

St Eustatius National Marine Park

A SPAW listed protected area



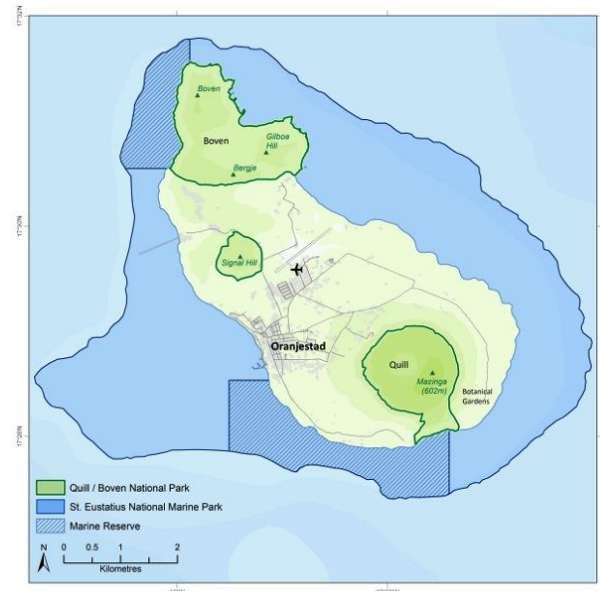
Country: The Kingdom of the Netherlands

Management structure / authority: The St Eustatius National Parks Foundation (STENAPA) is nongovernmental, not for profit foundation

Date of establishment: 9th January 1996

Date of listing under SPAW: 09 December 2014

Size (marine surface): 27 sq. km



Context:

The St Eustatius National Marine Park was created in 1996 and extends around the entire island from the high-water line to 30m depth contour. The park covers an area of 27.5 sq. km and protects a variety of habitats, including pristine coral reefs (drop off walls, volcanic 'fingers' and 'bombs', spur and groove systems) and 18th century shipwrecks. It includes two no-take zones (reserves) as well as general use zones and designated anchoring zones for large commercial ships.

The Marine Park's objectives are to conserve marine biodiversity, protect fish stocks and promote sustainable tourism.

Main fauna populations and/or those of particular importance present (resident or migratory) in the area:

All four Caribbean species of **turtle** can be found in Statia's open water. A number of **Cetaceans** are regular visitors both to the reefs and the waters around St Eustatius, including; Baleen Whale Species, Pilot Whales, Dwarf Sperm Whales, Humpback Whales, Gervais's Beaked Whales, Killer Whales, Melon-Headed Whales, Sperm Whales, Pantropical Spotted Dolphins, Striped Dolphin, Spinner Dolphins, Bottlenose Dolphins, Cuvier's Beaked Whales. Manta Rays and Eagle Rays also visit the Marine Park from Deeper waters.

There are a number of **birds** that live almost exclusively in the open ocean environment, using St Eustatius as a breeding ground or migratory stop over. The population of Redbilled tropicbirds is estimated at 800 individuals with between 300 and 500 nesting pairs.



Main ecosystems in the area:

The two most important ecosystems in the Marine Park are sea grass beds and coral reefs. Both are highly productive, fragile and valuable marine resources.

The sand and algae habitats, beaches and rocky shores also provide important homes, breeding grounds and foraging areas for a range of marine species, some of them endangered.

Potential Threats:

Six key threats to the biodiversity St Eustatius National Marine Park were identified. These are invasive and other problematic species and genes; pollution entering or generated within the protected area; biological resource use and harm within a protected area; human intrusion and disturbance within a protected area; residential and commercial development; climate change and severe weather.

Enabling Strategies

Developing institutional capacity (including good governance and staff development)

Influencing policy, regulation and management

Optimizing income generation

Providing nature education opportunities to school age children

Communicating effectively (including outreach, media, social media and interpretation)

Implementing science and monitoring programs to support management

Providing excellent enforcement (including permitting, rules, regulations advice)

Conservation Strategies

Ensuring the St. Eustatius National Parks Foundation is a valued conservation partner

Optimizing habitat protection (resilience), building support for conservation and restoration efforts

Optimizing conservation management for species of special interest

Improving sustainable recreational and commercial use of the Parks

Improving management for commercially important species

Reducing the (potential) impact of invasive species of fauna and flora

Addressing climate change readiness

Contact:

Website: <https://www.statiapark.org/>

Email address:

The St Eustatius National Marine Park is part of the **SPAW protected areas managers network**.

For more information about it: <https://www.car-spaw-rac.org/?Protected-Areas>