

# EL PILAR MANAGEMENT PLAN

*El Pilar Landscape: Gateway Between Two Nations*



Endorsed by the

**The Institute of Archaeology, Belize  
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## *El Pilar Landscape: Gateway Between Two Nations*

promoted by the  
Protected Area Technical Evaluation Committee ~ El Pilar

adopted by the  
Institute of Archaeology, National Institute of Culture and History

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# EL PILAR MANAGEMENT PLAN

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### INTRODUCTION – EL PILAR ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESERVE FOR MAYA FLORA AND FAUNA

#### **Signatures Across the Landscape**

The El Pilar Program has attracted an international, multidisciplinary team with the momentum to evolve a unique plan. This plan incorporates local community understanding, a government conservation and development agenda, and international environmental concerns through an integrated research program that informs a model development plan centered around the history and prehistory of El Pilar.

This management plan for El Pilar is the result of a long process and involves the participation of many individuals. The idea springs from the BRASS/El Pilar Program, but has been brought to fruition from participants in the first Mesa Redonda (1997) and the Mesa Redonda II. These key events set the stage for creating an innovative plan promoting a model interdisciplinary research and community development project that will serve as a model for conservation in the Maya forest.

#### **The Past Informs the Future**

The core of the El Pilar vision comes from archaeological research on the evolution of the ancient Maya landscape. The essence of this program acknowledges that clues to sustaining the complex habitats of today's Maya forest environment are embedded in Maya prehistory. Ancient Maya settlement and local community patterns provide material evidence for the evolution of sustainable economies in one of the planet's last frontiers: the tropics.

The goals of the multidisciplinary research and development program are to demonstrate the critical relevance of basic research to promotion of conservation and development around the world today. The outcome will influence the application of a reserve management plan that will conserve environmental diversity and preserve the irreplaceable cultural heritage of both the ancient and contemporary populations in the region.

#### **The Forest as a Garden**

The ecological structure of the Maya forest is a relic of the dynamic relationship in which humans have played an integral part. This relationship extends back more than four millennia to the agricultural pioneers of the Maya forest region and the ancestors of the ancient Maya civilization – the heritage of contemporary farmers. The large contiguous stands of forest are a testimony to the efficacy of ancient Maya practices. While the Classic Maya collapse affected the human populations, plants and animals survived only to be threatened with extinction today. Therein lies the ecological lesson that must be perceived to build a sound basis for conservation in the future.

Traditional agricultural systems in the tropics worldwide are as complex as the environment within which they developed. Mimicking the forest structure, a polycultivation system evolved to minimize instability, prevent degradation and integrate both intensive and extensive labor techniques that maximize production. Heterogeneous and bio-diverse, the forest gardens constituted the strength of the Maya community in the past, as they do today, by relying on the traditional knowledge of local farming households.

Combining research designs of agronomists with those of traditional farmers from the area, this forest garden can form a model of ancient Maya land use that will provide an ongoing source of innovation for the community. Such a design that uses ancient Maya settlement patterns and agricultural knowledge can foster resource conservation that aligns with, rather than opposes, the natural regenerative processes of the tropical forest.

#### **Community Links**

To accomplish the goal of improving living standards and self-sufficiency of the regional communities, the immediate and short-term needs of families must be incorporated into the long-term agenda of sustainability.

No reserve exists within a vacuum and to thrive the local population must assume an active role in conservation or the cultural aims may not be achieved.

A cooperative association has been established with Amigos de El Pilar. Their goal is to develop community enterprises in tourism and agriculture that increase villagers' economic stake in the reserve. Through education and participation, the links between the community and the reserve will strengthen local investments in conservation and develop administrative responsibility. The leadership role the villagers are assuming and the self-determination they are gaining in the process is the foundation upon which the future success of the El Pilar model depends.

**Discovering El Pilar**

The El Pilar Program has set the stage for ecotourism where the visitor can explore and discover the beautiful Maya architecture beneath the luxuriant forest canopy.

The program has promoted education and training workshops, given lectures and tours, and encouraged participation in the archaeological research. Further, the program has hosted events, such as the Fiesta El Pilar, that has elevated the visibility of El Pilar on the global front, to provide a springboard for tourism development.

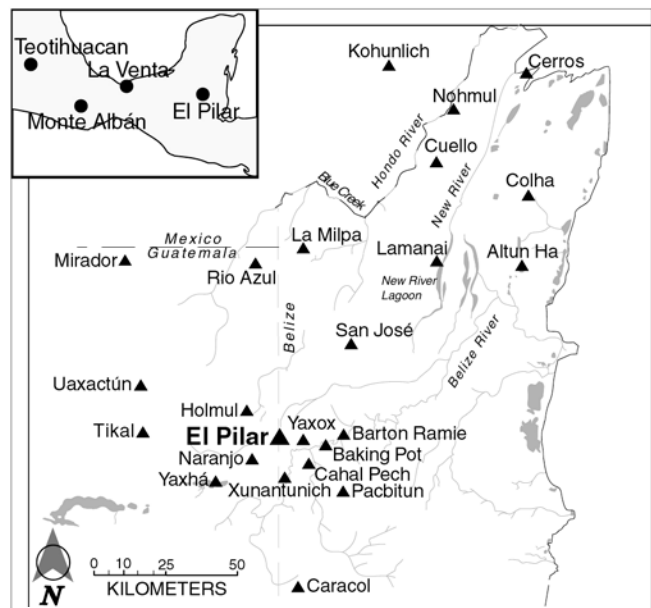
**Taking the Challenge**

Park management is fundamental to the long-term research and development plan as well as to the reserve's future. Informed designs are based on cultural and ecological research. Further, identification of stakeholders, incorporation of public interests, articulation of the mission, and a clear set of objectives for the sustainable management of the reserve is essential. Finally, the extent of conservation goals, issues of access and education, and the long-term funding needs must be developed.

