‘The efforts and dedication of everyone involved in DCNA – both professionals and the many enthusiastic volunteers – deserve the respect and support of us all’

Her Majesty, Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands
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photo contributions: B.S. & R.D. Kirkby (7, 16, 17, 32)
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design: R.J. van Oosten

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Introduction

Nature in the Dutch Caribbean

The islands of the Dutch Caribbean are blessed with a stunning diversity of tropical plants and animals, some of them endemic to the islands and found nowhere else on earth. The islands provide a safe haven for many significant globally threatened and endangered ecosystems and species and they are without a doubt the most important biodiversity hotspot within the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

These tiny Dutch Caribbean islands are home to approximately 1% of the world’s threatened coral reefs as well as globally endangered seagrass and mangrove ecosystems. They include two distinct and regionally important marine biodiversity hotspots: the oceanic islands of Bonaire and Curacao and the offshore atoll of the Saba Bank. The Saba Bank, which is only now being surveyed, has the highest diversity of marine plants of any system in the Caribbean and continues to reveal species new to science.

The islands of Saba and St Eustatius boast both primary and secondary rainforests and Saba has a cloud forest ecosystem unique in the world. The islands of Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao alone are home to over two hundred species and sub species of endemic plants and animals, which are found on these islands alone and nowhere else on earth.

Many globally threatened and endangered species, protected by the CITES Convention, thrive on and around the islands. These include over 50 species of hard coral, 8 birds of prey, five species of globally endangered sea turtle (four of which use the islands as their nesting ground), along with hummingbirds and flamingos, two species of iguana, the Queen conch, 17 species of cactus, 22 species of orchid, the tree fern and lignum vitae, to name but a few.

There are six wetlands of international significance in the Dutch Caribbean, which have been accepted on the internationally recognised RAMSAR wetland list and three natural world heritage site nominations, which are currently underway.

Looking beyond their intrinsic biological value the islands have also recognised the need to protect and conserve their fragile natural resources. Each island has at least one protected area and most have established both terrestrial and marine parks, several of which have received global recognition as Demonstration (Bonaire National Marine Park) and Target (Saba National Marine Park) sites by the International Coral Reef Action Network and UNEP.

The islands are also dependant on their superb natural resources as the cornerstone of their tourism linked economies. It has been shown that the parks provide millions of dollars in direct and indirect revenues to the islands. Any decrease in biological value will have serious economic consequences for the future of the islands.
Conservation in the Dutch Caribbean

The first protected area in the Dutch Caribbean was established on Bonaire nearly 40 years ago in May 1969. Since then protected areas have become the cornerstone of biodiversity conservation in the Dutch Caribbean.

There are now ten marine and land protected areas legally established on the six islands including Parke Nacional Arikok on Aruba, Bonaire National Marine Park and Washington Slagbaai National Park on Bonaire, Christoffel Park and Curacao Underwater Park on Curacao, Saba National Marine Park, Hiking Trails and Muriel Thissel Nature Park on Saba, Statia National Marine Park and the Quill Boven National Park on St Eustatius and the St Maarten Marine Park on St Maarten.

These protected areas provide a range of goods and services, which are not always easy to quantify. Traditionally their value has been calculated on fisheries yields and tourism revenues. Yet they are also of high biological, aesthetic and intrinsic value. Most importantly they generate substantial employment opportunities and are a vital source of income for local communities and governments.

The protected areas in the Dutch Caribbean are managed by non-governmental, not for profit foundations with independent local Boards to govern them. Each has opted for a co-operative management arrangement with local stakeholders. In nearly all cases stakeholder interests are represented directly on the Board of the protected area.

Nature conservation in the Dutch Caribbean has an excellent reputation and the parks and protected areas are highly regarded. They are considered amongst the best managed within the region and their example has been copied around the world. For example, the Bonaire National Marine Park has been recognised by the United Nations Environment Programme and the International Coral Reef Action Network as a Demonstration Site and the Saba National Marine Park has been selected as a Target Site.

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Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance

The Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA) is a Foundation (‘Stichting’) incorporated in the Dutch Caribbean on the island of St Maarten. It is registered with the Chamber of Commerce on St Maarten (registration # 81286) and Bonaire (registration # S-341).

A copy of DCNA’s Articles of Incorporation and bylaws can be downloaded from: www.dcnanature.org/about/statutes.html

DCNA’s vision is to safeguard the biodiversity and promote the sustainable management of the natural resources of the islands of the Dutch Caribbean by supporting and assisting the protected area management organizations and nature conservation activities in the Dutch Caribbean.

DCNA supports and assists the protected areas on the islands of Aruba, Bonaire, Curacao, Saba, St Eustatius and St Maarten as well as other conservation organisations such as the Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire to improve the management of their island’s precious natural resources.

DCNA’s goals are:

- Fundraising and securing long term sources of financing for nature conservation
- Promoting and representing the goals and activities of Dutch Caribbean nature conservation nationally and internationally
- Providing a central repository for information relating to biodiversity and protected areas, and encouraging communication exchange of such information between organizations within and without the Dutch Caribbean
- Promoting institutional capacity building, training, partnership-building and where necessary and efficient, technical resource sharing
Executive Summary

Nicole Esteban, DCNA Chairperson and Manager of the National Parks on St Eustatius.

Happily, 2007 was a year of solid achievements for the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance. Both DCNA and the park management organisations produced their first standardized annual reports, financial reports and audits, thereby fulfilling our contractual obligations towards the Dutch Ministry of the Interior, and crucially, securing the first payment, in a ten year agreement of one million Euros, which is being used to establish a conservation Trust Fund.

Our Trust Fund is designed to provide the six Dutch Caribbean islands with a secure and independent financial future. The establishment of the Trust Fund was part of a three-year strategic plan, which came to an end in 2007. Once it is fully capitalized in 2015, the fund will generate annual interest sufficient to cover the essential operational costs, such as staff salaries, park upkeep and maintenance costs as well as the provision of outreach, education, law enforcement, research and monitoring for one land and one marine park on each island of the Dutch Caribbean.

Throughout 2007 we’ve continued to bask in the glory of having Her Majesty Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands as our Royal Patron. Her Majesty accepted our invitation to become patron at the end of 2006. This has given DCNA an enormous boost and improved the standing of the organization considerably in the Netherlands. It is also a tremendous vote of confidence in our work and reveals the Royal family’s commitment to conservation in this tiny corner of the Kingdom.

This is particularly important in light of the current ongoing debate over constitutional change, which would give the larger islands of St Maarten and Curaçao considerably more independence within the Kingdom and would link the smaller islands of Bonaire, Saba and St Eustatius more closely to the Netherlands. DCNA is trying its best to work with local decision makers as well as the Dutch Ministries to assist in vision forming and hopefully to influence the outcome of that debate.

