

Project Update: June 2011

From May 2009 to June 2011, I collected fish fillets from traditional fish markets, co-operatives, super markets and restaurants in six towns along the Belizean coast. I used molecular techniques to quantify the frequency of herbivorous fish being sold by vendors. Based on genetic analysis, poaching of parrotfish fish is taking place; however, parrotfish fillets are only being sold in certain towns and decreased from 2009 to 2010. In addition, genetic analysis revealed that fillets sold as snapper and grouper were actually species such as cobia, hogfish, snook, barracuda, catfish, and triggerfish. These results show that fillet is being misrepresented and there is a possibility that more parrotfish may be being sold as other species. This information has been shared with the Belizean public and may reduce the demand for fillet. If so, this may also reduce parrotfish poaching as these fish cannot be sold as whole fish.

<http://www.amandala.com.bz/index.php?id=11340>

http://endeavors.unc.edu/a_fishy_mystery_in_belize