The El Pilar vision must include the concerns and desires for both resource conservation and economic development. Short-term strategies for community involvement and long-term concerns for conservation of

the ancient architecture and the environment are vital. Educational and interpretive strategy for the park and surrounding landscape are also important. These facets are all dependent upon the results of integrated, collaborative, and multidisciplinary research program and are crucial to establishing the reserve on a lasting base.

The management plan also takes into account the location of El Pilar between Cayo, Belize, and El Petén, Guatemala. This unusual setting impacts every aspect of research activities at El Pilar. The research projects and resource management designs for El Pilar must consider the contiguous sections of Belize and Guatemala as a whole, as resources shared between two countries. The natural environment, cultural resources, adjacent contemporary peoples, and access for tourism all figure prominently in the master research and development plan as well the ultimate product: The El Pilar Archaeological Reserve for Maya Flora and Fauna. The reward will be an understanding of the ancient and contemporary dimensions of the Maya forest.



Map of El Pilar and other centers of the Maya forest.

## **II MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS/CONSIDERATIÓNS DE MANEJO**

### **A. Vision Statement**

#### ***El Pilar Maya Landscape: Gateway Between Two Nations***

El Pilar Archaeological Reserve for Maya Flora and Fauna represents an innovative example of cultural resource conservation in relationship to the natural environment and to contemporary peoples.

As the largest Maya archaeological site in the Belize River area, El Pilar is unique in its presentation of ancient daily life through household structures and forest gardens, located in the shadows of monumental Maya architecture.

This shared resource serves as a symbol of cooperation between Belize and Guatemala, and as a model of collaboration between the reserve and local communities and between the cultural and natural resource researchers and conservators.

Involvement in reserve planning and management links the communities to their cultural heritage, encourages their social and economic development.

Documentation and evaluation of this holistic approach to resource conservation will allow El Pilar to serve as a model for other important sites of world heritage.

#### ***Paisaje El Pilar: Puerta Entre Dos Naciones***

El parque arqueológico El Pilar representa una nueva estrategia de conservación del patrimonio cultural y natural y su relación con la población.

El sitio arqueológico más grande en el área del Río Belice, El Pilar es único en su presentación de la antigua vida cotidiana a través de estructuras domésticas y la huerta agro-forestal, bajo la sombra de la arquitectura Maya monumental.

Este patrimonio compartido sirve como símbolo de cooperación entre Belice y Guatemala y como ejemplo de colaboración entre el parque y las comunidades locales y los investigadores y conservadores del patrimonio cultural y natural.

El involucramiento de la comunidad en el planeamiento y manejo del reserva lo relacionará con su herencia cultural y estimulará el desarrollo socio-económico actual.

La documentación y evaluación de este acercamiento a la conservación del patrimonio permitirá que El Pilar sirva como modelo para otros sitios de importancia del herencia mundial.

### **B. Goals**

1. Overall Reserve Goals
  - (a) To preserve in perpetuity the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve to maintain cultural and natural setting
  - (b) To conserve and maintain the integrity of the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve in a manner that benefits local communities through tourism and education
  - (c) To promote sustainable models for using the Maya forest at the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve
  - (d) To provide visitor access, research and education opportunities for national and international visitors in a manner compatible with the cultural/natural environment
2. El Pilar International Management Goals:
  - (a) To develop the reserve in a regional context
  - (b) To establish a Technical Advisory Team named the Consultative Council El Pilar (CoCEP)
  - (c) To promote joint cooperation between CoCEP
  - (d) Periodic monitoring of joint efforts
  - (e) Foster Inter-agency management potentials within and between countries

### **C. Significant Management Issues**

1. Administration
  - (a) Cross-border issues

- (b) Lands resolutions
  - (c) Extraction activities
  - (d) Boundary management
  - (e) Site maintenance
  - (f) Regulation enforcement
  - (g) Security (access and cross border)
2. Infrastructure
- (a) External access roads
  - (b) Park administrative buildings (caretaker's house, etc)
  - (c) Visitor center
  - (d) Internal concessions
3. Management Guidelines
- (a) Community participation
    - (i) institutional capacity building
    - (ii) Consolidation of adjacent areas into reserve (Chorro site, Yaloch, Manantial, wetlands)
  - (b) Presentation of Maya landscape past, present and future
  - (c) Carrying capacity for visitors at the Reserve
  - (d) Adoption and evaluation of integrated cultural and natural resource management plan process
  - (e) Enhancement of cross border potentials of a Peace Park
4. Funding
- (a) Funding mechanisms
    - (i) develop finance program
    - (ii) seed monies
    - (iii) institutional commitments
    - (iv) others – innovative
  - (b) National sources (e.g. PACT in Belize, ID sources in Guatemala)
  - (c) External sources
    - (i) donor from private sector (e.g. Ford, Getty, MacArthur, local and regional foundations)
    - (ii) international agencies (e.g. USAID, EU, GTZ, UK, UNESCO, UNDP/GEF, WB, IDB)
  - (d) Government revenues generated through visitation

