

Project Update: July 2014

The country of Belize stands at the nexus of conservation and development. Where its post-independence economy was founded on grassroots conservation to promote ecotourism, Belize's government has recently taken on a pro-development agenda with greater interests in oil, gold and natural resource extraction, mass tourism and other infrastructure development.

Local and indigenous communities have collectively organised and built local adaptive capacity to safeguard traditional resource use rights and the sustainability of local ecosystems.

Preliminary we have found that variables of the local resources users including strong social capital (trust and reciprocity), leadership, resource dependence and homogeneity have contributed to collective action to organise and implement institutions to manage local natural resources. Variables of the governance system (rules, monitoring, sanctions, external support and autonomy) have also proved critical in sustaining community institutions which collectively affects outcomes in resources management.



GPS Mapping of farmlands with Mayan villager

Road development by the oil company



State sanctioned logging threatening local livelihoods of indigenous communities