In December, the Governor General of the Dutch Caribbean opened the first National Park Visitor Centre buildings on St Eustatius, where I am manager of the terrestrial and marine parks. Offering information to visitors and the local community so they have a better understanding of the valuable and unique nature of the island, these sophisticated buildings have also transformed the lives of the staff who work here. We now have meeting rooms and proper offices, space to store and maintain our equipment, and a visitor’s centre which gives us more opportunities to earn money from souvenir sales and internet facilities. For the first time too, there are public bathroom facilities along the bay.

St Eustatius Marine Park was awarded National Park status by the island government in 2007. This announcement kick-started a week of celebrations for our 10 year anniversary, which included carnival-style marine activities, free boat rides around the bay, an underwater photography competition, a scavenger hunt on a 100 meter-long wreck – and a big party. In 2008 we will also be celebrating the 10-year anniversary of Quill and Boven National Park.

The biggest challenge for 2007 has been addressing the continued shortfall that the islands face between the money they are able to generate for themselves, for example through park admission fees and what they need to manage their parks. The three-year grants from the Stichting DOEN that had supported park operations in the Windward Islands came to an end in 2007. These funds had provided much-needed operational support for two of the most financially dependent parks, St Eustatius, which receives
fewer tourists than the other islands, and St Maarten, which doesn’t have the legal mechanism to collect any park fees. These parks will now be even more financially dependent on the DCNA, unless they are able to find an alternative source of income.

Our challenge for 2008 and beyond is to ensure the DCNA has sufficient money to cover the parks’ urgent financial needs, whilst building on the long-term security of the Trust Fund. I’d also like to see the DCNA build on its relations with existing partners. For me personally 2007 was a year of change and excitement with the arrival of my second child, baby daughter, Chloe. Whilst I continue to juggle home life with my work, this has made me feel more committed than ever to building a sustainable future for all our islands.

I’m left with a feeling of contentment and pride in our achievements in 2007 and confidence in our ability to collectively tackle the challenges, which lie ahead.

Nicole Eustace
Highlights of 2007

During the previous year, DCNA lost three of its founding Board members: Woti Bakhuis, Director of CARMABI retired and moved with his wife to the Netherlands; Janine leSueur Director of the Saba Conservation Foundation and staunch supporter of DCNA moved with her partner to New York and Andy Caballero, manager of the St Maarten Marine Park changed jobs and moved into the commercial sector on St Maarten. They were replaced by CARMABI’s former Chief Science Officer and new Director of CARMABI, Dr Dolfi Debrot, who has decades of research experience on Curacao and the other islands; new Park Manager for the Saba Parks, Canadian Jan den Dulk who moved to Saba to take up his challenging new job and St Maartener, Beverly Mae Nisbeth, who had newly completed a Masters Course in Environmental Science and joined the Nature Foundation in July as their Marine Park Manager.

This of course has had a significant impact on DCNA as the Board struggled both to welcome and embrace its new Board representatives and to find an effective way to rapidly bring them up to speed on their responsibilities within DCNA as well as DCNA’s role towards their protected areas and within the Dutch Caribbean.

Additionally the funding from the Dutch Ministry for the Interior which has been the lifeline for DCNA over the past year and which gives us the very real prospect of being able to capitalize a conservation trust fund and provide the parks with a secure financial future came at a price. Due to a conflict of interests caused by IUCN NL’s role as an intermediary in this funding relationship we were forced to radically change the highly productive and supportive relationship DCNA had enjoyed with IUCN NL and sadly DCNA lost Willem Ferwerda, Director of IUCN NL, as a Board member. Although the process of change was tumultuous for both organisations, ultimately it has given DCNA and IUCN NL a much more realistic and more robust working relationship, which will undoubtedly stand us in good stead as we continue to work together in the coming decade.

The Dutch Ministry funding to set up the Trust Fund was held on a dedicated Rabobank account in the Netherlands during 2006 whilst the Board of DCNA and their Trust Fund Committee evaluated the available options for the management of the funds. One of the crowning achievements for DCNA in 2007 was the signing of a contract with Swiss banking giant, the Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS) who took over the portfolio management in June 2007. This tremendous achievement has been soured only by the decline in world financial markets, which has left DCNA smarting with a loss of some Euro 118,000 or 5.68% of its original assets. Fortunately this has been offset somewhat by interest generated on the Rabobank Trust Fund account leaving a deficit of approximately Euro 78,000 at the end of 2007. Bank costs and exchange taxes associated with the transfer of funds, as required by the Dutch Ministry, to the park management organisations and their subsequent ‘donation’ of funds back to the Trust Fund are also worryingly high and cost DCNA an additional Euro 23,000 in 2007.

The challenge of the year for DCNA’s Board came when they took on the daunting task of developing a new multyear plan. This was kick started at the Board meeting in May 2007, where DCNA was joined by many of her Dutch and international partners and brought to a conclusion in November 2007 when the Board spend a whole day behind closed doors evaluating, challenging one another and brainstorming to develop a collective vision for the future. The result is a brand new multyear plan 2007 – 2012 which will be ratified by the Board at their May 2008 Board meeting.

One of the unexpected spin offs of the multyear planning was a dramatic improvement in relations with DCNA’s Dutch Partners. From those who were able to attend the Board meeting, Vogelbescherming spontaneously offered to run a fundraising campaign amongst their membership to raise funds for bird conservation.
in the Dutch Caribbean, which DCNA gratefully accepted. Staatsbosbeheer agreed to donate 8 weeks of Jan Blok’s time to work with DCNA on the development of Management Plans for the islands of Saba, St Eustatius and St Maarten. It is hoped that the St Maarten plan in particular may help to provide the necessary impetus for their Island Government to declare a terrestrial protected area on the island of St Maarten before it is too late. Samenwerkingsverband Nationale Parken declared its interest in signing a Memorandum of Understanding with DCNA and MilieuKontakt International are keen to find ways to work together and bring their particular expertise to the Dutch Caribbean. This and more are in the planning for 2008.

Additionally the US based organization, Conservation International, has been working furiously with the Saba Conservation Foundation and MINA throughout the year to survey and ground truth the Saba Bank, as well as providing the world with access to detailed information on Saba’s plants and, hopefully soon, their insect assemblages. It is hoped that their work will be instrumental in having the Saba Bank declared a Specially Sensitive Sea Area.

DCNA’s turtle conservation work with the islands, lead by the Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire (STCB), continued in 2007 with the tracking of an additional three turtles (Eloise, Darwina from Bonaire and Track from St Eustatius) www.bonairenature.com/turtles/turtletracking.html As an extension of this work a new joint initiative was started in 2007 to provide access to all of the outreach and educational materials developed as part of the multi-island turtle conservation campaign in 2005-2006 via the STCB website: www.bonairenature.com/turtles/protehanosturtuganan/index.html
Management plans were finalized for the St Maarten Marine Park and Statia National Marine Park and DCNA’s Management Success project continues to go from strength to strength.
DCNA has clearly demonstrated its resilience to change and can be rightly proud of a number of significant achievements in 2007. It is therefore with some satisfaction that DCNA can look back on the year 2007 and forwards to an exciting and challenging year ahead.