**D. Communication Plan for El Pilar Archaeological Reserve for Maya Flora & Fauna (EPAR)**

1. Definitions
- (a) "Communication" is:
    - (i) Public/community relations
    - (ii) Site identity materials (e.g. design elements, consistency of information content, etc.)
    - (iii) Interaction with news media (especially with respect to responsiveness to inquiries)
    - (iv) Interaction with professional communities
  - (b) "Public Relations" is communicating your story as you want it to be communicated
    - (i) create a standard communication plan for all events
    - (ii) design a crisis management strategy for unforeseen events
2. Objectives
- To develop, implement, evaluate and maintain an effective communication plan which will
- (a) Achieve a uniform identity in all communications products to market the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve as a unique eco-tourist destination and research setting
  - (b) Maintenance of positive relations with educational outreach, government, media, the tourist industry, local communities and external organizations
  - (c) Ensure continuity of public/community relations
  - (d) Collaborate with institutions supporting security (internal to the park, around the park, and cross border)
3. Activities
- (a) Short Term
    - (i) Design a communications plan
      - determine overall message desired to be sent
      - identify key audiences locally, regionally and internationally
        - local communities and schools

- government administrators
  - tourism officials
  - visitors to site
  - interested scientists and academia
  - news media
  - identify supplemental audience(s)
  - tailor messages to the needs, interests and knowledge-level of audience(s)
  - determine methods to be used to communicate messages
    - brochures
    - posters
    - signs
    - corporate identity materials (logos, etc.)
    - newsletter
    - video
    - world-wide web
    - fact sheets
    - open houses
    - events (fiestas, fundraisers, Mesa Redonda)
    - publications library
    - internet list-serves
    - reports and research summaries (perhaps an annual report of site activities, aimed at the interested public)
    - media and trade tours
    - speakers’ bureau
    - press releases, newspaper articles
  - identify key internal communicators/spokespeople for specific topics and external community leaders, government officials, tourism professionals, etc. through whom messages and information may be disseminated or reinforced
  - develop an action plan for crises and conflict management
    - accommodate news media in times of adverse events (natural disasters, thefts, cultural resources, international tensions, crime, funding emergencies)
    - determine spokespersons (the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve administration, El Pilar Program, tourism industry)
  - determine methods of receiving or eliciting information from targeted audiences (evaluation methods, surveys, informal elicitation of comment)
  - evaluate feedback and determine how that information will be analyzed and incorporated (or responded to)
  - amend communication plan as appropriate/necessary
- (ii) Implement the communications plan
- (b) Medium Term
- (i) Maintain the communications plan
  - (ii) Further evaluate the communications plan
  - (iii) Determine further/future potential audiences
  - (iv) Amend plan as appropriate/necessary
- (c) Long Term
- (i) Maintain the communications plan
  - (ii) Further evaluate the communications plan
  - (iii) Determine further/future potential markets
  - (iv) Amend plan as appropriate/necessary

### **III MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

#### **A. Resource Management and Protection, Maintenance and Sustainability Archaeology Under the Canopy (re-evaluation based on updated research)**

1. Benchmark indicators for monitoring
  - (a) Identify key features for monitoring
  - (b) Design plan for information loop

2. Conflict management strategy
  - (a) Determine communication needs
  - (b) Design action plan for crises
  
3. Cultural aspects with nature
  - (a) Objectives
    - To celebrate the past, for the present, to build a future
    - To connect the history of El Pilar to the Maya forest community
    - To present a unique view of ancient Maya daily life for all visitors
  - (b) Activities
    - (i) Short Term
      - establish inventory of all archaeological remains
      - develop feature house and forest garden at Tzunu'un
    - (ii) Medium Term
      - to develop the El Pilar chronology from prehistoric, into the historic, and to the present
      - excavate houses in other environmental zones
      - develop feature houses in other environmental zones
      - initiate maintenance regime for cultural resources (prehistoric, historic)
    - (iii) Long Term
      - complete feature house sites in key environmental zones
      - complete feature house sites in key human use zones
      - promote the model of culture with nature and the entwined relationship of humans and the environmental
      - establish maintenance strategy for managing the houses and forest garden in key environmental zone
  
4. Natural aspects with culture
  - (a) Objectives
    - To enforce the recuperation and regeneration of the renewable natural resources
    - To establish actual situation of natural resources
    - To determine management and sustainable use models of flora and fauna according to contemporary/comparative knowledge of the Maya forest
  - (b) Activities
    - (i) Short Term
      - establish a monitoring program
        - examine the dynamics of the natural resources at El Pilar
        - initiate studies to establish standards to manage uses of natural resources at El Pilar
    - (ii) Medium Term
      - establish a program for the management of human uses of wildlife at El Pilar
      - establish different forest gardens along interpretative trails which incorporate wildlife management at El Pilar
      - establish a program for habitat recuperation/restoration at El Pilar
      - Strengthen /extend the biological corridors with mutual reliance with El Pilar
    - (iii) Long Term
      - promote a standard monitoring program for El Pilar
      - maintain data control standards for El Pilar
      - promote a sustainable wildlife management program in conjunction with the forest garden
      - periodic evaluations of habitat program and corridor connections
  
