

Bonaire National Marine Park

A SPAW listed protected area



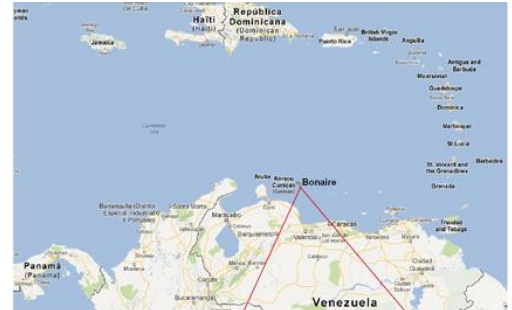
Country: The Kingdom of the Netherlands

Management structure / authority: STINAPA Bonaire

Date of establishment: 1st January 1979

Date of listing under SPAW: 23 October 2012

Size (marine surface): 27 sq. km



Context:

The Bonaire National Marine Park was first established in 1979. It surrounds the island of Bonaire and includes the satellite island and the waters around Klein Bonaire. Bonaire lies in the Southern Caribbean approximately 100km (60 miles) north of Venezuela and 12' north of the equator. Bonaire is unusual in that it is a true oceanic island, separated from the South American mainland by a deep-water trench.

Bonaire has a well-deserved international reputation for excellence in the field of SCUBA diving and is routinely listed in the top five destinations for the Caribbean.

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

Bonaire's marine environment is living, foraging and breeding ground, and migratory stop over, for many species that are locally, regionally and globally protected, including mammals, fish, crustaceans, birds and corals. This includes at least 796 documented species of plants and animals. The shoreline and Klein Bonaire are known to be home to 97 bird species, 9 bat species, and 30 insect species that are important for conservation.

A total of 362 fish species were reported. Around thirty species of marine mammals, including Bottle Nose Dolphin, Spinner Dolphin, Sperm Whale and Humpback Whale, are known to frequent the waters around Bonaire. An estimated 33 species of elasmobranch are believed to be present in the Dutch Caribbean, consisting 28 species of sharks and 5 species of rays. Three species of sea turtle are also found frequently in Bonaire's waters.



Main ecosystems in the area:

The marine park encompasses 2,700 ha of fringing coral reef, seagrass and mangrove ecosystems, and contains representative habitats and ecosystems from the shore to intertidal environments and from coral reefs to deep water environments.

The shallow reef environment is dominated by forests of gorgonians, principally seafans, and low growing corals and some areas are dominated by dense algal assemblages, which may have an important ecological role to play.

Potential Threats:

Five key threats to the biodiversity Bonaire National Marine Park were identified. There are pollution; invasive / problematic species; biological resource use; residential and commercial development; and human intrusions / disturbance.

As main pressure there are tourism, overgrazing, poor water management, coastal zone development, artificial beaches, climate change, disease, fishing, and physical damage.

MANAGEMENT PLAN

Sustainable Recreation

- Develop novel attractions in the marine park
- Improve safety at sea
- Improve recreational infrastructure
- Improve communication and outreach to marine park users
- Develop and enforce policy for beaches

Sustainable Fishing

- Provide input into and enforce fisheries policy
- Support fisheries cooperation PISKABON

Control invasive species and disease

- Control lionfish
- Monitor invasive seagrass
- Minimize the impact of sargassum on marine ecosystems, economy and public health
- Prepare for disease outbreaks

Policy and Legislation

- Provide input to the development of policy, legislation and development plans
- Generate adequate structural funding for effective protected area management

Optimize protection for key habitats and species

- Generate the necessary information for effective conservation action
- Review zoning policy
- Address nutrient, sediment and pollution pressures
- Strengthen surveillance and enforcement

Support restoration of key habitats and species

- Facilitate and support coral restoration activities
- Support mangrove restoration efforts
- Facilitate seagrass restoration efforts
- Support reforestation efforts

Contact:

Website: <https://stinapabonaire.org/>

Email address:

The Bonaire 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>