science regarding the link between trust and conservation success.

Finally, it is important that TNC takes this slowly and does not apply these strategies on all islands. By focusing on a few islands over the next 2-3 years, TNC can invest the appropriate amount of time, staff, and resources to make a meaningful impact that will hopefully survive the change in turnover and future conflicts. The Nature Conservancy will be taking critical steps in the implementation phase to lay the foundation for a future with improved trust between fishers, law enforcement, and conservation groups.

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APPENDIX 1. QUALIFIER CHARACTERISTICS

The researcher worked with TNC-Bahamas to determine the type of participants we wanted to include in the focus groups. Since we had to work with between 10-12 persons, it was important to get the right people in the room. The qualifier characteristics were provided to community leaders to help them in making a guided decision for the type of person to participate. We did not verify with participants if they met all the qualifier characteristics. However, we did not announce the qualifier characteristics used to identify participants at the beginning of every focus group.

1. Trusted individual in the fisher community
2. Can easily communicate to many people on this island
3. Are considered a leader or willing to be a leader in the community when needed
4. Understand the importance of a healthy ocean

APPENDIX 2. FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Bahamas' Trust and Engagement Project

Questionnaire

Thank you for agreeing to be part of this focus group. Each of you were selected because you met specific qualifications

Qualifier Characteristics

- Trusted individual in the fisher community
- Can easily communicate to many people on this island
- Are considered a leader or willing to be a leader in the community when needed
- Understand the importance of a healthy ocean

The intent of this study is to help build better working relationships between fishers, law enforcement, and conservation groups and at some points we will discuss The Nature Conservancy specifically. The objective is to develop an approach that respects the rights of all community stakeholders to have a voice in deciding how, where and why marine resources are managed now and conserved for the future.

My name is Leander Lacy. I am an environmental social scientist (meaning I do interviews and focus groups to help environmental groups better understand their stakeholders.) and I am the founder of Lacy Consulting Services. I have worked in the environmental conservation field for over 10 years. I have always been more concerned about the people-side of environmental conservation. This means that I fully believe that good conservation can't happen without the involvement of all people in decision-making. I used to work for The Nature Conservancy but decided to dedicate my career to helping stakeholders as a contractor. I am now fully independent, and the results of this study will be worded in a way that accurately reflects your and your community's concerns and recommendations and not those of The Nature Conservancy. I know it may be difficult to trust me as we have just met, but I hope through our dialogue you will see that your well-being and trust are my top priority.

Since I came alone with no note-takers or additional staff, I am requesting to record this conversation. I am doing this for two reasons. First, I want to focus more on our conversation and not scribbling notes and second, I want to make sure I accurately summarize your responses. Nobody except for me and a third party of transcribers I use through Rev.com will listen to the recordings. Nobody from TNC nor anyone else will listen to the recording. After the study is completed and the information is analyzed, I will delete the recordings. Are you ok with me recording this session?

All information you provide during this survey will be kept private and confidential. Only summary information representing aggregated responses will be reported publicly. Your participation in this focus group is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. The potential benefits of participation include direct connection with TNC staff on future work, opportunity to define how conservation groups should collaborate with your community and improve how TNC should engage with your community after a natural disaster. There is minimal risk of your individual responses being revealed due to measures we are taking to secure your information.

Intro question:

- What made you get into fisheries?
- What made you get into law enforcement?
- How many of these type of focus groups or interviews have you done in the past year?

I understand that you have probably done a lot of these in the past and may have said some of the same things. However, this group meeting is a little different. By the end of this process I will have information to help TNC start addressing the problems you have been raising in the past. I will ask some basic questions so that I can gain an understanding of your knowledge of certain topics. However, I assure you we have planned this focus group to reach a decision on how to better work with conservation groups and The Nature Conservancy specifically.

Broad trust questions with conservation groups:

- Could you describe the current level of trust between fishers and conservation groups?
- Could you describe the current level of trust between law enforcement and environmental conservation groups?
- Could you describe the biggest breakdown in trust over the last 10 years? What do you believe caused the breakdown of trust between conservation groups and fishers?
- Could you describe the best example of building trust with conservation groups over the last 10 years?
- How has trust with conservation groups affected your job on a day-to-day basis?
- How would building trust between fishers and conservation groups impact your job on a day-to-day?
- What do you want environmental conservation groups to do to improve trust with you?

As I mentioned in the very beginning, The Nature Conservancy has requested this study because they want to improve their relationship with fishers and law enforcement and start to work more collaboratively. As part of understanding the relationship between fishers, law enforcement, and conservation groups, they also want to start building trust. They are investing in learning how to engage with you in a way that is more transparent and empowers you to be engaged in conservation issues that impact your livelihood. I am going to ask you some questions about trust and engagement to help guide TNC on how to best engage with your community.

I'm going to ask you questions about The Nature Conservancy because they have no control over other organizations and government agencies, but they can control how they work with you.