5. Integrate Culture and Nature
  - (a) Objectives
    - To recognize the irreplaceable quality of cultural resources
    - To acknowledge the nexus of nature and culture
    - To determine management and sustainable use models that accentuate the interrelationships of culture and nature in the Maya forest past, present, and future
  - (b) Activities
    - (i) Short Term
      - establish a monitoring program that set values for irreplaceable cultural resources and the conservation of natural resources



- examine the dynamics at the nexus of culture and nature at El Pilar
- initiate studies to establish standards to manage uses of integrated resources at El Pilar
- (ii) Medium Term
  - establish a program for the implementing the forest and a garden at El Pilar
  - establish different interpretative trails which incorporate interrelationships at El Pilar
  - establish a program for educating communities about human environmental impacts at El Pilar
  - Strengthen links to biological corridors ~ human gaps within the around El Pilar
- (iii) Long Term
  - promote a standard monitoring program for El Pilar
  - maintain data control standards for El Pilar
  - promote a sustainable integrative management program
  - periodic evaluations of activities

**B. Human Use Program**

1. Education

(a) Objectives

- (i) School Programs and Curriculum Development
  - take local children on field trips to El Pilar (implement rules and regulations for educational visits: carrying capacity, student teacher ration –25:1—and permit monitoring strategy)
  - create a teaching program between children and BRASS/ El Pilar researchers (mentoring possibilities)
  - develop school curriculum to increase knowledge and awareness of cultural and natural resources
  - increase knowledge and awareness of values within the community (important objects or areas to protect, maintain agricultural character, protect the river)
- (ii) Building Capacity of Local Community
  - courses/workshops for guides (archaeology, natural resources, environment and contemporary culture)
  - workshop for small enterprise initiation and management (restaurants, arts and handicrafts, guest houses)
  - workshop for developing livelihood alternatives using forest garden concepts for the reserve (extraction of corozo, allspice, fruits, etc.) and the promotion of innovative and traditional subsistence activities outside the reserve
  - workshop on grant writing/fundraising
  - evaluate and prioritize land use areas/zones (control access along main road, consider commercial and civic zones, determine housing densities, promote historic, environmental, and public areas, establish waste management policy)
- (iii) Inform local, regional, and international community of the management plan for El Pilar
  - organize committee meetings
  - design informational posters about the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve
  - create image of security in collaboration with BDF and Guatemala authorities
  - build buffer zone rapport with near neighbors around the perimeter of the Reserve

2. Community Participation in El Pilar  
Belize/AdEP

<u>Community</u>	<u>NGO</u>	<u>Promotion</u>	<u>Government</u>
Bullet Tree Falls	National	Tourism Marketing	IoA
Santa Familia	HfP, BEST, PACT	Conservation Education	NICH
Calla Creek	International		VC
Cayo Towns	UNDP		Others

## Guatemala – Counterpart AdEP

<u>Community</u>	<u>NGO</u>	<u>Promotion</u>	<u>Government</u>
Melchor	National	Evaluation of Municipal	CONAP
Santa Teresa La Zarca	NPV	Potentials	IDAEH
Santa Rosa	International	Conservation Education	Municipalidad
Suchitan		Tourism Marketing	

## (a) Objectives

- (i) To promote participation of government and non-governmental organizations in the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve
- (ii) To create a symbol of cooperation between the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve and local communities
- (iii) To document and evaluate methods of community participation

## (b) Activities

## (i) Short Term

- expand community-based organization participation in Belize and Guatemala
- forge communication channels between community and the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve
- develop methods for community conflict management through education and alternatives
- Documentation of the process of community participation
- begin to collect interpretative material from the community (traditional stories, poems, dances, photographs)

## (ii) Medium Term

- establish memorandum of agreement for interaction between the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve and communities
- local participation in CoCEP and other pertinent groups
- assemble community interpretative material for exhibition

## (iii) Long Term

- continue to strengthen community based organization (CBO) membership
- participate in conflict management
- maintain communication between NGOs/CBOs and communities
- document education strategies in cultural/natural resources
- publish community interpretative material

## (3) Interpretation

## (a) Objectives

- (i) to develop interpretive materials to orient visitors to the cultural and natural qualities of the reserve and the local communities
- (ii) to underscore the importance of the reserve's resources and their conservation and protection
- (iii) to emphasize the need to support the reserve goals to conserve cultural/natural resources
  - acknowledgment of the Maya forest is a Garden
  - promoting interaction with Forest Gardeners

## (b) Activities

## (i) Short Term

- design a brochure/website
- build a visitors' center at the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve
- organize target features for local tours
- maintain and upgrade self-interpretative trail system
- design and maintain appropriate signage for features at the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve

## (ii) Medium Term

- create interpretative scenes of visitors' center
- incorporate demonstration forest garden models inside and outside the reserve

## (iii) Long Term

- maintain trail system
- create interpretative scenes of visitors' center
- promote integrative livelihood models at El Pilar