None of us are immune to the political world in which we live and ironically for us, just as the park management organisations on each island are working together effectively for the first time, the constitutional structure of the Netherlands Antilles is fragmenting and falling apart. The issue of the islands developing different political relationships with the Netherlands does not pose a problem for DCNA, which from the outset has combined Aruba with its ‘status aparte’ and the islands of Netherlands Antilles. It does, however, bring some serious challenges for the future management of nature and conservation in the islands as well as potentially, some exciting, new opportunities.

DCNA therefore invested considerable time and energy in 2007 discussing and debating the issue of constitutional change, focusing on how this will effect nature conservation and conservation management in the Dutch Caribbean as a whole as well as what DCNA’s role could or should be. Two of the most obvious aspects are, with the dissolution of the Central Government, both DCNA and the individual parks will lose the strong support they currently enjoy from MINA (Central Government Department of Nature and the Environment) and DCNA will lose MINA’s representation on the Board.

Throughout DCNA and the individual park management organisations worked diligently to place nature and conservation on the agenda for discussion and have tried to be involved with each working group from the Netherlands, as they have visited the islands. DCNA has formulated its own vision document, which has been widely distributed and took the decision to establish a Constitutional Change Committee to address this issue in the future.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Island</th>
<th>Mgmt. Body</th>
<th>Protected area</th>
<th>Area and special features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aruba</td>
<td>Fundacion Parque Nacional Arikok</td>
<td>Parque Nacional Arikok</td>
<td>This terrestrial park was established in 2003. It is 3400 hectares and covers approximately 17% of the land area of Aruba. It includes the island’s highest hill, Jamanota and protects various exotic cacti, around 50 species of tree and is the last refuge of the island's endemic rattlesnake, the ‘cascabel’.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bonaire</td>
<td>STINAPA Bonaire</td>
<td>Klein Bonaire</td>
<td>An uninhabited satellite island off Bonaire’s western shore the island includes some of the most undisturbed vegetation on Bonaire and is an important stop over point for migrating birds and nesting grounds for endangered hawksbill and loggerhead turtles. It was declared a protected area in 2000.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Washington Slagbaai National Park</td>
<td>Established in 1979, it encompasses almost 17% (13,500 hectares) of the land area of Bonaire and includes Mount Brandaris, the island’s highest point. A wide diversity of habitats can be found in the Park which provides a safe haven for the endemic Iora, flamingos and iguana.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Curacao</td>
<td>CARMABI Foundation</td>
<td>Curaçao Underwater Park</td>
<td>The Curaçao Underwater Park was established in 1983. The seaward boundary is the 60m depth contour and on the shore side the boundary is the high-water mark. The park covers a total surface area of 600 hectares on the leeward shore and includes pristine fringing reef.</td>
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<td>Christoffel Park</td>
<td>A protected wildlife reserve and garden covering 1,820 hectares. Mt. Christoffel is in the centre of the park, and is the island's highest point. The park contains rare and endemic flora and fauna.</td>
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<td>Shete Boca</td>
<td>Established in 1994 the Shete Boca covers approximately 470 hectares of coastline.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saba</td>
<td>Saba Conservation Foundation</td>
<td>Saba National Marine Park</td>
<td>The Saba National Marine Park was established in 1987. It surrounds the island stretching from the high-water mark to a depth of 60m and includes coral pinnacles, the seabed and overlying waters. It covers 820 hectares.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Saba’s Hiking Trail system and Muriel Thissel Nature Park</td>
<td>Saba’s terrestrial park is comprised of 35 Ha of land donated to the SCF by the Thissell family in 1999. This area is locally referred to as the sulphur mine. Other protected areas include the portion of Mt. Scenery above 550m (no dwellings can be constructed) and the 14 trails (public easments on private property).</td>
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<tr>
<td>St Eustatius</td>
<td>St Eustatius National Parks Foundation (STENAPA)</td>
<td>Statia National Marine Park</td>
<td>The St. Eustatius National Marine Park includes the waters around the island from the high water mark to the 30m depth contour. It was designated in 1996 and is approximately 4,700 hectares including two actively managed no fishing zones.</td>
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<td>Quill and Boven National Park</td>
<td>Comprises a dormant volcano, the Quill, and Boven, an area of hills on the northern tip of St. Eustatius. The trails to, in and around the Quill have been open since 2000. It was established in 1997 and covers 540 hectares including lush secondary rain forest and almost all of the 482 wild plant species found on the island.</td>
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<td>Botanical Gardens</td>
<td>The Botanical Gardens cover an area of 5.3 hectares.</td>
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<tr>
<td>St Maarten</td>
<td>Nature Foundation St Maarten</td>
<td>St Maarten Marine Park</td>
<td>The Marine Park surrounds the entire Dutch side of the island from the coastal waters and beaches to the 60m depth contour. The Park covers approximately 5,200 hectares and includes mangroves, seagrass beds and coral reefs. The park is a major breeding area for marine birds such as the frigate and home to fish, turtles and conch.</td>
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Management body

Council of Patrons

In 2005 DCNA established a Council of Patrons made up of distinguished and influential members of society, each of whom has a profound understanding of the value of nature and conservation for the islands, local communities and the local economy. Members of the Council are:

Her Majesty Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands
Following a Jubilee visit to the Dutch Caribbean in November 2006, Her Majesty, Queen Beatrix, in an unprecedented move, agreed to become a royal patron of the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance.

Jaime Saleh: Minister of State for the Netherlands Antilles
Jaime Saleh is former Governor General of the Netherlands Antilles and was both the Judge of the Court of Justice of the Netherlands Antilles and later the Chief Justice. He has taken a keen interest in both nature conservation and the preservation of historic buildings.

Nico Visser: Head International Nature Conservation for the Ministry of Agriculture
Nico Visser holds a professorship from the Universite de Savoie in Chambery, France where he has taught sustainable tourism development. He helped establish the Netherlands Antilles Department of Nature and the Environment. He stated, “The creation of DCNA is a dream come true for the Dutch Caribbean. It enables nature management NGOs to work together to protect and manage the unique richness in biodiversity of the islands.”

The Governor Generals of both the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba, as Her Majesty Queen Beatrix’ representatives have both shown a strong professional and private interest in the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance and are considered ‘honorary patrons’.