Before we continue, I have one question:

- Which other environmental organizations have you worked with?

Types of trust

Dispositional

- Before meeting The Nature Conservancy, what had you heard about them?
- When did you first hear about The Nature Conservancy?
- The Nature Conservancy is an environmental non-profit. Do you trust how non-profits are funded?

- How do you feel The Nature Conservancy and the local government work together?

Rational

- Have you ever worked with The Nature Conservancy specifically in the past?
- How good is The Nature Conservancy at meeting their goals in the projects they work on?
- Has The Nature Conservancy ever failed to follow through on a promise? If so, what example can you provide?

Affinity

- Do you feel The Nature Conservancy understands Bahamian culture?
- If yes? Why?
- If no? Why not?
- Do you know or are you related to somebody that currently or used to work at The Nature Conservancy?
- Have you ever worked with somebody from The Nature Conservancy? Can you provide an example?
- Do you feel The Nature Conservancy has fisher values in mind when doing work?

Systems-based

- If you needed to contact The Nature Conservancy, how would you do so?
- If a conservation project impacts your livelihood, what actions could you take?
- What rules or guidelines should The Nature Conservancy adopt on future projects that impact your livelihoods and communities?

Questions for law enforcement:

- How much of your time is spent on fisheries enforcement?
- Do you feel the time you spend on fisheries is adequate to enforce the laws?
- What are the biggest barriers to enforcing fishery laws?
- If money were no object, what would you need to fulfill your duty to enforce fisheries laws?
- What role can fishers play in helping to enforce fishery laws?
- What can/should be done to improve the relationship between law enforcement and environmental conservation groups?
- Do you feel that your patrol vessels are adequately funded and resourced? Why do you say so?

Collaboration after natural disasters

We understand that we are conducting these focus groups after Hurricane Dorian and many people are still hurting. TNC's thoughts and prayers remain with those who have been impacted, including their own families and friends.

TNC wants to be as respectful as possible in resuming their work and would also like to hear about how best to engage with you/communities in recovery after natural disasters.

- What resources do you think conservation groups can offer to help you after a natural disaster?

- Fisheries is important to everyone in The Bahamas but your personal well-being after a natural disaster is also important. How should conservation groups determine when it is a good time to engage with you about natural resource management after a natural disaster?

Questions about fisheries conservation:

- What role do conservation groups play in making sure that fish populations don't decline to the point of no return?
- What role does law enforcement play in helping to bring back fish populations?

Questions about policies and laws

- Do you feel the fisheries laws are clear and precise? Why or why not?
- What group enforces fisheries law on this island?
- Do you trust the scientific data that has been used to create the fisheries regulations? Why or why not?
- Do you feel you adequately understand 100% of the fisheries laws?
- What stops you from understanding 100% of the fisheries laws?
- What are the consequences of not complying with fisheries regulations?

Fisheries Livelihood

- Have marine protected areas impacted the livelihoods of hard working and honest citizens? Could you share an example?
- What would happen to the fisheries if there were no law enforcement?
- What would happen to the fisheries if there were no conservation groups?
- If fisheries regulations and marine conservation don't work and the fisheries industry disappears in The Bahamas, how would that impact your day-to-day life?

Final question

- How would you, personally, like to be engaged in future policy, regulations and conservation work about the marine environment?

We would like to make you aware that the Department of Marine Resources, over the next couple of months, will be coming back to some islands and talking to fisher communities to discuss MPAs, conch and Nassau Grouper. These visits were scheduled to be done last year, but the hurricane caused them to be postponed. The government has invited environmental non-profits to accompany them as part of these discussions. So, you may see staff from The Nature Conservancy again during this work. But that effort is led by the Department of Marine Resources. If our study ends first, we will share our data with them, so hopefully, they will choose to focus on different questions.

APPENDIX 3. SWEETING'S CAY AND EAST END, GRAND BAHAMA SUMMARY

The researcher and TNC staff visited Sweeting's Cay and East End in Grand Bahama to conduct focus groups and ensure their voices were included in this study. After the site visit, it was determined that focus groups should not be conducted in light of the remaining challenges and ongoing recovery efforts after Hurricane Dorian. Since the research team was already in the community, an explanation was provided about why the focus groups were happening and the purpose. While the focus groups were not conducted, the dialogue still happened about recovery efforts and organic conversations about how TNC could assist in that recovery. Discussion about how long after a natural disaster TNC should return to communities was also highlighted. Fishers still received a \$40 stipend at the end of their participation in the conversation. Below are the highlights of the conversation. The discussions were not recorded and transcribed. Instead, we based the discussion on the researcher's notes taken during the conversation.

Fisher needs

- Humanitarian needs such as food, clothing, and shelter will always take priority for recovery needs after a natural disaster
- After basic needs are met, fishers need equipment to get back to work and help with financial recovery. According to the fishers we engaged, the following equipment is needed:
 - Engines
 - Boats
 - Condos
 - General equipment used to catch fish
- Fishers need assistance with filling out forms to get equipment replaced
- Some fishers expressed symptoms of mental trauma in both adults and children. Providing psychiatric assistance seems to be an appropriate response to the needs of these persons.

