

## **Project Update: December 2011**

### Accomplishments:

- The Ecological Foundation signed a collaborative agreement with the Fisheries Management Council of the Dominican Republic (CODOPESCA) on September 16, 2011 and two other private development properties to work jointly with the fishermen in creating a co-management plan for approximately 20 miles of coastline in the Punta Cana area. This agreement empowers the Ecological Foundation to help guide and supervise the fishing activities of the local fishermen community.
- Access to the Juanillo fishing boats is now regulated and monitored by government issued licenses and restricted to fishermen that have registered with CODOPESCA.
- The existing fishing boat fleet has been officially registered with numbers and names.
- The marine area that will be included in the co-management agreement has been mapped and submitted to CODOPESCA for approval.
- Six fishermen have been trained in lobster house construction. A total of 200 houses have been built. Forty lobster houses have been placed in the water and are currently being monitored for lobster recruitment and used by the fishermen.
- Three fishermen are trained and are actively cooperating in lionfish fishing activities. Lion fish is an invasive species that is affecting reefs throughout the Caribbean. The Foundation has bought basic gear to facilitate safe capture of venomous lionfish and has facilitated sale of lionfish at local restaurants.
- The Ecological Foundation project coordinator has been trained and certified as an Emergency First Responder instructor. This person will be in charge of teaching the selected fishermen first aid and CPR courses.
- Catch, Picture, Release best practice manual as well-as a fish identification guide for tourists has been designed.
- Catch, Picture, Release fishing tours are currently offered to the tourist by a local marine excursion operator with oversight from the Ecological Foundation.

### Next steps:

- The Ecological Foundation will offer first-aid and CPR training for fishermen beginning in February 2012.
- The Ecological Foundation will offer basic English and basic boat captaining course beginning in February 2012.
- CODOPESCA and the Ecological Foundation have begun efforts to organize the fishermen into a formal fishing cooperative.
- The remaining lobster houses will be placed in the water and the cooperative will manage monitoring and extraction of lobster.
- Alternate sections of the reef will be designated as a no fishing areas during a period of time.