Board members

DCNA has an elected Board of eight voting members and one non-voting member. Six core members represent the legally designated non-governmental protected area management organizations (parks) of Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, St Eustatius and St Maarten. One independent financial expert and one Nature Forum representative join them. The Netherlands Antilles Dept of Nature and the Environment (MINA) holds a non-voting seat on the Board. Current Board members are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board member</th>
<th>Alternate Board member</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roy Croes</td>
<td>Ambrosio Curiel</td>
<td>Parke Nacional Arikok</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.E.F. Beekenboom</td>
<td>Kerenza Frans</td>
<td>STINAPA Bonaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolphe Debrot</td>
<td>John de Freitas</td>
<td>CARMABI Curaçao</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan den Dulk</td>
<td>Johanna van’t Hof</td>
<td>Saba Conservation Foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicole Pozas Esteban</td>
<td>Irving Brown</td>
<td>STENAPA St Eustatius</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beverly Mae Nisbeth</td>
<td>Frank Boekhoudt</td>
<td>Nature Foundation St Maarten</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frensel Mercelina</td>
<td>Theo van der Giessen</td>
<td>Uniek Curaçao/Nature Forum</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leendert van Driel</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(financial expert)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paul Hoetjes</td>
<td>Letitia Buth</td>
<td>MINA</td>
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A complete list of Board members including biographical information and an overview of Board officers can be found at: www.dcnanature.org/about/boardmembers.html
Committees

DCNA has two standing committees: Executive Committee and Finance Committee as well as a variable number of ad hoc committees set up and tasked by the Board with various mandates in support of DCNA’s activities.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is charged with:
• Overseeing and managing the affairs of DCNA between meetings
• Taking urgent decisions
• Liaising with the Finance Committee
• Ensuring that decisions of the Board are implemented and that the affairs of DCNA are conducted in a proper and efficient manner at all times
• Managing the day to day affairs of DCNA in the absence of the Executive Director

The current Executive Committee members are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nicole Esteban</td>
<td>Chairperson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leendert van Driel</td>
<td>Vice Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Hoetjes</td>
<td>Secretary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elsmarie Beukenboom</td>
<td>Treasurer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee is responsible for:
• Overseeing the management of the day-to-day financial affairs and financial assets of DCNA between Board meetings
• Reviewing and advising on all matters related to financial asset management including investment strategy, oversight and management of any third parties such as an Asset Management Company
• Ensuring that correct and appropriate financial records are kept and procedures followed and that financial reports, budgets and financial audits are completed in a correct and timely manner
• Approving balance sheets and calculation of revenues
• Acquiring and disposing of real property

The Finance Committee consists of the Treasurer and DCNA’s financial expert:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>Elsmarie Beukenboom</td>
<td>Treasurer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leendert van Driel</td>
<td>Vice Chair</td>
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Trust Fund Committee

The purpose of the Trust Fund Committee is to make all of the necessary preparations for the establishment and capitalization of a Trust Fund as described in the “Feasibility Study of a Protected Areas Trust Fund” (February 2005). Norbert Chaclin joined the Trust Fund Committee in November 2007 and it currently comprises:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leendert van Driel</td>
<td>Committee Chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norbert Chaclin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Letitia Buth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kalli De Meyer</td>
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CBF Committee
A CBF Committee was established at the November Board meeting with the mandate of working towards obtaining certification from the Centraal Bureau Fondsenwerving (CBF Keur). The CBF Committee consists of:

Kalli De Meyer Committee Chair
Robbert Kroon
Nicole Esteban
Elsmarie Beukensboom

Fundraising Committee
A Fundraising Committee was established in May 2007 with the broad mandate of guiding fund raising efforts on behalf of DCNA. It’s initial tasks will include overseeing the drafting of a fundraising strategy and implementing new fundraising activities in the Netherlands and the USA. The Fundraising Committee consists of:

Nicole Esteban Committee Chair
Leendert van Driel
Kalli De Meyer
Board meetings

Board meetings were held on Bonaire in May and November of 2007. Since DCNA gained new Board representatives from Curacao, Saba and St Maarten in the course of the previous year, team building, networking and bringing the newest Board members up to speed on DCNA as an organization was high on DCNA's list of priorities at both meetings.

Additionally the Board ambitiously embarked on the process of writing a new multiyear plan. Before DCNA was ever officially registered, the Board had already developed a three year strategic plan (2004-2007). In the intervening three years DCNA has gone from a great idea to a fully-fledged organization supporting the six islands of the Dutch Caribbean and their ten protected areas. The Board felt it was time for a little introspection and the opportunity to brainstorm and formulate a new perspective on the years ahead.

Board meeting: May 2007, Bonaire.

The May Board meeting gave DCNA the opportunity not only to network with our overseas partners but also to launch into a new multiyear planning process with their active participation. As a first step in any multiyear planning process it is usual to examine the 'external landscape' and to identify organisations working in the same or similar fields, looking for synergies as well as potential areas of conflict. Rather than doing this as a desk exercise, DCNA decided to actively involve our overseas partners in this process.

DCNA was privileged to be able to welcome to that meeting representatives of Conservation International, De Landschappen, IUCN NL, MilieuKontakt International, Samenwerkingsverband Nationale Parken and Vogelbescherming as well as Frans Kerkhoff of the Governor's Office, all of whom contributed significantly to the discussions and to the overall success of the meeting.

Besides networking and laying the foundation for DCNA's new multiyear plan, the meeting was used to brainstorm and explore opportunities for future co-operation through facilitated discussion.

Board meeting: November 2007, Bonaire

The November Board meeting focused firmly on the parks and protected areas themselves as core stakeholders in DCNA, giving them the opportunity to clearly define their vision for the organisation as well as determining in a very clear and concrete way, what assistance, support, services and facilities they expect from the organization and from the DCNA Secretariat in the years ahead.

The whole of the first day of the Board meeting was devoted to the development of DCNA's multiyear plan. The session was facilitated by Galan Group's Robbert Kroon who very kindly volunteered his expertise to guide DCNA's Board members through a series of exercises designed to clarify their vision for DCNA by 'governing the present from the future'. It proved to be an exciting and extremely useful day of intense debate and discussion.

The draft multiyear plan which was developed at that Board meeting was then delegated to the Executive Committee to finalize and will be presented to the Board for ratification at their May 2008 Board meeting.
DCNA Secretariat

The DCNA Secretariat is staffed by a full time Executive Director and Office Administrator based at DCNA’s headquarters on Bonaire along with a variety of sub contractors, consultants and similar some of whom generously donate their time and work on a pro bono basis for DCNA.

The Executive Director is responsible for the day-to-day management of the foundation’s affairs whilst the Office Administrator is responsible for the smooth and efficient running of the office.

