

# Presentations, Workshops and Excursions Provide New Nature Conservation Drive in Participants

During the 2019 edition of the DCNA convention held on Bonaire end of October, biologists from the region met to thoroughly discuss coral restoration, the Coral Action Plan, the (citizen) science platform Observation.org and the next Dutch Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) call for research proposals. In addition to attending presentations and workshops, the biologists from, among others, the six national parks of the Dutch Caribbean also went on an excursion to gain first-hand experience on the coral restoration work of the Reef Renewal Foundation on Bonaire.

## [In-depth information on coral recovery](#)

The park biologists are now better informed on when and how to apply coral restoration methods since the presentations and workshops represented a unique opportunity to learn from each other's knowledge and experiences. This newly gained knowledge will undoubtedly benefit the work carried out on the other islands.

*"It is very inspiring to see what is already being done on Bonaire and to learn from the experiences of the other islands. It is also very insightful to learn about the available knowledge and how accessible it is made through the developed methodologies."*  
Jessica Berkel (STENAPA-St Eustatius).

## [Public Lecture Creates Mixed Feelings amongst Attendees](#)

The public lecture held on Monday night caused mixed feelings amongst those in attendance. Based on scientific standards, the status of the coral reefs in the Dutch Caribbean is moderate to very unfavorable. This means that urgent measures need to be taken. The main consideration is that the status of the coral reefs are crucial for the sustainable prosperity of the islands in the long term. The willpower to take action and prevent further decline of coral reefs is therefore very strong at this moment. In the coming years, the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA) will also focus on coral recovery.



*During the 2019 edition of the DCNA convention on Bonaire, biologists from local organizations such as Aruba National Park Foundation, STINAPA Bonaire, Reef Renewal Foundation Bonaire, CARMABI Curaçao, Saba Conservation Foundation, Sint Maarten Nature Foundation and EPIC, STENAPA and CNSI of Sint Eustatius were united on October 28 for a full day of workshops.*

*Photo by: © Skyview Bonaire*

### Citizens Can Help Report Animal and Plant Species

Hans Verdaat presented how the free website [www.DutchCaribbean.Observation.org](http://www.DutchCaribbean.Observation.org) and apps could be used by the nature conservation organisations of the Dutch Caribbean. This free website and free apps can be used not only by biologists but by all citizens to report animals and plants and is available in more than 40 languages. It is now also being translated to Papiaments. The species reports by local communities are very valuable for the nature conservation organization to learn and protect the species on our islands. For more information, contact: [research@dcnanature.org](mailto:research@dcnanature.org)

### Exploring Inter-Island Collaboration Possibilities

Arjan de Groene of World Wildlife Fund (WWF-NL) gave a workshop on the Nature Policy

Plan including the Coral Action Plan that is under development for the BES islands. The workshop provided a valuable platform for the participants to give input on how to successfully implement this plan and for the other three Dutch Caribbean islands Aruba, Curaçao and St. Maarten to give input for possible future inter-island collaborations with the BES-islands.

### Optimization of New Research Projects

Joseph Stuefer and Niels van den Berg from the Dutch Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) gave an update on the upcoming call for scientific research proposals in the Dutch Caribbean. This workshop also provided a valuable platform for local organizations to discuss the desired approach and results of research projects through which they can improve the management of nature parks and protect vulnerable areas and animals.



*During the 2019 edition of the DCNA convention on Bonaire, Dr. Erik Meesters (WMR) gave a well-attended public talk on the status of the Dutch Caribbean reefs.*

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