

El Pilar Memorandum of Understanding
between and among
the Regents of the University of California,
on behalf of the Santa Barbara Campus'
Institute for Social, Behavioral and Economic Research
and MesoAmerican Research Center,
and
Exploring Solutions Past: the Maya Forest Alliance,
and
Belize National Institute of Culture and History,
and
Belize Institute of Archaeology.

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") acknowledges a willingness and ability of the Parties to work together to further common goals and seeks to support and strengthen that commitment.

WHEREAS, the Parties share a common interest in the Maya Forest and its people and in particular the archaeological site of El Pilar located in western Belize and bridging the Belize-Guatemala border, and believe that the site and its environs are important for prehistoric, historic, current, and future values including systems and policies about resource management and human survival,

WHEREAS, the Maya Civilization existed in the area between approximately 1000 BC and AD 1000, created the Maya Forest, and is the heritage of the contemporary people of the region,

WHEREAS, El Pilar was first recognized by the Government of Belize in 1972, and was first recorded and mapped in 1984, in collaboration with Dr. Anabel Ford of the University of California Santa Barbara ("UCSB"),

WHEREAS, the Parties signed a collaborative MOU affirming shared interests in the scientific and educational research at the ancient Maya center of El Pilar,

WHEREAS, the Government of Belize, acting through the National Institute of Culture and History ("NICH") and the Institute of Archaeology ("IA"), has supported scientific research, conservation development, and provided care for El Pilar, and in 1994 established a management presence, in 1995 delimited boundaries, in 1996 built park rangers facilities, and in 1998 declared the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve for Maya Flora and Fauna, pursuant to Statutory Instrument No. 34 of 1998,

WHEREAS, the University of California Santa Barbara ("UCSB") has supported scientific research and conservation development of the El Pilar area, through its research unit the Institute for Social, Behavioral and Economic Research ("ISBER") and in particular the MesoAmerican Research Center ("MARC"),

WHEREAS, the Belize River Archaeological Settlement Survey ("BRASS")

completed extensive work at El Pilar, under the direction of Dr. Anabel Ford, and in particular field work including mapping in 1984, the looter's trench investigation in 1986, full scale mapping in 1993-94, and exploratory excavations 1993-2004,

WHEREAS, this work led to recognition that the Maya Forests were not primeval jungles but had been managed by the Maya for centuries as Forest Gardens providing food and materials for the Maya and their way of life for centuries, thus Forest Gardens were established at the ancient Maya house of Tzunu'un of El Pilar in 1995, promoted at Masewal in 1999, advanced at the Santa Familia Primary School by the El Pilar Forest Garden Network in 2009, and creates a base for the development of a UNESCO application for Intangible World Heritage,

WHEREAS, local involvement emerged to assist and support the cooperative efforts of the Government of Belize and UCSB's representatives, including Amigos de El Pilar registered in 1994, the annual Fiesta El Pilar 1994-2002, and the El Pilar Forest Garden Network registered in 2008,

WHEREAS, this work led to the establishment of nonprofit organizations to assist and support in the scientific and educational work emerging at El Pilar and in the Forest Gardens, including Exploring Solutions Past: the Maya Forest Alliance ("ESP~Maya") that began in 2001 by conducting annual field operations and supporting local collaborations including the 2008 workshop "Building Common Ground" with the IA,

WHEREAS, the location of El Pilar on the Belize-Guatemala border has made it an example, via the Mesa Redonda El Pilar process, for cooperation, collaboration, and consensus building between governments at a time of confrontation and resource depletion in other parts of the world,

WHEREAS, the Governments of Belize and Guatemala declared El Pilar a protected area in 1998, the Master Plan for physical management of El Pilar was approved by Guatemala in 2004, the Management Plan was approved in 2005 and formally signed by Belize in 2006, and bilateral Belize-Guatemala cooperative MOU for El Pilar were established in 2008 that set the stage for a collaborative bi-national protected area,

WHEREAS, it has emerged that El Pilar is specially situated as a pilot for a program promoting its investigation by scientists, and use by visitors, as a model of "Archaeology Under the Canopy", a term which was coined in 2004 during the creation of the El Pilar Forest Garden Network concept to explain monument preservation by managing the forest over story already in place to protect monument degradation from the elements while providing a sense of awe in discovery and understanding of the Maya Forest and the Maya civilization by visitors.

And WHEREAS, funding has been provided by Peace Corps Belize, Canada Fund, British High Commission Belize, DFID, USAID, CAPAS, PRODOMA, MacArthur Foundation, Ford Foundation, Rolex Awards for Enterprise, Wallis Foundation, Adobe, Fullbright, Education Foundation for America, ESP~Maya, and US Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation,

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS AGREED, that

1. The Parties share a common desire to promote archaeological, scientific and educational research at El Pilar and its environs based on cooperation and mutually supportive policies and actions.
2. The Parties intend to work together on research at El Pilar and related activities with the aim of:
 - enhancing scientific understanding of El Pilar, Maya civilization, and the Forest Garden;
 - promoting goodwill between governments sharing common heritage sites;
 - achieving and/or facilitating a program of Archaeology Under the Canopy;
 - building capacity to address and adapt to the implementation of the El Pilar management planning process; and
 - facilitating mutually beneficial opportunities in relevant technologies, products and expertise learned from El Pilar and its environs.
3. All activities at El Pilar shall be implemented in accordance with the NICH Act and all other provisions of the laws of Belize, and with guidance provided by the Management Plan of the El Pilar Archaeological Reserve for Maya Flora and Fauna.
4. The IA/NICH shall maintain regulations by Statutory Instrument as may be necessary to ensure implementation of this MOU.
5. The Parties shall maintain regular interaction and information exchange to ensure that each Party will continue to facilitate, encourage and assist the other Party in all work, activities and projects at El Pilar.
6. Miscellaneous
 - a. This MOU will remain in effect for a period of five (5) years, commencing on the date of the last signature. The MOU may be renewed or extended through a written amendment signed by the authorized representatives of each party.
 - b. Any party may terminate the MOU at any time, with or without cause, by giving sixty (60) days written notice to the other. Upon notice of termination, all parties shall cease incurring any further obligations in connection with this MOU and the parties shall meet in good faith to establish a mutually-agreeable close out plan, which shall include the disposition of any remaining financial obligations.
 - c. No party shall be obligated to perform any activities under this MOU unless and until an appropriate and adequate source is identified to fund activities and the funded Party confirms that the proposed activity is consistent with its policies, practices, procedures and the shared vision set forth in section #2 of this MOU.
 - d. This MOU will be in accordance with applicable statutes, regulations and contracts governing the respective parties.

SIGNED in duplicate at Santa Barbara, California on this 24 day of January in the year 2011.

Regents of the University of California

By: Henry T. Yang
Henry Yang, Chancellor
University of California Santa Barbara

Institute for Social, Behavioral & Economic Research

By: Sarah Fenstermaker
Sarah Fenstermaker, Director

ISBER/MesoAmerican Research Center

By: Anabel Ford
Anabel Ford, Director

Exploring Solutions Past: the Maya Forest Alliance

By: Randall Fox
Randall Fox, Secretary

Belize National Institute of Culture and History

By: Diane C. Haylock
Diane C. Haylock, President

Belize Institute of Archaeology

By: George Thompson
George Thompson, Acting Director