The Secretariat works with the Board to provide:
- Board support and liaison including preparation of Board meetings, agendas and logistics as well as supporting documentation
- Preparation of strategic, planning documents, action plans and budgets
- Record keeping and reporting
- Bookkeeping, accounting and financial reporting

Additionally the Secretariat, together with select Committees, is responsible for:
- Fundraising and implementation of fundraising strategy
- Communication and representation and implementation of communication strategy
- Provision of capacity building, training and support to protected areas
- Provision of central repository for information relating to biodiversity and sustainable management in the Dutch Caribbean
- Biodiversity conservation project planning, administration and project management.

DCNA has developed an Operational Manual, which captures the operational practices and procedures for all facets of DCNA and the Secretariat’s work. It is regularly updated, reviewed and approved by the DCNA Board and can be downloaded at: www.dcnanature.org/about/manual.html

Additionally DCNA has now developed an Office Handbook detailing office management and practices, an Accounting Procedures Manual which captures how all book keeping and accounting related issues are managed as well as a Dutch Partners Handbook (based on work by IUCN NL’s Imke Gilsing) with information on each of DCNA’s partners in the Netherlands.

Staffing
The year 2007 was rather turbulent for DCNA on the staffing front. The Secretariat started the year with an Executive Director, Office Administrator, Project Manager and DCNA liaison in the Netherlands (based at IUCN NL’s offices in Amsterdam) and by the mid year only the Executive Director remained on staff.

The Office Administrator, Elize Craane, left to set up her own consulting business on Bonaire at the end of August 2007. DCNA was fortunate to hire highly competent and enthusiastic Aruban, Emeray Martha Neuman in October 2007 just as she was returning to work from maternity leave after the birth of her first child, Noah.

IUCN NL staff communication officer, Imke Gilsing, worked with DCNA from IUCN NL’s Amsterdam offices until June 2007 and left IUCN NL shortly thereafter.

Local Project Manager Vronie Sieverding started working part time for DCNA on the 15th January 2007 and acted as primary liaison with the Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire (STCB) for the turtle tracking work and with Rob van de Vechte on the development species database project. Vronie also worked with Duncan MacRae on
the Management Success data collection on Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao and assisted completing a first evaluation (null meeting) for DCNA’s proposed application for CBF certification. Due to pressure of work Vronie switched from the project manager’s position to the newly vacant Dutch Liaison position in June and was introduced to DCNA’s Partners in the Netherlands later that month. In August 2007 however she took the difficult decision to leave DCNA due to personal circumstances. She had been working for DCNA for just 8 months.

After a protracted hire process Jamie Davies was selected to take over as DCNA’s Project Manager and he arrived on Bonaire in December 2007. Unfortunately Jamie met his future partner just days before he took up the job on Bonaire and within three months had decided to return to the UK.

Office
In April 2005 DCNA rented office space on the main street in downtown Kralendijk, Bonaire. The office is centrally located and consists of a large room, a small kitchenette/storage area, toilet and shower. It is basically furnished with desks, chairs, shelving and a meeting table and is equipped with three desktop computers, two laptops, server, wireless Internet and printers (including a color laser printer). A Nissan four-door pickup is on loan from a local non-profit foundation, Coral Resource Management.

Staying in touch has proved quite challenging throughout the year. Keeping phones, cell phones, Internet, faxes and the server up and running on Bonaire is not easy. These are not problems which can easily be solved in house as they rely on improvements being made in telecommunications and IT support on the island as a whole.

Subcontractors and consultants
DCNA works with a variety of highly qualified local and overseas subcontractors, including:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alison Benson</td>
<td>Project leader for the Dutch Caribbean Conservation Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenneth Buchan</td>
<td>Advising on standardized marine monitoring protocols for use throughout the Dutch Caribbean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liz Hartley</td>
<td>Administrative assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbert Kroon / Galan Group</td>
<td>Providing Project Management training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macha lePoole</td>
<td>Legal expert providing technical translation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duncan MacRae</td>
<td>Project leader for Management Success project and development of Management Plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Jan (RJ) van Oosten</td>
<td>Graphic designer working on DCNA design look, outreach and communication materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Tooze</td>
<td>Journalist providing text for communication materials and website</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Financial arrangements

DCNA holds two Antillean Guilder (ANG) bank accounts on Bonaire with Maduro and Curiels Bank. The current account (#11286004) is used to pay local operating expenses and a balance of around ANG 10,000.00 is maintained on this account. The savings account (#101196402) holds the balance of DCNA’s local funds where they earn approx. 3% interest. The savings account is used to pay overseas costs and subcontractors’ fees. DCNA also holds a VISA card the balance of which is cleared in full on the 25th of each month.

In the Netherlands DCNA holds two Euro (EUR) bank accounts with Rabobank. The current account (#1120.32.893 / IBAN NL77 RABO 0112 0328 93) holds the balance of DCNA’s Euro funds where they earn a favourable rate interest. A Trust Fund account (#1158.96.783 / IBAN NL02 RABO 0115 8967 83) acts as a holding account for money, which is to be invested in the Trust Fund portfolio.

The Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS) was selected as the asset management company for DCNA’s endowment fund portfolio. (See DCNA Trust Fund Report for full details).

Accounting services

Caribbean Accounting Services were contracted in 2006 to provide complete accrual based accounting and payroll services for the DCNA Secretariat with an agreement that bookkeeping would be entered into their financial system on a monthly basis. This was never realized. Due to insufficient feedback from the auditors after their pre-audit in 2006 and some conceptual difficulties CAS struggled to produce the Financial Statement for 2006 and all of the items related to the Trust Fund had to be rebooked several times. Not only was the Financial Statement late being finalized but CAS were unable to begin booking DCNA’s 2007 accounts until July 2007. The accounting for this period was never delivered.

Therefore to ensure adequate financial management DCNA subsequently contracted Windfield Financial Services (Curtis Eduarda) in September 2007 to provide monthly accounting and payroll services. By October 2007 the financial accounting for the year had been brought up to date and by the November Board meeting the Executive Director was able to provide monthly overviews of profit and loss and balance sheets.
**Auditing services**

Ernst and Young have been contracted by DCNA to provide annual audits for DCNA (including Trust Fund) as well as four of the six park management organizations (Fundashon Parke Nacional Arikok and STINAPA Bonaire both elected to retain their own auditor, Deloitte and Touche).

For a variety of reasons there was a delay in starting the auditing process as a result of which none of the agreed upon deadlines with Ernst and Young were met. Final Financial Statements were not received until 14th May 2007. This has lead to an unacceptable delay in the production of an auditor’s letter for 2006 and management recommendations and necessitated a request to the Dutch Ministry of the Interior for an extension on the delivery date for the technical and financial reports and Financial Statements for 2006.

IUCN NL delivered the 2006 technical and financial reports along with audited Financial Statements to the Dutch Ministry on the 14th August 2007. Throughout the remainder of the year DCNA worked with the protected area management organisations and Windfield Financial Services to find robust solutions to improve reporting in 2008.