How environmental organizations can help

- These fishers believe that environmental organizations could build trust by keeping a database of critical equipment held by fishers including engines, boats, and condos. This way when recovery organizations come to assist with rebuilding, they can rely on organizations such as The Nature Conservancy to provide official documentation to these agencies to expedite the process and get fishers back on the water.
- Assessments are needed to determine the level of destruction and health concerns on the ecosystem to help fishers assess safe areas to fish. For example, the impact and scope of ecological damage from the destroyed oil storage tanks near
- the East End could be assessed.
- Natural disasters displace large machinery such as cars and also home debris into the ocean and onto the bank. Conducting cleanups to help remove these items bring back a sense of normalcy and protects the safety of boaters.

Returning after a natural disaster

- Some fishers felt that environmental organizations could come back immediately. Some fishers came up to us and thanked us for taking the time to talk with them. Some expressed the feeling

that having us there helped them feel as though “people still remember us”. While we didn’t have much to offer, they felt that it was enough to just have us there talking to fishers.

- One gentleman expressed that environmental organizations could come back immediately as long as they are there to help with some of the items listed above.
- Another fisher stated that an easy way to assess returning is to wait until the humanitarian needs have been addressed and persons have food, water, and shelter.

Current recovery efforts

- Fishers on East End and Sweeting’s Cay felt that their communities have been forgotten or overshadowed by other communities. The level of destruction was still very apparent compared to other communities in Grand Bahama that were closer to the hotels.
- Recovery has been slow for receiving equipment because there is no formal documentation of boats and engines. This has led to certain fishers getting equipment faster or slower depending on the level of documentation before the hurricane. This is especially frustrating if you lost documents during the storm.
- In Sweeting’s Cay persons were still in need of fresh water each day and structures to sleep at night.

APPENDIX 4. LITERATURE REVIEW

Trust and Engagement Research in Marine Conservation: A Literature Review

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Prepared for: The Nature Conservancy – Northern Caribbean Program

Date Completed: 5/7/20



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ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS

Acronyms

BNPAS – Bahamas National Protected Area System
BNT – Bahamas National Trust
BREEF - Bahamas Reef Environment Educational Foundation
CCI – Caribbean Challenge Initiative
KAP – Knowledge, Attitudes, and Perception
MPA – Marine Protected Areas
MIMCA – Mnemba Island Marine Conservation Area
NGOs – Non-Governmental Organizations
TNC – The Nature Conservancy

Definitions

Affinitive trust – Trust that is built on the perception of commonalities. A person believes that you are trustworthy and share similar values because of your identity group. This is common in many circles such as fraternities, family, ethnicity, religion, career, and politics. Affiliation with a group improves the likelihood a person will trust you more than somebody not in that group because of affinitive trust.

Dispositional trust – This trust is determined before an individual meets you in person. This is built on worldviews crafted through experience, schooling, or upbringing. Here you will find bias and assumptions as an indicator of how much an individual will trust you based on what they heard about you from neighbors and friends, marketing materials they have read, or personal histories with you or representatives of your particular group.

Environmental social science – Utilizing the diversity of social science theories (psychology, anthropology, criminology, communications, economics, etc.) to provide a better understanding of complex socio-ecological conservation challenges.

Focus group – A group of individuals (8-12) that participate in a guided discussion to better understand the values, attitudes, and knowledge of that group.

Qualitative social science techniques – Using methods such as interviews, focus groups, case studies, and observation to understand a social challenge.

Rational trust – Trust cultivated based on performance, failures, and achievements. An individual makes a rational evaluation of the costs and benefits of likely future performance based on past performance. The individual bases their trust on the quality of past projects and ability of the individual or organization to meet goals.

Systems-based trust – An individual's assessment of the fairness and transparency of procedures. In this case the individual will have more or less trust with a person or organization if they perceive that there is a process in place to address unfair treatment, conflicts, or challenges. An example of creating systems-based trust is to develop and sign a memorandum of understanding to provide a clear

understanding of the roles, responsibilities, decision-making process and intended outcomes within a project.

Trust ecology – A broad framework that explains four dimensions of trust (dispositional, rational, affinitive, and systems-based) that, through richness and even distribution, enhances the efficacy, resiliency, and trustworthiness of natural resource management institutions.

BACKGROUND

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is expanding its ability to effectively engage stakeholders across The Bahamas to increase adoption of marine ecosystem management measures. Through The Bahamas Trust Project, TNC would like to understand the social factors and barriers to trust and increase trust with fishers and marine law enforcement. Fishers represent primary marine resource users that are impacted by and can impact marine conservation efforts. Law enforcement represents a set of agencies that have the ability to both educate fishers on the importance of marine conservation and enforce government policies enacted to protect marine resources. TNC has experience engaging with these stakeholders through past social science research and utilizing stakeholder engagement such as community meetings. Consequently, their documented efforts have identified that a well-designed trust strategy is needed to achieve success in marine conservation efforts.