## 4. Tourism

## (a) Objectives

- (i) To conserve cultural and environmental integrity of the local area
- (ii) To develop positive and negative impacts tourism
- (iii) To promote a new tourism concept “Archaeology Under the Canopy” for the community
- (iv) To encourage sustainable business activities through maintaining the community character (e.g. forest gardening)
- (iv) To give priority to local community in the granting of concessions in the Reserve
- (b) Activities
  - (i) Short Term
    - promote craft, food, and beverage sales in the community
    - form committee to address rules for tourism impacts within the community and within the Reserve
    - formulate a community committee to address concession policy in the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve
  - (ii) Medium Term
    - contact travel wholesalers and travel writers
    - develop excursions and concessions that enhance the objectives of the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve (horses, canoes, hiking, forest garden walks),
    - design field trips and exchange programs to other community-based tourism sites to evaluate the pros and cons (mobile workshops)
  - (iii) Long Term
    - maintain tourism infrastructure between communities and reserve
    - promote established community tourism sites

5. Community Development

- (a) Objectives
  - (i) to encourage comprehensive planning of growth related to the reserve (goods, services, waste management, preservation)
  - (ii) to support the economic activities of community in nearby communities to improve the quality of life and achieve a sustainable use of cultural and natural resources
  - (iii) to give priority to local community, wherever possible, in the creation of permanent/temporary jobs related to the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve
  - (iv) to plan economic development in manner consistent with the cultural and environmental qualities at El Pilar
- (b) Activities
  - (i) Short Term
    - promote seminars/workshops by the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve staff in the local communities on sustainable development
    - identify economic resources and opportunities at El Pilar to help local community groups
  - (ii) Medium Term
    - collaboration of the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve administration to develop proposals for community development
    - Encourage education on sustainable uses of renewable resources
    - Develop livelihood models at El Pilar for the conservation of Maya forest resources
    - Promote the EPAR model as a conservation strategy for the Maya forest
  - (iii) Long Term
    - El Pilar Archaeological Reserve administration ensures profits from concessions in the reserve include the community
    - El Pilar Archaeological Reserve administration encourages the development of artistry from natural resources found at the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve (e.g. Corozo)
    - Realize the EPAR model as a conservation strategy for the Maya forest

**C. Research and Monitoring Program**

1. General Objectives: Research, Education, Protection

- (a) To focus on nexus of culture and nature
  - (i) promote sustainable extraction strategies for plants/animals (e.g. Corozo)
  - (ii) education of community to participation in long term management of El Pilar
  - (iii) encourage dissemination and publication of preliminary results
- (b) To promote solicited science and independent science that creatively considers culture and nature

- (i) standardized data collection methods to facilitate comparisons
  - (ii) UTM grid location of data sites
  - (iii) comparable recording techniques
  - (iv) maintain highest standards of scientific research
  - (c) To develop a comprehensive Geographic Information System (GIS) (include all scientific data within the reserve boundaries)
  - (d) To organize a research committee made up of research scientists working in the area
    - (i) to establish peer review process to evaluate research
    - (ii) to develop “handbook” for systematic and vicarious information gathered within the reserve and to encourage dissemination to the community
    - (iii) to promote centralized database of information (all information available, preliminary field reports of research/observations)
    - (iv) to track and coordinate access to preliminary reports and other grey literature
    - (v) to promote and facilitate research and permit process at El Pilar
    - (vi) to facilitate scientific enterprise and communications between scientists and between the committee and governments
    - (vii) to promote periodic scientific roundtables
    - (viii) to attract more research projects
2. General Activities:
- (a) Short Term
    - (i) develop teachers packages (audio/visual kits) for schools
    - (ii) contribute illustrative information to the Be Pukte and other community repositories
    - (iii) incorporate new data into the trail guide for the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve
    - (iv) document the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve research and development process
    - (v) issues to address
      - permit-processing
      - areas of investigation
      - research advisory committee
  - (b) Medium Term
    - (i) Visitor Center and associated educational presentations on research programs
    - (ii) Promotion of the forest-as-a-Garden model for El Pilar
  - (c) Long Term
    - (i) Promote model for interdisciplinary research
    - (ii) Realize the conceptual integration of culture and nature
3. Cultural Resources Objectives
- (a) To adhere to the conservation principles:
    - the Athens Charter 1931, the Venice Charter 1964, and the Burra Charter 1966
  - (b) To understand the prehistory, history, and contemporary development of El Pilar (archaeological, survey, excavation, archives, library)
  - (c) To promote a coherent archaeological conservation program for all of El Pilar
  - (d) To develop a conservation monitoring program to maintain El Pilar
  - (e) To adopt the theme of *Travel Through Time* and *View Everyday Life* –past, present, future
4. Cultural Resources Activities
- (a) Short Term
    - (i) inventory of cultural remains to establish a research and monitoring baseline
    - (ii) investigate the construction sequence of Nohol and Xaman Pilar using the tunneling method focused at Copal (EP7) and the Hemena (EP20)
    - (iii) continue development of the Forest Garden to show aspects of everyday life
    - (iv) complete the excavation, exposition, and consolidation at 1) Tzunu’un, 2) EP7 stairs of Copal, 3) EP25 of Plaza Lec
    - (v) initiate monitoring system for consolidation program and institute improvements
    - (vi) develop cultural conservation program
  - (b) Medium Term
    - (i) include Pilar Poniente in trail system
    - (ii) the excavation, consolidation, and exposition of “Archaeology Under the Canopy” at key locations of