**Other professional services**

DCNA has been working with Robbert Kroon of the Galan Group since January 2007 to prepare the way for DCNA to put in an application for certification from the Centraal Bureau Fondsenwerving (CBF) in the Netherlands. Four meeting were held and the first evaluation or ‘0-meting’ was completed. This indicated that the structure of DCNA as an umbrella organization with representatives of the park management organisations on the Board would make it very difficult for DCNA to obtain certification. CBF were also contacted early on in the process and a second problem arose, as CBF does not currently certify organisations based outside of the Netherlands. Furthermore representatives of the Dutch Postcode Lottery have made it clear that they do not require potential beneficiaries to acquire CBF certification. This means that, until circumstances change, DCNA’s time and resources may be better spent on improving governance and ensuring transparency than investing in acquiring CBF certification.
The Dutch Ministry of the Interior (BZK) made a commitment to support nature conservation in the Dutch Caribbean by making available a sum of Euro 1 million per year for a period of ten years, ending in 2016. At least third parties should match Euro 750,000 of this money and these funds used to capitalize the Trust Fund. The agreement with BZK as stated in a Letter of Intent (‘intentieverklaring’) signed by them in December 2005 has been confirmed by the ‘Tijdelijke subsidieregeling IUCN NL ten behoeve van DCNA’ (from Staatscourant 17th November 2006, nr.255 / page 9).

Trust Fund Committee

In accordance with the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA) Articles of Incorporation, Article 15 Sections 1 and 4, the Board of DCNA created a Trust Fund Committee for the purpose of making all of the necessary preparations for the establishment and capitalization of a Trust Fund as described in the “Feasibility Study of a Protected Areas Trust Fund” and required by the BZK Letter of Intent.

The Trust Fund Committee provides co-ordination, leadership and decision making throughout, which includes the establishment of procedures and protocols for managing funds swapped into the Trust Fund, the selection of an appropriate financial asset management company, preparation and review of all necessary documentation including contracts and terms of reference, strategic decisions regarding investment guidelines and ethics as well as the type and maintenance structure of the fund, ensuring at all times, that DCNA and its interests are best represented.

DCNA Trust Fund

In accordance with the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA) Articles of Incorporation, Article 16, DCNA is at liberty to establish a Trust Fund as one of the means available to the foundation to raise funds for the completion of its mission.

As of June 2006 a Trust Fund was effectively established through the setting up of a dedicated bank account in the Netherlands with the Rabobank (#1158.96.783 / IBAN NL02 RABO 0115 8967 83)

At the DCNA Board meeting in May 2006, it was unanimously reconfirmed that the Trust Fund will be an endowment fund where the capital is locked for a defined period and cannot be touched. This means that money placed in the DCNA Trust Fund account will not be available to solve short term funding needs. The Board also agreed unanimously that the revenues from the fund would be reinvested (not withdrawn from the Trust Fund) for a period of ten years, ending in 2016.

A memorandum of understanding and contract, which includes a framework for the funding swaps, guarantees to the parks, reporting obligations and sanctions for non-compliance were signed by all park representatives at the May 2007 Board meeting.
**Funding swaps**

Trust Fund committee presented a general proposal for swapping funds through the park management organisations into the Trust Fund, including the process, procedures and protocols at the DCNA Board meeting in May 2007. The proposal was to swap a total amount of € 810,000. This was approved with the following division of funds based on parks’ annual operating costs:

- Fundashon Parke Nacional Arikok, Aruba € 110,000
- STINAPA Bonaire € 168,800
- CARMABI Curacao € 168,800
- Saba Conservation Foundation € 137,000
- STENAPA St Eustatius € 137,000
- Nature Foundation St Maarten € 89,000

Total € 810,000

In order to maintain a comfortable financial reserve for emergency situations, however, the Executive Committee advised the Board in November 2007 not to transfer € 810,000, but only the required minimum of € 750,000.

Substantial energy was invested in 2007 in gaining experience with the swapping process, improving the procedures, and looking for ways to reduce bank charges (transfer and currency exchange costs). An agreement to deal with potential non-compliance by Parks was signed by all park management organisations in 2007 prior to executing the swaps.

Surprisingly, a swift, smooth and flawless transfer of money between the Netherlands and the Dutch Caribbean was not possible. Some of the difficulties encountered during the swapping process of 2007 included:

- Rabobank in the Netherlands erroneously executed payment instructions sent in June 2007 resulting in transfers being made the wrong currency (Euros instead of US$). This caused considerable confusion and consternation and resulted in one transfer being refused by the receiving agent bank. But last years’ experience with the process prompted quick and adequate corrections.

- The cost of transferring funds from the Netherlands to the park management organisations and back into DCNA’s Trust Fund account is very high. In 2007 these bank costs amounted to over € 23,000! In order to comply with the financial regulations of the Dutch government DCNA is unable to transfer funds directly to the Trust Fund but must direct funding through the parks. The Trust Fund Committee will therefore cautiously explore options with IUCN NL and the Dutch Ministry of the Interior to see if other processes may be applied to save this unnecessary waste of funds, which should be used for nature conservation.

**Asset Management**

In 2006 three asset management companies were identified as potential candidates for managing the assets of the Trust Fund, Smith Barney Citigroup (SBC) in the USA, Union Bank of Switzerland in Switzerland (UBS) and ABN-AMRO in the Netherlands.

Face to face meetings were held with representatives of each financial institution to assess their expertise –worldwide investment experience–, their competence, their reporting and communication policy, their philosophy regarding ethical investments and their views on an appropriate investment strategy for DCNA’s purposes.
The proposals from UBS (Switzerland) and SBC (USA) seem comparable, both offering a fee of approx. 0.85%. After considerable deliberation the Trust Fund Committee decided in favor of the Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS) due to the severe screening procedures currently in place when transferring funds to the USA as a result of the new Terrorism Act.

A detailed proposal for the investment portfolio was received from UBS. Some of the key components include:
- Flat rate fee (0.85%)
- Structure of 90% equity, 5% liquidity, 5% alternate vehicles. The selection of equity as the investment of choice rather than the more traditional 60:40 balance of equity and bonds is based on the long time frame (10yrs) of investment.
- Monthly updates and overview of activity, quarterly detailed reports and discussion of the investment portfolio, annually at face to face meetings
- Selection of investments based on the ‘equator principle’

The final agreement was signed in May 2007, the account was opened in June 2007 and an amount of € 1.930.000 was transferred from Rabobank into the newly established portfolio.

Unfortunately, the financial markets started to decline globally during this period. Giving the Trust Fund of DCNA a difficult start, and as a result the DCNA portfolio ended in 2007 with a negative performance of -/- 6.4%1, being the equivalent of a loss of € 118.600.

UBS’s performance with DCNA’s portfolio was, however, in line with a number of different benchmarks.