With a proposal to expand upon the number of MPAs in The Bahamas (Bahamas National Trust, et al., 2018) it is imperative to improve relationships among stakeholders and prove that these efforts have a social, economic, and ecological benefit for all Bahamians and residents. Further, with the pending adoption of a new Fisheries Act, TNC is lending support to The Bahamas Department of Marine Resources through engaging in projects with stakeholders that will help to inform new regulations and approaches to management. This will require a shift in thinking on collaboration, as well as increased stakeholder participation.

Though trust has a multitude of definitions, it has often been cited as “the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that party” (Mayer et al. 1995, p. 712). Every community experiences vulnerability differently which may be a reason for the variation of trust within a study area. For natural resource managers, trust has been touted to improve cooperation, decrease the cost of a project, help assess differing views, and lessen uncertainty (Olsen & Shindler 2010, Sharp et al. 2013). Research continues to refine how different factors of trust contribute to resource management. A major obstacle of resource management is distrust, while trust is a critical factor in conflict management (Hough 1998, Davenport et al 2007, Hartley & Robertson 2008, Devine-Wright 2010, Smith et al. 2013, Stern & Coleman 2014). Trust also plays a role in social capital which is used among individuals to promote strong and beneficial relationships (Woolcock 2001, Claridge 2004, Dasgupta 2009, Sigler 2014). While there are a few studies on trust with fishing communities (Johnson 2010, Hartley & Robertson 2006, Hartley & Robinson 2008), there is limited research on the topic of trust as it relates to marine law enforcement and MPA management and formation.

Through past stakeholder engagement (The Nature Conservancy 2015, 2018 & 2019), TNC documented that fishers perceive a lack of trust with conservation groups and government. Fishers state a need for clarity on the motives of conservation groups and their relationship with the government. Other concerns from various fishers include a lack of trust in the science behind marine conservation, distrust in funding sources, concern that environmental, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are not sensitive to fishers’ livelihoods, and the inability for fishers to distinguish between the various environmental NGOs.

While many of the past efforts focused on fishers, TNC recognizes the role of law enforcement and the need to develop a more robust relationship. For this reason, TNC would also like to better understand law enforcement’s perception of trust and how trust and engagement with law enforcement can be improved. Enforcement of marine policies has an important role in the success of marine conservation efforts and law enforcement personnel are on the front line. They also play a significant role in educating fishers on the importance of abiding by the laws and how fishers contribute to the success of sustainable fisheries.

It is hypothesized that improving trust among fishers, law enforcement, and environmental groups, such as The Nature Conservancy, will reduce conflict and risk such as fisher opposition, project failure, tarnished reputation, loss of funding sources and more, while fostering stronger collaboration and increased compliance with policies aimed at creating benefits for people and nature. For this reason, The Nature Conservancy wants to incorporate trust into their strategic planning process to increase the likelihood of achieving conservation outcomes. While building trust, alone, will not address all the factors that contribute to marine resource depletion and scarcity (Pomeroy R., et al 2016) it is a step in the right direction.

Evaluating social perceptions is an agreed form of evidence for determining the success of marine conservation (Webb et al. 2004, Christie 2005, McClanahan et al. 2005, Leleu et al 2012, Bennett & Dearden 2014, Cinner et al 2014) and is beneficial for informing future work. In January 2020, TNC hired an external consultant to help them understand fishers' and law enforcement's perception of the current state of trust, barriers to building trust, context of distrust, and how to effectively build trust. Engaging in what they can control, the bulk of the study is focused on the level of trust with The Nature Conservancy. Lessons learned may be shared with other environmental NGOs, however TNC is unable and does not desire to dictate how other organizations should operate when engaging stakeholders.

Through this multi-year effort, TNC hopes to build relationships with fishers and law enforcement through trust strategies that will improve collaboration and co-management of marine resources to ensure that there is healthy marine biodiversity, sustainable fisheries and coastal resilience into the future for the benefit of all Bahamians and residents.

OVERVIEW

This literature review begins with an overview of documented engagement in The Bahamas over the last five years. The engagement documents provide a foundation to help clearly understand the type of effort that has been applied to engage fishers and other stakeholders in The Bahamas. This includes efforts from BNT, TNC, and Bahamas Protected. In order to understand historical context and potential areas for conflict, it is important to review these documents.

The literature review will then focus on a few papers that provide an overview of trust studies that have been conducted in the conservation space (not limited to marine conservation) followed by trust studies that have been conducted around MPAs. These studies will highlight recent approaches to understanding and improving trust in the conservation space. A limitation of these studies is that they analyze trust after a project is completed. This means that a quantitative analysis has yet to be done to show how trust and trust strategies impact a project through the lifetime of a project. This limitation makes it difficult to determine how much trust is needed to be effective and which strategies are most effective at gaining and sustaining trust.