- Copal
  - Gumbolimbo
  - Hemena
- (iii) expand the Forest Garden developments at El Pilar to include the mosaic of land use areas, in the variety of landscapes within the reserve
  - (iv) continue to monitor conservation strategies for revisions and improvements
- (c) Long Term
- (i) analyze, publish results of research and conservation programs
  - (ii) promote conservation program
  - (iii) establish the varied aspects of the model mosaic of ancient Maya life ways in the different identified natural life zone systems within the reserve

5. Natural Resources Objectives

- (a) To understand the natural history of El Pilar
- (b) To promote an appreciation of the human interface with the natural environment at El Pilar, past and present
- (c) To focus on the dynamics of the forest through research on succession, edge effects, and examination of equilibrium
- (d) To determine indicator species for monitoring program
- (e) To demonstrate the necessity of wildlife corridors in the viability of small reserves like El Pilar and document the contribution of small reserves like El Pilar to the maintenance of bio-diversity and refuges for plants and animals

6. Natural Resources Activities

- (a) Short Term
  - (i) inventory of species and communities of plants and animals for baseline
  - (ii) establish permanent monitoring plots and transects for research and monitoring programs
  - (iii) determine baseline soils, species, light for milpas and other stages of forest within the reserve
  - (iv) determine protocol for monitoring within the reserve boundaries
  - (v) establish air photography base and ground proofing
- (b) Medium Term
  - (i) periodic monitoring of permanent plots and transects (as needed, at least every 5 yrs)
  - (ii) measure dynamics of forest
- (c) Long Term
  - (i) analyze, publish results of research and conservation programs
  - (ii) promote conservation program
  - (iii) continue periodic monitoring of permanent plots and transects (as needed, at least every 5 yrs)
  - (iv) continue to measure dynamics of forest

7. Integrated monitoring and management concerns

- (i) maintain natural environment in public areas
- (ii) manage natural environment on monuments
- (iii) determine impact standards on natural and cultural resources in public areas
- (iv) incorporate community monitors to increase local investment
- (v) incorporate tourism trails into resource monitoring agenda
- (vi) promote an integrated management strategy between management entities (Archaeology, Forestry, Lands etc.)
- (vii) propagate model for the regional conservation of cultural and natural resources

**D. Zoning, Land Use, Access**

1. Objectives: The El Pilar Archaeological Reserve for Maya Flora and Fauna (EPAR)

To protect the cultural and natural resources present in the Reserve and determine proper usage. All extractive processes (looting, hunting, timber , etc.) should be prohibited within the Reserve boundaries to facilitate and monitor the recuperation in the Reserve while gathering scientific info on succession and reforestation. A one kilometer zone surrounding the entirety of the Reserve should be created for the purposes of limited and sustainable extraction and education.

- (a) To create a comprehensive plan for research, education, protection of resources at the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve
  - (i) based on available research data
  - (ii) consider impact on culture & nature
- (b) To develop environment to benefit visitors and community
  - (i) facilities
  - (ii) concessions
  - (iii) trails
  - (iv) roads
- (c) To manage relationship inside/outside the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve
  - (i) promote a conservation zone of influence around the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve
  - (ii) develop camping facilities outside the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve
  - (iii) manage road access (close to through traffic in phase, monitor rerouted roads)
  - (iv) encourage alternative agricultural practices based of the forest garden model
- (d) to create zones which protect the cultural and natural resources of the Reserve while involving and considering the local communities and their needs.

2. Activities

- (a) Culture/Nature Zone
  - (i) research – inform management/capacity in the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve
  - (ii) protection – establish a continuum of access based on recuperation and succession, research projects, and interpretation exhibits (from tourist trails to forbidden zones)
  - (iii) interpretation – use research data for interpretative trails and information
  - (iv) extraction – develop data base to serve a model of sustainable extractive uses and education that would include a buffer zone of influence around the reserve
- (b) Development Zone
  - (i) concessions – involve community participation
  - (ii) infrastructure – develop funding priorities
    - construct facilities related to the reserve (Caretakers base, visitors centers for exhibits, control points to inhibit through traffic, research base to assist in field work)
    - develop roads in reserve to facilitate access and monitoring with control access points developed in 2 phases
    - expand trail system for interpretive exhibits on culture and nature (demonstrate diversity of culture and nature, minimize impact on resources, unified and well- designed system including all aspects of the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve)
  - (iv) maintenance of park developments
- (c) Zone of Influence surrounding the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve (Belize – SDA; Guatemala – ZUM)
  - (i) access
    - improve roads to reserve to allow community access beyond reserve and control within reserve with diversions around culture core developed over 2 phases that includes improving visual approaches
    - insure access around reserve and monitoring of boundaries along roads
    - trails from communities to reserve for hiking, observation, and horseback
  - (ii) communities
    - promote camping facilities in zone of influence for visitors
    - create 40 meter forested buffer along access road to limit views of agriculture/pasture zones
- (d) Resources or areas of special interest (Culture/Nature)
  - (i) identify within the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve for research, protection, education
  - (ii) recognize outside the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve for research, protection, education