In addition to the disappointing financial results, the Trust Fund Committee felt that the management of the portfolio and communication with UBS needed to be improved, and that the reporting did not adequately cover the essential information necessary for making a balanced judgment of UBS’ performance. Early 2008 discussions started with UBS in order to correct the situation.

Trust Fund Financial Report

The performance of DCNA’s investment portfolio during 2007 was very disappointing. This situation is unlikely to change in the first quarter of 2008 considering the state of global financial markets.

Since its inception in July 2007, the “equity oriented” portfolio declined in value (before management cost) by 5.68%. This is slightly worse than the benchmark, which declined over the same period with 5.2%. However, other comparable parameters did worse, for example the MCSI world index declined by 8.1%, S&P 500 index by 9.4% and the AEX index by 6.4%.

The decline in value of the portfolio resulted in a loss of € 118.600.

The Trust Fund Committee therefore decided not to transfer the proceeds from the Dutch Ministry of the Interior funding to the DCNA portfolio at UBS, but to hold these funds on the Rabobank Trust Fund account, due to the volatile equity markets. The Rabobank Trust Fund account generated € 44.443 in interest thereby offsetting DCNA’s overall loss to -/-€ 78.071.

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1. 6.4% refers to the investment results of the Trust Fund portfolio after the deduction of the UBS management fee.
2. 5.68% refers to the investment results of the Trust Fund portfolio before the deduction of the UBS management fee.
Total Value DCNA Trust Fund

Starting value (31/12/2006)  € 1,900,208
Inflow (BZK contribution through swaps)  € 736,135
€ 2,636,343

Final Value (31/12/2007)
    UBS portfolio  € 1,811,400
    Bank account  € 746,872
€ 2,558,272
Result  -/- € 78,071

The Trust Fund Committee is together with UBS exploring possibilities for improving the portfolio by modifying the investment strategy, the asset allocation etc. A final decision will be made before August 1, 2008.

Networking with other Trust Funds

DCNA’s Letitia Buth met representatives of the Suriname Conservation Fund in Suriname as well as their fund manager, John Adams of Donnelly Adams, to gain more insight into how the Suriname fund is being managed. The Suriname Conservation Fund has had a higher than usual return from their portfolio which John Adams attributes to the unusually active management by their foundation and constant challenging of the portfolio management by their financial experts.

DCNA’s Leendert van Driel and Executive Director visited Ecuador and met members of the Ecuador Trust Fund (Fondo Ambiental Nacional) on a weeklong visit in August 2007 to learn about their financial and trust fund management. All aspects of Trust Fund management were discussed including fundraising, fund management, granting funds for projects and support of the protected areas in Ecuador. This gave a fascinating insight into the management of a Trust Fund under radically different circumstances, which nevertheless showed many parallels to the challenges being faced by DCNA in the Dutch Caribbean.

DCNA has been invited to attend the next RedLAC meeting – an umbrella organization representing 23 Environmental (trust) Fund initiatives throughout Latin America and the Caribbean with a combined annual operating budget of over US$ 70 million and whose mission is to set up an effective system of learning, strengthening, training, and cooperation through a Network of National Environmental Funds aimed at contributing to the conservation and sustainable use of nature in Latin America and the Caribbean.

An offshoot of IUCN NL’s recent ‘Leaders for Nature’ initiative is being used to draw attention to the need to improve funding for ecosystem management and to sensitize the Dutch Government to the idea of investing in Trust Funds as a means of creating a sustainable funding future for protected areas. Together with Wetlands International, WWF, Natuurmonumenten, BirdLife International and DCNA (represented by Leendert van Driel), IUCN NL has set up a Trust Fund Committee. The Committee, under the leadership of IUCN NL, is drafted a letter to the Minister for Development Aid, explaining why Trust Funds are an important funding tool. They plan to meet with the Minister and are in the process of producing a policy paper on the subject. The focus will be on profiling successful Trust Fund initiatives underway in Mauritania, Ecuador, Indonesia, Suriname and of course the Dutch Caribbean.

3. This was the starting balance on DCNA’s Rabobank account as of 31st December 2006. Note between Jan – Jun 2007 this account gained € 30,000 in interest. Therefore the Trust Fund portfolio was opened with € 1,930,000 in June 2007.
 Capacity building and development

Fund raising

DCNA faces significant fund raising challenges. Its primary objective in the years ahead is to raise Euro 24 million, which will be used to capitalize a Trust Fund, approximately one third of which will come from the contribution of the Dutch Ministry of the Interior. The intention is that the revenues from the Trust Fund will then be used to pay for the day-to-day operations of one marine and one terrestrial park on each of the islands of the Dutch Caribbean as well as the operational costs of the DCNA Secretariat.

Simultaneously DCNA is struggling to raise sufficient funds annually to ensure that all the protected areas can meet their basic operational costs and to be able to provide the level of services and support needed by the park management organisations allowing them to improve or maintain their management capacity.

Fund raising strategy

A fund raising framework has been developed which identifies funding sources both to
1. Capitalize the Trust Fund
2. Make up the funding short fall created by the Parks’ unmet funding needs.

Dutch Ministry of the Interior (BZK)
The reporting on the year 2006 to the Dutch Ministry of the Interior was completed and handed over to IUCN NL at the beginning of August. Anticipating some delay in meeting the reporting deadline IUCN NL had wisely already requested an extension on the 1st August delivery of the reports to BZK. All of the documentation was handed over to the Dutch Ministry at the end of August 2007 and they accepted the 2006 technical and financial reports and audited financial statements.

Action plans and budgets for the year 2008 were also submitted in good time to IUCN NL and went to the Dutch Ministry on the 29th October 2007. These were also approved and the next installment of Euro 1 million was received by DCNA on 5th December 2007.

Dutch Postcode Lottery (NPL)
With the help and support of Uniek Curaçao and CARMABI, DCNA played host to a group of around 50 postcode lottery winners and staff members of lottery during a visit to Curaçao. Tours were kindly organized by Uniek Curaçao to Boca Ascension to look at foraging turtles, and jeep tours of the Christoffel Park by CARMABI staff. The day went well despite some logistical problem and everyone was happy with the opportunity to actively profile themselves and their work with the Dutch Postcode Lottery.

DCNA submitted a second application to the Dutch Postcode Lottery asking to be considered for beneficiary status in September 2007. This year’s request was made in the form of an attractive, image rich booklet. Beneficiary status would allow DCNA to receive institutional support from the Netherlands’ largest funder of environmental non-profit organizations. The application mirrored that of last year but the theme of ‘people and parks’ was added. DCNA also asked her Partners in the Netherlands to support the application and most of the ten organisations sent letters of support to the Postcode Lottery including Natuurmonumenten who normally have a strict policy of not petitioning on behalf of other organisations. The application was acknowledged in October and the Board waited patiently until the end of January 2008 to hear that it had again not been successful.
DCNA has been given to understand that the Postcode Lottery is nevertheless very enthusiastic about the nature conservation work going on in the Dutch Caribbean and has been encouraged to submit a new application in September 2008.