The paper will then dig into a social theory known as the "trust ecology" by Professor Marc Stern. This approach will guide development of the focus group questions and help in the strategy building phase following completion of the focus groups study. The trust ecology provides a framework to view trust from four dimensions: dispositional, affinitive, rational, and systems based. By understanding these types of trust, strategies can be built to improve trust within each category. However, it is important to note that strategies must connect to each of the trust dimensions in order for the trust ecology to be effective. Each of the strategies can impact each of the others. This means that resiliency is built by investing

resources and staff into efforts that ensures the diversity of trust factors are acknowledged and incorporated.

Finally, the paper will conclude with some engagement best practices that were consistent across the literature. This section again highlights the importance of having a designated framework to work through the complex concept of trust.

The major limitation of this literature review is that research has not been conducted on the relationship and level of trust between law enforcement and conservation groups in the marine conservation space. TNC's idea to engage and document trust with law enforcement may be used to help inform future research.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN THE BAHAMAS

Extensive outreach has occurred in The Bahamas over the last 5 years to better understand fishers and their knowledge, attitude, and perception of marine resources and conservation efforts (The Nature Conservancy 2015, Brumbaugh, D.R. 2017, Bahamas National Trust 2018 *(a,b)*, The Nature Conservancy 2017, The Nature Conservancy 2018, The Nature Conservancy 2019). These studies and reports show that fishers also greatly value the sustainability of fisheries but are concerned that the lack of fisher involvement in the decision-making process has created a process in which fishers' voices are not heard or included. There are also concerns that, through the enforcement of conservation laws, livelihoods are at risk of being taken away or minimized to the extent that fishers would be unable to provide for their families. These documents also show varying levels of understanding of the laws by community stakeholders and lack of clarity on the intentions behind conservation groups that advocate for these laws.

In 2016, The Nature Conservancy led a process along with Bahamas Protected project partners, to reprise the success of an additional 11 million acres of marine and coastal environmental protected under The Bahamas National Protected Area System (BNPAS) in 2015. The project laid out a 3-year plan to support the Government of The Bahamas in its commitment to the Caribbean Challenge Initiative (CCI) which commits countries to protecting 20 percent of their marine and coastal habitat by 2020. Bahamas Protected included collaboration between BNT, TNC, the Bahamas Reef Environment Educational Foundation (BREEF), government agencies, numerous national and community-based stakeholders. The Bahamas Protected team utilized a parallel process of scientific analysis and community consultations to identify potential areas for MPAs, and to gain further understanding of biodiversity and patterns of use in these areas. In order to reach these stakeholders, they implemented two different approaches: public consultation and public relations. Bahamas Protected conducted 21 meetings over 10 islands from 2016-2018. They engaged stakeholders about proposed MPAs, created a Facebook page, and shared public comments. They also relied on TV, radio, social and print media, and public service announcements to create a public relations campaign to educate the general public. There are also posters in airports around the country that explain the importance of this work. As of 2019, almost 15,000 people signed a petition in support of increasing the number of MPAs.

In 2015 The Nature Conservancy conducted a social study on the knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions (KAP) of fisher regarding the Queen Conch. In this study, focus groups were conducted on the Northern Islands of The Bahamas and a nationwide phone survey was implemented. The purpose of this work was to better understand how fishers and the general public felt about and perceived the status of the Queen Conch. It also gave recommendations for how to further engage with fishers and the general public. The paper found that there was a need to better communicate the support for government action in conch conservation, better communicate to the general public that the government is in support of this work,

develop a collaborative management approach that are supported by the general public, conducting future social science analysis to better message and promote the conservation efforts, create positive reinforcement to help change behaviors, and increase engagement with fishers throughout The Bahamas.

Building on the momentum of that project, TNC continued to conduct focus groups and one-on-one meetings with fishers over the following 5 years. They documented engagement with stakeholders in East and West End, Grand Bahama, Eleuthera, Cat Island, and Long Island. (The Nature Conservancy 2017, 2018, 2019). The engagement found a mixed bag of support and concerns from fishers regarding MPAs and other proposed fisheries management measures. Many of the comments supported results from the focus groups conducted during the KAP study of 2015. Some of the concerns included a lack of enforcement on international poachers, concern that livelihoods will be decreased with the creation of MPAs, lack of trust between fishers and decision-making authorities, and a need to consider alternative livelihoods. One interesting element is that the fishers were unclear about the decision-making process and who has input or influence. With so many actors involved, fishers are unable to tell the difference in roles or mission among NGOs and government agencies. The knowledge gained from these documented engagement efforts will guide TNC to take lessons learned and expand on the knowledge.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Trust research in conservation