**IV. ADMINISTRATION – FORMAL/INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

**A. General**

1. Objectives

- (a) To establish an administrative/management presence at the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve

- (i) to establish an administrative framework for implementation of the Management Plan in Belize and Guatemala
- (ii) to establish a coordination mechanism between Belize and Guatemala to implement the Management Plan

2. The Management Entity in Belize

Belize  
 Institute of Archaeology  
 NGO (ID)  
 Consortium

3. Delegation of Authority

Belize  
 By agreement (Belize Audubon Soc. Model)  
 Design for Inst. of Archaeology

4. Non-Delegable Authority

Belize and Guatemala

- (a) Security and Enforcement
- (b) Research Approvals
- (c) Review and Application of Master Plan and Amendments

5. Duration

Belize  
 (a) 5 years  
 (b) Annual Operating Plan

6. Procedure for Plan Approval

Belize (Belize Audubon Soc. Model)  
 Inst. of Archaeology/NICH

7. Technical Advisory Team Consultative Council for El Pilar  
 Description of CoCEP:

Knowledge of the resources of the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve  
 Commitment to resource management and conservation  
 Liaison between management and community  
 Interest in promoting cross border interactions

<u>Belize</u>	<u>Guatemala</u>
Advisory Team	Advisory Committee
(a) Composition	(a) Composition
Village Council member	Municipality member
AdEP member	Community member
EP Program member	NGO member
IoA member	IDAEH member
BTB/BTIA member	CONAP member
EPAR member	EP reserve member
Required CoCEP Meetings	Required CoCEP Meetings
Ad hoc Informal Liaisons	Ad hoc Informal Liaisons

8. Management Entity

Belize and Guatemala

Maintain communication and must consult with CoCEP, BUT the recommendations of the CoCEP are not binding

## 9. International Coordination Capacity (2 levels)

<u>Belize and Guatemala</u>	
(a) High	
(i) Formal Agreement for cultural exchange	
• UNESCO as a facilitator	
• Embassies as a facilitator	
(b) Low	
(i) Memoranda of Agreement/Understanding	
<u>Belize</u>	<u>Guatemala</u>
Forestry	CONAP
Inst. of Archaeology	IDAEH

## 10. Responsibilities of Joint CoCEP

- (a) Review Progress of the Management and Operating Plan
- (b) Develop and implement common standards for management (e.g. research, administration, tourism, community, etc.)

## 11. General Administration Issues for the EPAR

- (a) Create annual operation plan
- (b) Create annual budget
- (c) Register visitors and maintain visitor data
- (d) Request/acquire necessary material/equipment
- (e) Produce list of training needs and implement training program
- (f) Manage reserve accounts
- (g) Plan/regulate personnel requirements
- (h) Explore legal/financial opportunities for long term sustainability of reserve

## 11. Issues of Concern

- (a) Resolution of outstanding land issues within the reserve (Belize /Guatemala)
- (b) Develop education programs for Belize/Guatemala in co-management of resources at the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve of Belize and Guatemala
- (c) Utilization of the Reserve as a contiguous park
- (d) Identify funding sources and alternative combinations
  - (i) external sources
  - (ii) internal sources

## 12. Laws and International Agreements/Conventions Affecting the EPAR

## BELIZE

- (i) Ancient Monuments and Antiquities Act
- (ii) National Institute of Culture and History Act
- (iii) National Parks System Act
- (iii) Lands Utilization Act
- (iv) Special Development Areas
- (v) CCAD Agreement
- (vi) CCAB/AP
- (vii) CITES
- (viii) Convenio Centroamericano de Biodiversidad y Proteccion de Areas Silvestres Prioritarias en America central
- (ix) Alianza Centroamericana para el Desarrollo Sosostenible (ALIDES)
- (x) UNESCO: World Heritage Site Convention
- (xi) Environmental Protection Act, 1992.
- (xii) Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 1995

**B. International Coordination**

## 1. Objectives

To develop appropriate mechanisms to coordinate, manage, research and other activities at El Pilar between Belize and Guatemala



2. **Activities**
  - (a) **Short Term**
    - (i) informal technical exchange as basis for CoCEP – plan Mesa Redonda III and other exchanges
    - (ii) secure a Carta de Intención for general cooperation between the relevant government agencies  
CONAP –of Department Forestry  
Institute of Archaeology – IDAEH
  - (b) **Medium Term**
    - (i) pursuant the Carta de Intención, establish a joint Technical Advisory Team under the jurisdiction of each management entity
    - (ii) develop and implement joint management strategy
  - (c) **Long Term**
    - (i) formal agreement for cultural exchange (UNESCO, Embassies)
    - (ii) prepare appropriate delegation agreement and, if necessary, statutory instrument
    - (xiii) promote standing joint Technical Advisory Team for cooperative management at El Pilar
3. **International Relations BELIZE**
  - (a) The Government, via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is the only governmental entity that may sign agreements at the national or political level.
  - (b) The Institute of Archaeology, National Institute of Culture and History, through the Director of the Institute of Archaeology is the entity that may sign agreements between institutions with regional or international objectives
  - (c) Protected areas alone may sign letters of understanding with other protected areas at the international level

