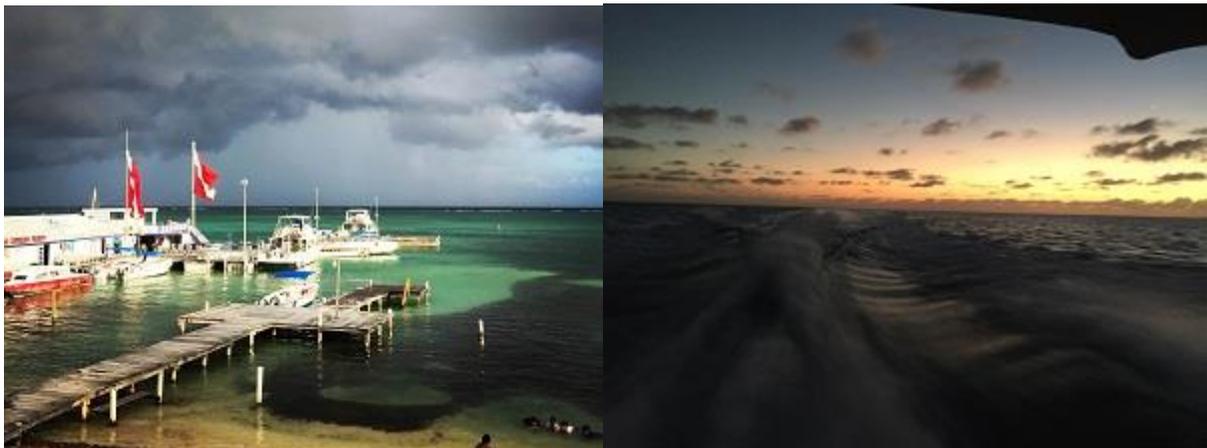


Project Update: November 2014

We are just finishing up our research trip here in Belize, so I thought now would be a good time for an update. The 150 update and pictures are attached below. I plan to send a report out before January 1st 2015. We are also working on a documentary or accompanying film for this trip. It will take a bit longer, but one of our awesome undergraduates is producing it (communications/ biology double major).

Our team of 6 scientists from The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill have surveyed 15 coral reef sites across the Belize Barrier Reef System. Sites were chosen based on sea surface temperature variability. We surveyed coral cover, diversity, and species diversity at sites that experience low or high temperature variability to assess how temperature variability affects these variables. With the help of local guides, we located corals in highly variable environments and were able to really explore the reef system. We travelled the mainland and were able to experience the diverse cultures of each of Belize's coastal towns. We collected small coral samples at each site to identify how coral symbiotic communities change with temperature. We also deployed temperature loggers to compare satellite temperature records to in-situ records. The next steps in this project are to identify trends in species composition and diversity and return next year to core corals.



Left: Storms approaching over San Pedro, Belize. Luckily, we finished sampling before the storm on this day. We weren't so lucky on other days. Right: The sunset over Northern Belize at the end of our last day of successful sampling!