Trust has been shown to be a critical factor of conservation success in complex and dynamic scenarios where stakeholders have influence over or are impacted by conservation outcomes (Metcalf et al 2015, Burgoyne, C. 2017, Ordonez-Gauger, L. et al 2018). Studies that evaluate fairness in decision making, determine shared values and interests, understand perception, attitudes, and knowledge of management approaches, and rate trustworthiness of institutions have been conducted to better understand social factors contributing to success of conservation projects (Davenport et al 2007, Petts 2008, Hamm et al 2013, Burgoyne, C. 2017, Ordonez-Gauger, L. et al 2018). These studies show that trustworthiness, acknowledgement and integration of local concerns and knowledge, perception of cooperation among leaders, public engagement, and two-way communication (meaning not just talking at stakeholders but also providing a platform to receive feedback) all contribute to increasing trust. Davenport et al. (2007) found that unclear communication, limited community engagement, lack of community power, and historical resentment can lead to distrust.

In the paper by Metcalf et al. 2015, researchers explored the social factors that led to the success of one of the largest superfunds (federal designation of toxic waste areas) cleanup in the U.S. on the Clark Fork River. The researchers were curious about the social factors of conservation success because little research had been conducted to date. The study involved diverse stakeholders across multiple communities that were connected to four superfund sites on the Montana river, which is the largest river in Montana. These stakeholders bring a diversity of values, experiences, expectations, motivations, and justifications that contribute to their willingness to trust institutions. This could contribute to why in some studies public participation in agency decision making builds trust and increases participant's perception of equitable conservation while other studies found a decline in trust after stakeholders were engaged (Beirle & Konisky 2000, Gray et al. 2012, Herian et al. 2012). Petts (2008) stated that truly deliberative public engagement is still an exception rather than the rule. This may be impacting the mixed reviews received from stakeholder engagement. The study also determined that there was historical distrust in government and concerns about how restoration could impact livelihoods (Carvill 2009).

Scale played a factor in the results of this study. Projects that are smaller have higher level of participation than larger projects (Maynard 2013). For smaller projects there is more room for flexibility and communication tends to be easier because personal interactions can build trust. When you have a large-scale project, participants perceive a top-down management approach and feel they have less of a voice and power in the decision-making process (Spink et al. 2010). Trust also scales with local, regional, state, and federal agencies. Local agencies are far more likely to be trusted and then trust decreases with higher scale (Gray et al. 2012).

The researchers conducted 38 in-depth semi-structured interviews to explore the diversity of views on the restoration project and determine which social factors were at play. They found that trust and effective engagement directly contributed to the perception of success. Perception of success describes a stakeholder's personal perception of success apart from the actual goal of the project. This means that while the actual goal may be a healthy riverbed habitat, a stakeholder may perceive the project a success simply because they were actively engaged in the process. However, if they were asked if the project successfully improved the riverbed, they may have no idea.

Trust was of particular interest in the results since the researchers never asked about trust. This factor came out without prompt and was consistent with responses from state agency staff, federal agency staff, community members, NGO staff, private landowners, academics, river guides, and tribal leaders. While participants could acknowledge that this was a large project, the differences in cultures, economies, political affiliations, and values played a critical role in the variable levels of trust. Each of the communities experienced vulnerability differently with the project which, as stated in the background research, is a key factor in trust. The project was also so large that it was difficult to keep communication consistent and have local success resonate with the whole project area.

The researchers also documented conflict between two agencies which caused a mistrust of the governing agencies in this project. This in-fighting was contributing to the deterioration of trust among participants. The conflict seemed to be produced from a lack of clear roles and a difference in institutional values and priorities. This conflict in turn delayed the project which left many stakeholders frustrated and linked these frustrations to further decline of trust. In addition to the conflict among two agencies, some staff expressed an overall dislike of meetings stating that meters were counterproductive, and the process was tiresome due to continuously asking the public for input. This led some agencies to only doing one-way communication such as tours, and announcements through radio and newspaper. Landowners would complain about the lack of communication regarding important project news which fueled more frustration.

Trust research in MPAs

In a paper by Burgoyne, C. 2017, researchers explored the relationships among stakeholders that played a role in the creation and implementation of the Mnemba Island Marine Conservation Area (MIMCA) in Zanzibar, Tanzania. The purpose of the MIMCA was to protect critical reef habitat, provide an opportunity for economic diversity for local communities, and all for reinvestment in local communities through a tax system for visitors. The document explored the reasons why the MIMCA is not perceived as a success by communities. They conducted a series of in-depth interviews and focus groups. Over a period of 8 months they interviewed 62 people that represented communities, local government, NGOs, and local tourism operations. While final decision-making power lies with the government, they are informed of local

concerns from fisheries officers. These officers were chosen by leaders of the fishing community in each village.

