

The Blue Atlas Project outlined during our previous emails and conversations regarding our work in the Bahamas moving the needle forward for increased food security post Dorian. We do this by providing infrastructure support, equipment, financial resources, and technical trainings on climate smart grow techniques. Please accept this letter as an introduction to our organization, our successes, and our goals for 2024 and beyond.

Our mission is to rebuild blue food systems with communities in crisis recovery. With blue foods, we specialize in aquaponics, aquaculture, and algae for finding innovative and climate smart ways to support food security development that alleviates multi-faceted issues of the region. We have been present in Abaco since 2020 when we broke ground on our first FEAST Center at the Agape Christian School located in the center of Marsh Harbor. We have hosted over a dozen in person trainings at the facility and our Garden Manager includes the children in the operating and science behind aquaponics systems. Virtually we have reached over 700+people in the Northern Caribbean with trainings on various growing techniques and technologies to help alleviate the need of imports for food security. In 2022 we began our first rounds of Scaling Up Local Agriculture (SULA) Grants to help small and new farmers get over the obstacles of basic infrastructure, providing $130,000.00 in grants and equipment to nearly 30 farmers in Abaco and Grand Bahamas. We are excited to continue to expand a hands-on teaching garden at strategic schools in the Bahamas and are developing the necessary partnerships to ensure their success.

Upon our first assessments of the Bahamas, we spoke with many farmers and community members to learn what some of the obstacles are to growing food on certain islands. What we found is that there is a lack of soil in many areas, and lack of nutrients in the soil where it exists making the importation of expensive fertilizers a necessity and out of reach for many. Coupled with the devastating impacts of Dorian that left many farmers and fisherman without basic equipment and infrastructure for their primary means of income. We wanted to alleviate those struggles and bring a hands-on learning environment to Abaco to allow interested persons to learn the basics of aquaponics and aquaculture to plant the seed for the future.

Our Programs

1. The expansion of our Food Equity and Sustainability Training (FEAST) Center to Eleuthera and Grand Bahamas. This will double as a school and community garden that is accessible to all interested students and individuals in those areas. We are developing FEAST Eleuthera with the Island School and One Eleuthera. I have also reached out to ADO regarding a strategic partnership for mutual support in our collective goals of sharing the knowledge of garden technology with students. $48,000.00
2. Development of the Northern Caribbean Aquaponic School Garden Curriculum. We will be working with two Abaco teachers and a curriculum consultant to develop this workbook to guide all teachers and schools through the first year of their aquaponic school garden. $10,000.00
3. Mangrove restoration project in Abaco in partnership with the school and community aquaponic gardens. We are developing an inter-island program with the Island School and communities in Abaco and Grand Bahamas. $14,000.00
4. Project Management: To oversee all aspects of these projects to fulfillment over the course of one year. $48,000.00

**Looking Forward:**

With funding Blue Atlas seeks to achieve the following goals:

* Introduce students and individuals to climate smart agricultural growing techniques to share interest and knowledge.
* Offer an innovative and creative curriculum in the agricultural and science departments that connects students of all backgrounds with the environmental, nutrition and health, along with economic (both personal and GDP) benefits that come with increased food security.
* Rebuild destroyed mangrove areas in Abaco and Grand Bahamas through a strategic partnership that provides on-going financial support to the school and community aquaponic gardens of the region to showcase the efficiency of propagation in the systems.

The Blue Atlas Projects’ diverse programming will benefit immensely from a grant of $120,000.00. By supporting farmers, fisherman and students in these challenging years, we're investing in the future of the Bahamas food security landscape. This not only enhances the prospects for current farmers and students but uplifts the entire community, as the youth of today will need to be the farmers of tomorrow.

I appreciate your consideration and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Kali Kirkendall

Founder & Executive Director

The Blue Atlas Project

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