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TREASURE OF THE CARIBBEAN

Produced by **Ana Salceda**
Executive producers: **Ivo Filatsch, Sabine Holzer**
1 x 50 min., 4K, 5.1 + Stereo



A Story of Hope in Troubling Times

Guatemala. A fisherman struggling to feed his family is forced further offshore and discovers an unknown reef a great distance from the mainland. The reef is brimming with life and big fish the likes of which haven't been seen before. When a handful of scientists find out, they conspire with local fishers to keep the reef a secret – and for good reason.

If word gets out, the reef will be plundered by a host of forces, such as illegal fishers from neighboring countries, unscrupulous charter boat captains catering to wealthy sports fishers, and fisheries officials willing to look the other way to line their pockets.

'Treasure of the Caribbean' is a rich mix of adventure, natural history, and cutting-edge conservation science told against a ticking clock.

The heroes of the story form an unlikely alliance: fishers, scientists and conservationists are working together to explore and protect the reef. What they are finding thus far is staggering. The reef is approximately 250 square kilometres, five times the size of Manhattan, featuring three-times the live coral-cover of any reef in the region, and it's teeming with life! There are canyons, vertical walls, subsea cliffs and deep ocean caves. But what's most remarkable is that the edge of the reef is studded by giant spires that sprout hundreds of feet off the sea floor, forming points that look like a crown, giving rise to its name, 'the Cayman Crown'.

But there's more! A series of clues suggests that the Crown is the site of an unknown fish breeding ground, a hotspot where tens-of-thousands of fish converge en masse – from far and wide – to reproduce. If true, the Crown could be critical to protecting and managing some of the region's most important commercial fish species, which millions of people and countless communities rely on.

'Treasure of the Caribbean' is a conservation story that unfolds on newly discovered coral reef. In times of despair, it's a powerful story of hope.

Central to the story is a bold new vision of reef and fisheries conservation. Fishers and scientists are

working side-by-side to uncover what they believe is a network of fish breeding grounds that seed each other, with the Crown as a critical hub. Their plan is deceptively simple: find and protect the breeding network and ensure healthy fish populations.

From discoveries to setbacks, from cutting-edge science to spectacular natural history, 'Treasure of the Caribbean' will take audiences to the frontlines of a struggle to explore and protect one of the most incredible natural discoveries of the 21st Century ... offering us all a blueprint for a new era in ocean conservation.

A production of The WNET Group, Terra Mater Studios, BelugaSmile Productions LLC and HHMI Tangled Bank Studios in co-production with Doclights/NDR Naturfilm in association with PBS and CPB