The study found that open communication, transparency and accountability, and trust were strained for various reasons. Open communication was strained because of multiple instances where communication was limited or nonexistent on the benefits of the MIMCA's tourism economy to communities and infrequent to no communication among the stakeholder groups. Some community members perceived a barrier of access to government leaders and employees in the tourism industry. This caused residents to feel that the industry was disorganized and fragmented. It was perceived that communication in the beginning was acceptable, but as the MIMCA grew to absorb more areas, the communication reduced because authorities felt it was too difficult. This lack of communication has sparked indirect conflict which included a disregard for the marine resources and an increase in overfishing. It has also led to a constant lack of knowledge and a distrust of where and how money from the taxed visitors are being spent.

Some people perceived the MIMCA to be a failure because of the lack of transparency and accountability of the money collected by the MIMCA rangers. Also included is the lack of transparency between how much local businesses such as hotels and NGO's are receiving from this financial stimulus. Another example of the failure of transparency and accountability included a US \$60 million project that communities never heard of before the study and no knowledge of a community resident that benefited from this project. Overall, residents perceived no received benefits from the MIMCA.

The study states that distrust in this case is a result of the previously stated social variables. Without accountability from community leaders and government of the financial management of the taxes, trust will continue to decline. Questions continue to be avoided and, in some instances, open communication about finances has been discouraged. This lack of trust has caused residents to have a negative view of the MIMCA. At a meeting of 49 residents, when asked if the MIMCA should be abolished they all said it would be a good idea to scrap the project.

The researchers go further to state that a lack of trust has a direct correlation to the degradation of marine resources. Without proper governance implementation, it is impossible to manage the MIMCA. Due to the conflicts produced from distrust, fishers feel their voices are not heard or included in the decision-making process. Since communities still do not know where the tax money is going, it continues to be a source of conflict. For the Mnemba Island Marine Conservation Area, the researches state that the poor working relationships are contributing to local mismanagement and a degradation of marine resources. This shows that the social factors that contribute to relationships are having an impact on the overall health of resources in the MIMCA. Local communities, fishers, and tourists are damaging coral and overfishing. Since the establishment of the MIMCA divers have noticed a 10% to 15% decline in schooling fish around that area. Without improved relationships stakeholders will continue to degrade the reefs.

Ordenez-Gauger, L. et al 2018 explores fisher's assessment of the California North Coastline Marine Protected Area Network. The implementation of the California Marine Life Protection Act is described as a high-profile conservation success with the creation of 124 MPAs along the coast of California (Chen & Carr 2015). Extensive engagement and general outreach were conducted as well as large financial investments in expert facilitators. The study showed that fishers did not have the same perception of success as reported by organizations about the implementation of the Act. This was in part because the metrics of success did not include social acceptability or ecological effectiveness. The metrics used were

driven on management objectives like sufficient funding, support from government leaders, and concise laws.

The study showed that fishers felt they were not properly included in the process, did not feel their voices were being heard, and felt that the MPAs would do little to help their livelihoods. Local representatives were chosen by fishing communities. Those representatives were respected and honored by their communities. However, fishers didn't feel their representatives were adequately heard or appreciated by decision makers. The participants perceived that local ecological context was not considered and instead a blanket management approach was utilized. This perception led people to believe that the same ecological standards were applied to the entire area despite local ecology. The research also found that trust was a critical factor in whether or not a fisher believed the project was a success. Overall, fisher's trust towards the organizations that implemented the process was low because these organizations were perceived to be unwilling to consider alternative ideas, lacked communication about decision making reasoning, and did not take local ecology and livelihoods into account when creating MPA boundaries. The researchers used a Likert scale (Ex: On a scale of 1-5 how much do you trust...?) to determine level of trust. The study showed a statistically significant correlation between trust and the perception of success. The higher the level of trust between fishers and specific organizations, the higher perception that the process was a success. However, if trust was low the processes was deemed unsuccessful. Qualitative research would help bolster the understanding of the numbers provided by participants.

While literature states that stakeholder participation is important (Christie 2004, Scholz et al 2004, Dalton et al 2012), without equitable participation (meaning that all stakeholder feel they have a tangible role decision making and local knowledge is acknowledged) it is possible that trust will decrease. In this study, fishers felt their views were dismissed despite being provided a platform to participate. This became more apparent when a unified proposal disagreed with science guidelines. Decision makers were unable to create a process to equitably compare the opposing ideas. Also, many of the key decisions about the MPAs were developed before stakeholders were involved. Leaving many participants feeling that their voices were useless when discussing topics decided before their involvement.

Trust ecology

Research has shown that natural resource management is driven by trust between stakeholders (Cvetkovich & Winter 2003, Davenport et al. 2007, Vaske et al. 2007, Stern 2008). Because of this, Stern and Coleman initially investigated a framework to differentiate trust dimensions and explain how they interact with each other to create a "trust ecology". Investment in a diversity of trust approaches contributes to an environmental organization's overall resilience and trustworthiness. It is important for institutions to consider these factors as its ability to learn and make adaptive changes shows its relevancy and resiliency to local stakeholder.

