

# FOUNDATION NEWS



A publication of Nature Foundation St. Maarten

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## DCNA Board Meeting



**Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance** held its first board meeting for the year, from May 21<sup>st</sup> thru 25<sup>th</sup>. The meeting was hosted on Bonaire by STINAPA Bonaire and attended by all park managers.

On the agenda of the board meeting were protection and preservation of the natural land and underwater treasures of the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba.

Special guest, Frans Kerkhoff represented Her Royal Majesty Queen Beatrix in his capacity as Financial and Economic Advisor to the Governor of the Netherlands Antilles. Last November Queen Beatrix became a patron of DCNA, indicating that nature conservation in the Dutch Antilles has got her attention.

Other invited guests were support group representatives of the organisations Stichting Nationale Parken, de Landschappen, IUCN-NL, Milieu Kontakt, and Vogelbescherming NL. Other special guests were IUCN-NL Chairperson Doeke Eisma, Mike Smith of Conservation International and head of Environment and Nature (MINA) Laetitia Buth on Curaçao.

DCNA is a non-profit organisation that supports nature conservation activities of national and local institutions, which are responsible for the conservation of nature, species and/or management of protected areas and other areas of high natural value in the Dutch Caribbean.

DCNA functions as the contact point between the parks and the international world of funding and plays a key role in bringing together park managers and international partners for networking opportunities.

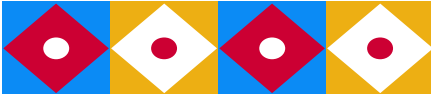
Another very important accomplishment up until now is the establishment of the Trust Fund, which once fully capitalised within the next ten years, will guarantee the parks' sustainable existence well into the future.

So, with the great success of this board meeting we look forward to the second one, scheduled to take place in November on Aruba and to be hosted by Parke National Arikok.



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Dear Reader,

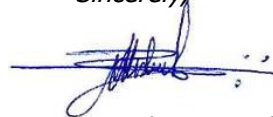
Welcome to this year's second issue of *Foundation News!*

*In recent days, news of the Foundation's precarious financial situation has reached the Press but despite this challenge we are committed to giving service particularly in the form of grassroots level education and public awareness on environmental and conservation issues that affect us all.*

*Once again, our education programme was successful this past school year. That you recognize our efforts in this regard was evident in our education coordinator being awarded as this year's most outstanding environmental educator.*

*In addition, we have been the recipient of generous financial support from various sources in our community to help to cover some of our expenses. We are very grateful to these donors and as always to each of you for your support of Nature Foundation.*

Sincerely,



Beverly Mae Nisbeth  
 Marine Park Manager

**AUC Donates to the Foundation**



Earlier this year, they organised a wine and cheese evening at which they raised enough funds to offer donations to various local non-profit organizations. Nature Foundation was one of the recipients of an endowment to the tune of \$1,800. These funds will be used to purchase a VHF radio for the boat, Yellowtail, and the office. Thank you AUC!

The students of the American University in the Caribbean (AUC) in Cupecoy are known for volunteering in the local community.



**New Engines for Yellowtail!**



Bay Pond. Because these mangroves are thriving and new engines for our patrol boat were a priority, we asked for half the pledge to go towards new engines. With PJIAE's approval, we were finally able to order two brand new engines. Once they've arrived, Yellowtail will undergo a complete overhaul, making her as good as new once again and ready for her duty as patrol and work boat.

In November 2006 we received a Naf 50.000 pledge from PJIAE for the continuation of the mangrove restoration projects at Fresh Pond and Little

## An for the Teacher!

**I**n Island Vision's Second Annual Windward Islands Environmental Award night on June 6<sup>th</sup>, Nature Foundation was nominated for two categories: 'Outstanding Environmental Education' and 'Outstanding Organisation Supporting Environmental Awareness'. The award was won in the first category by Dominique Vissenberg for Nature Foundation's educational program: Captain Scout of the Black Turtle.

Nature Foundation started its full time educational program in November 2004 as a joint project

with Saba Conservation Foundation and STENAPA St. Eustatius. Although it originated as a one-year assignment, the three marine parks managed to extend it to three years. Interesting is the diversity of topics and environmental angles that have been taken. Not only 'green' projects were carried out for the community to experience nature, such as the sea turtle project. But also the 'grey' environmental topics have been discussed, for instance the second year focus on 'waste management'.

*Continued on page 4.*



## This Year's Students and Interns



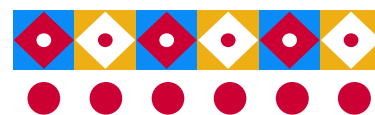
Nature Foundation often facilitates a student by acting as a guide and helping the student to achieve the internship objectives. Typically, students from abroad contact us via our website requesting to do their internship with us.

On April 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>, Nature Foundation hosted two MPC students for career orientation. HAVO and VWO students, Shaeza Ramjiawan and Lisandro Suriel picked Nature Foundation for their career orientation because of their interest in possibly pursuing future studies in those fields. Their article on mangroves was published for Earth Day in the Daily Herald of April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2007.



Casper Kruizinga, a second year student of the Hoge school Van Hall in Leeuwarden is winding down his 3-month internship on tree conservation and legislation which entailed reviewing St. Maarten's Hillside Policy and exploring existing legislation in the wider Caribbean.

The idea is to make a comparison analysis followed by recommendations for improvement of the Hillside Policy. The second part of his project should result in a GIS map showing current low-density areas where existing trees are at risk of being cut down for real estate or other development.



### Coming up...

**10 - Day Workshop on Marine Biology and Environment on Curacao: July 9th—19th**

**10 - Day Sea Turtle Anatomy Course in Bermuda: August 5th—17th**



Guess what and where?

## An for the Teacher! *Continued...*

But both angles are so entangled that when you are dealing with one, you have to talk about the other. Animals won't stay around for us to enjoy in a polluted area. Therefore, last year's project on the importance of marine life and coastal vegetation was a distinct combination of both.

Although environmental education can have a broad target group, we mainly focussed on schools and school youth to explain to our future community how they can help to keep our island clean. People are not always taken much by the topic of nature protection and children in school are sometimes difficult to entertain. So to make environmental topics fun and attractive in order to get children interested in getting

involved, we put a lot of time in making the right materials for the lessons. For every project Dominique did approximately 300 class visits on the three islands St. Maarten, Saba and St. Eustatius.

Not only numbers are important for determining whether the educational efforts have been effective or not. Sometimes you also get signs of appreciation from the students who enjoy the lessons and tell us what they liked best or what they learned or from teachers who write what they did to follow up on the lessons, suggestions for new lesson topics or a request that we visit their school again. And now this award, which is a very gracious token of appreciation from the whole community.



We want to thank you all and we look forward to many more exciting projects in the future.

### OUR (PROJECT) FUNDERS & PARTNERS

MINA  
KNAP  
IUCN-NL  
INNO-WWF  
Stichting DOEN  
Prins Bernhard Cultuur Fonds  
Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance  
(DCNA)

### THANK YOU!

We wish to acknowledge the following organizations and businesses which have recently made donations to Nature Foundation or that support us regularly. We are incredibly grateful for their support.

- PJIAE
- DeskTop Publishing
- St. Maarten Harbor Holding Co.
- Bunchies Garage and Trucking NV
- American University in the Caribbean