

**A Conservation Project through Stock Restoration for the Queen Conch,
Strombus gigas Linnaeus, 1758, on some of the San Andrés
and Old Providence Archipelago's MPA'S**

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The 'Friends of the Queen Conch Foundation' is an initiative which pretends to conserve the Queen Conch, through the development of a stock restoration project in some of the MPAs of the San Andres and Old Providence Archipelago, Colombia. This project is set as an answer to the actual stock crisis, a result of overfishing as well as terrestrial, coastal and marine polluting activities. To attain this goal the Foundation is calling into action different Governmental Entities and the community, also developing environmental education campaigns. To increase the numbers and the densities of the depleted populations of Queen Conchs in the MPAs, this Project will initially include the collection of sexually adult male and female individuals, their transportation and holdings in artificial enclosures located in natural environments ('Conch-breeding habitats') and the protection of their egg masses from natural predators in specially built pens inside those enclosures. Afterwards, the project will permit that some of the egg masses continue their natural development in the pens, through eclosion into veligerous larvae, allowing for their release into the surrounding local currents. Some other egg masses will be collected and transported to a laboratory, where will be apply maricultural techniques for the complete development of the eggs and larvae through the settling stadium. Later on, the project intends to release the just-settled individuals into their MPAs' natural habitats, as well as the release of the initial Queen Conch parental stock back into the areas where the individuals were captured. The just-settled individuals will be monitored in the wild through the pre-juvenile stadium. Finally, the project will produce the results of the field and laboratory experiments, including the breeding and feeding behaviors, the survival and growth rates, and the analysis of the conditions of the MPA'S for the Queen Conch Restoration.

KEY WORDS: Queen Conch, CREST, egg farm, mariculture, San Andrés, Old Providence, MPA'S.

**Proyecto de Conservación por Medio de la Repoblación del Caracol Pala
Strombus gigas Linnaeus, 1758, en Algunas de las AMP'S del
Archipiélago de San Andrés y Providencia**

La Fundación Amigos del Caracol es una iniciativa que pretende conservar el Caracol Pala a través del desarrollo de un proyecto para la repoblación del recurso en algunas de las AMP'S del Archipiélago de San Andrés y Providencia, Colombia. Este proyecto es una respuesta a la actual crisis de densidad poblacional resultante de la sobrepesca y de las actividades de contaminación terrestre, costera y marina. Para alcanzar esta meta la Fundación esta haciendo un llamado a las diferentes entidades de Gobierno, y la comunidad, desarrollando campañas de educación ambiental. Para aumentar los números y densidades de las poblaciones disminuidas del caracol en las AMP'S, este proyecto incluirá la captura de individuos machos y hembras sexualmente maduros, su transporte y resguardo en encierros artificiales localizados en sus entornos naturales (Habitats de Reproducción del Caracol) y la protección de las masas ovígeras de depredadores naturales en jaulas especialmente construidas dentro de los mismos encierros. Se permitirá entonces que algunas de las masas ovígeras continúen su desarrollo natural desde su eclosión hasta las larvas velígeras, permitiendo su desplazamiento a través de las corrientes locales circundantes. Otras masas serán colectadas y transportadas