For The Bahamas Trust Project, the "trust ecology" theory may be applied to help guide the project and set the groundwork for future strategies to improve trust with fishers and law enforcement in The Bahamas. In investigating his trust ecology hypothesis, Professor Marc Stern identified four types of trust and analyzed how they work together (Stern & Coleman 2015, Stern & Baird 2015, Stern 2018).

Dispositional Trust

- Based on personal histories, general hearsay, and innate tendencies
- Baseline from which trust and/or distrust can be built or eroded

- Rational, Affinitive, and Systems-based can all shift dispositional trust (thus easiest to change)

Rational Trust

- Based largely on assessments of prior performance
- Cost and benefit analysis of likely future performance
- Affinitive trust and Systems-based trust buffer loss of rational trust

Affinitive Trust

- Developed through interactions which are positive and when active listening has been demonstrated
- Disturbances include turnover of personnel and competing relationships
- Rational trust and Systems-based trust can compensate when Affinitive trust is lacking

Systems-based Trust

- Buffers individuals' degree of risk in potential trust relationships
- Lessens the importance of other forms of trust
- Individuals can work together with less interpersonal trust

As noted, each trust dimension tends to impact and compensate for the others. However, systems-based trust is not directly impacted by the other types of trust. This may indicate that systems-based trust has higher importance because it lessens the need for all the other types of trust. This is because systems-based trust is transparent and has a built-in accountability factor. An example of this is a memorandum of understanding signed by all leaders including local communities that has some legal standing to protect the livelihoods and wellbeing of all stakeholders. It provides an approach for discrepancies in a written document as the appropriate approach to address conflict or concerns. However, if all parties do not perceive the system to be legitimate then this type of trust has not been built. By having systems-based trust, stakeholders are more likely to agree to particular actions and without this type of trust they may never agree to comply.

Professor Stern argues that it would be unadvised to only rely on one type of trust. In order for an organization to achieve sustainable trust, there must be effort to improve the diversity of trust dimensions in order to strike a balance (similar to an ecological balance). By building strategies in all trust types, organizations are buffered from common distrust factors such as personnel turnover, extended timelines, or lack of communication.

CONCLUSION

While trust has been perceived as a thread that connects many social factors (communication, engagement, perception of reliability), the research shows it is more of an umbrella factor than a supporting one. This means that by focusing efforts on improving trust, it should inherently produce a beneficial outcome for other social factors. The ability for an institution, such as TNC, to improve trust will require a focus on effective engagement and building trust.

The research shows that it is not enough to engage and involve stakeholders. There must be an equitable process that allows for direct impact to the decision-making process. It is possible to engage stakeholders and have trust decline. This happens with stakeholders are engaged but they feel they are being dismissed in favor of prevailing science without regard for local knowledge. However, it is important to find a leader to represent a community or larger population. This representative should be chosen by the stakeholders.

If the right leader is chosen, they will be powerful allies that can carry the support and will of the communities they represent.

An investigation of stakeholder engagement in large-scale marine protected areas from 17 countries found that engaging in environmental social science to assist in understanding stakeholders was helpful (Bennett, N. 2017). Environmental social science uncovered the following best management practices for effective stakeholder engagement:

- Integrating traditions and cultures
- Ensuring social justice and empowerment
- Being transparent
- Ensuring there is proper time for conflict management and resolution
- Maintaining economic wellbeing and livelihoods
- Promoting economic sustainability
- Developing appropriate and legitimate governance

Thankfully, many of these strategies focus on practices that support the improvement of trust building. While we have presented a series of studies on the topic of trust, there is a need to document the specific actions organizations are taking to reach their strategies. The application of social science findings is critical to understand how to best apply these theories in practical circumstances. A highlight of The Bahamas Trust Project will be the documentation of the actions taken by TNC to address all four dimensions of the “trust ecology” theory. This places The Nature Conservancy at the frontline of creating a set of strategies using both the knowledge found in this literature review and through The Bahamas Trust Project that will commence in 2020.

It is important that trust is built among the decision-making bodies by ensuring everyone understands their roles and responsibilities. Conflict among leaders is a clear sign to stakeholders that the process is flawed or that the timeline will be extended. An extended timeline will result in a loss of trust for every day the project continues past the announced project end date. Most stakeholders want to be engaged, have the project implemented, provided with a list of guidelines or rules, and then left alone to resume life after the project has conclude with occasional updates.

Ordonez-Gauger, L. et al 2018 mentioned the “trust ecology” by Professor Stern as a way to explain the trust dimensions at play in both trust and distrust with marine resource management. Through a series of workshops and meetings, TNC can take a proactive approach to develop a diversity of strategies that focus on the four primary elements of trust: Dispositional, Affinitive, Rational and Systems-based.

This innovative approach should be guided by available social science research with an emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion philosophies and best strategic planning principles. Trust strategies will need to be locally relevant and within the capabilities of the institution. What works for TNC - Bahamas may not be feasible for another agency.

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