**C. Financial**

1. **Objectives**

To develop a sustainable funding basis for the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve (Belize/Guatemala)
2. **Activities**
  - (a) **Short Term**
    - (i) develop the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve as a eco-tourist destination for immediate community benefits in marketing
    - (ii) maintain transparency in El Pilar Archaeological Reserve management planning
  - (b) **Medium Term**
    - (i) account for direct economic development, social benefits and environmental conservation
      - longer stays in Cayo
      - concessions in the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve
      - visitor receipts at the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve
      - longer stays in Cayo
      - access to community facilities (Be Pukte, stores, restaurants, etc.)
    - (ii) create an education link for students
      - conservation at the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve
      - education in cultural/natural resources
  - (c) **Long Term**
    - (i) develop economic and conservation indicators to demonstrate contribution to conservation goals
    - (ii) evaluate economic and conservation benefits at the local, regional and global levels

**D. Facilities Maintenance**

1. **Objectives**

To develop and maintain physical infrastructure within the reserve
2. **Activities**
  - (a) **Short Term**
    - (i) to enhance the forest canopy at the El Pilar center and surrounding trails
    - (ii) develop and implement a regular maintenance program for basic trails, informal facilities, improve restrooms
  - (b) **Medium Term**
    - (i) develop and maintain visitor way stations along trails and basic visitor center

- (ii) forge alliances with local forest gardeners for visitor education, site maintenance, and heritage promotion
- (c) Long Term
  - (i) develop and maintain appropriate developed tourist facilities, services, visitors' centers with appropriate materials
  - (ii) promote the El Pilar Maya forest as a garden.

**E. Conflict Management and Enforcement**

- 1. Objective
  - To be able to manage conflicts within the reserve administration between the reserve and the communities and between the two nations
- 2. Activity
  - Identify supportive institutional linkages in Belize and Guatemala (OAS)
  - Create a protocol for conflict resolution
    - Local
    - Regional
    - International

**F. Community Participation**

Formally part of administrative structure for short, medium and long term activities  
Incorporated into the communication schedule for all actions and developments

**G. Co-Management issues**

Joint Belize/Guatemala or Government/NGO

**V. IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE**

**A. Objectives**

- 1. To follow a schedule and sequence for implementing a management plan
- 2. To stage and prioritize plan for maximum management flexibility
- 3. To jointly implement the development, monitoring and communication channels for the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve in Belize and Guatemala
- 4. To develop the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve within the regional context of the Mundo Maya
  - (a) EPAR cultural destination in the context of nature in Belize
  - (a) EPAR natural destination in the context of culture in Guatemala
  - (b) Educate visitors in protecting the monuments and conserving the environment

**B. Activities**

- 1. Short Term
  - (a) Establish schedule
    - (i) Short Term: years 1 to 2; urgent requisites
    - (ii) Medium Term: years 3-4; necessary requisites
    - (iii) Long Term: years 5+; feasible activities
  - (b) Implement schedule for protection, resource management, education, tourism, interpretation, community participation, research, monitoring, administration, maintenance
  - (c) Maintain trails in culture destination
  - (d) Evaluate trail system for nature destination
  - (e) Create security protocol
- 2. Medium Term
  - (a) Maintain schedule
  - (b) Establish trail for nature destination
  - (c) Maintain trail system to culture/nature areas
  - (d) Evaluate security protocol

3. Long Term
  - (a) Re-evaluate schedule
  - (b) Evaluate trail systems
  - (c) Maintain trail systems to culture/nature areas
  - (d) assess security protocols

**C. Monitoring Issues**

Objectives

To jointly establish periodic monitoring strategies to evaluate and assess management plan

Activities

Short Term

- Coordinate the Joint CoCEP
- Establish joint efforts (boundary maintenance, cross-border visitation, international research)

Medium Term

- Establish a periodic schedule of joint monitoring efforts
- Promote cooperative CoCEP meetings

Long Term

- Continue to coordinate joint CoCEP meetings
- Enforce periodic joint monitoring tasks

**VI. BUDGET**

1. Protection/enforcement (patrols, guards, signs, caretakers' base)
2. Resource management (access zones, extraction zones)
3. Education (school visits, curriculum development, rules and regulations)
4. Tourism (information dissemination, visitors' center, visitor way stations)
5. Interpretation (trails, signage, exhibits)
6. Community participation (labor, AdEP, concessions, projects)
7. Research (inventory, protocol, documentation, dissemination)
8. Monitoring (wildlife transects, review of monuments, assessment of conservation)
9. Administration (annual operating plan/budget, visitor data, materials & equipment, training, accounts, personnel)
10. Maintenance (develop program, solid waste management program, equipment inventory)
11. Security (internal to the park, the immediate perimeter, community relations, cross border issues)

**VII. PROTECTED AREA TECHNICAL EVALUATION COMMITTEE ~ EL PILAR MAY 2000**

John Morris ~ Department of Archaeology, Chair  
 Anselmo Casteñada ~ Mesoamerican Biological Corridors  
 Eugene Ariola ~ Coastal Zone Management  
 Egenio Ah~ Belize Audubon  
 Elias Awe ~ Help for Progress  
 Joseph Palacio ~ University of West Indies  
 Rafeal Manzanero~ RARE International