Prince Bernhard Fund for Nature (PBFN)
Funding proposals were sent to Prince Bernhard Nature funds and $34,500 was granted for the development of a series of Guide Books for the protected areas of the Dutch Caribbean. This allowed work to commence on a Guide to the Statia Marine Park, written by Nicole Esteban and a Guide to the Washington Slagbaai National Park on Bonaire, written by park intern Flo Depondt. DCNA’s graphic design expert R.J van Oosten has developed preliminary design ideas for the eventual series of guidebooks.

Stichting DOEN
DCNA submitted a joint funding proposal to Stichting DOEN at the end of July requesting three years of project funding to support the protected areas on Saba, Statia and St Maarten. The funding proposal focused on their need for support primarily with their education and outreach programmes, essential infrastructural investments and the need for outreach materials and signage. In 2008 DCNA heard that the project proposal had been approved and that Stichting DOEN was willing to grant Euro 600,000 in support of the windward island parks. Thanks are due to Stichting DOEN’s Jeff Prins who optimistically supported the application from the outset and was instrumental in getting a funding reservation approved.

Vogelbescherming
At the DCNA Board meeting in May 2007, their representative Bert Denneman brought the good news that his Board was considering running a fund raising campaign amongst their membership to raise funds for bird conservation in the Dutch Caribbean. Through a series of meetings tentative project proposals were identified and material was collected for the fundraising campaign, which started at the end of 2007.

Vogelbescherming used their magazine to publish articles on the value of nature and birds in the Dutch Caribbean. They then sent out a special mailing to their core membership with more detailed information on what the threats to birds are and which special species are at risk. Information was posted to their website with popular material on the following species: lora, terns, southern flamingo, choko (burrowing owl), tropic birds and humming birds.

Vogelbescherming are optimistic that they will be able to raise up to Euro 150,000 for bird conservation work which they hope will lay the foundations for a long and productive working relationship with DCNA and the foundation of a new Caribbean centre for bird work.

Fundraising meetings
In 2007 DCNA had meetings about funding or funding opportunities with, amongst others:
• Gea van Craicamp and Jan Bandsma at the Dutch Ministry of the Interior
• Sandra van Balveren, Judith Lingeman and Femke Rotteveel at the Dutch Postcode Lottery
• Jeff Prins at Stichting DOEN as well as Idris Nor and Clayde Menso staff members of Stichting DOEN who visited Bonaire to visit the Washington Park and proposed Onima protected area
• Siebe Algra, consultant for Stichting DOEN
• The CEO of Akzo Nobel in the Netherlands who was vacationing on Bonaire
• Barbara Birdsey of the Pegasus Foundation
**Essential Operational Support**

In 2007 the Board recognised that some parks, notably the smaller windward island parks, were at risk because they were unable to generate sufficient revenue and attract a sufficient amount of grant funding and other support to maintain their current level of operational management.

The Board felt strongly that parks should not have to cut their operational management solely due to lack of funds. Therefore the Board created and approved “Essential Operational Support” to assist the protected area management organisations to ensure that each of the parks of the Dutch Caribbean has sufficient income to meet the bare and basic operational funding needs of their park/s where:

- There is a clear and urgent need for additional funding
- The primary reason for the shortfall is lack of funds due to situations/issues beyond the control of the park or park management organisation

Eligibility is limited to the legally designated protected area management organisations, namely:

- Fundashon Parke Nacional Arikok
- STINAPA Bonaire
- CARMABI
- Saba Conservation Foundation
- STENAPA
- The Nature Foundation

Application forms and an application process were established and approved in 2007 and three applications for funding support were received, one each from The Nature Foundation, STENAPA St Eustatius and the Saba Conservation Foundation. Applications were reviewed by the DCNA Secretariat before being sent to an independent external reviewer for evaluation and recommendation. The Board then took the decision to fund/not fund.

In September 2007 the Board of DCNA awarded Naf 146,050 in Essential Operational Support to the Nature Foundation on St Maarten.

In December 2007 the Board of DCNA awarded Naf 151,467 in Essential Operational Support to STENAPA on St Eustatius.

Funding awards are limited to operational support and money can only be used to cover the direct costs of park management namely:

- salaries and benefits for park manager, assistant manager, rangers,
- transportation (pickup, car, scooter) including fuel, maintenance, repair, road tax and insurance
- boat including fuel, maintenance, repair and insurance
- office overheads
- mobile communication equipment including base station, radios, cell phones, VHF
- education officer and operational costs for outreach and education
- dive equipment including maintenance, repair, servicing and testing
- moorings including maintenance, replacement and repair of ropes, buoys
- travel costs
- accounting costs for bookkeeping, accounting, financial statements and audits
- visitor centre maintenance, rent, insurance, repairs and materials
- AV equipment such as TV, VCR, cameras, beamer, slide projector, wipe board etc
- monitoring equipment
- law enforcement
Support and networking

Dutch Partners

Meetings with DCNA’s Partners in the Netherlands were held in March, June 2007 and again in September 2007. The commitment to support DCNA amongst Dutch Partners has grown tremendously over the past year and more and more concrete projects and examples of joint action are underway. These include:

- As part of DCNA’s ongoing project to develop management plans for each of the islands protected areas, Staatsbosbeheer’s Jan Blok contributed his expert knowledge to ground truth the existing data on the physical and biological resources of the islands of Saba, St Eustatius and St Maarten as well as identifying key habitats and species and working with the parks to sensitize stakeholders to the importance of the management planning process and their involvement in it. Jan was tremendously pleased that Staatsbosbeheer approved his involvement in the project and agreed to donate 8 weeks of his time and services to the Management Planning process.

- Conservation International has long considered the islands of the Dutch Caribbean not only a Caribbean biodiversity ‘hot spot’ but also an interesting and rewarding place to work. This has lead them to work with MINA and the Saba Conservation Foundation on the Saba Bank survey as well as involving the New York Botanical Garden in botanical surveys of Saba which has delivered a state of the art on line virtual herbarium with universal data access. They already consider Saba as their first ‘node’ in the Caribbean. Additionally they have organised surveys of marine algae and hypersaline water fish on Bonaire and are interested in participating in a deep water survey of the marine environment around Bonaire as well as working collaboratively to develop insect surveys of the Windward Islands.

- Vogelbescherming’s promised fund raising campaign amongst their membership to raise funds for bird conservation in the Dutch Caribbean.

Two organisations have spontaneously contacted DCNA expressing a strong interest in joining the DCNA Partners group: IVN and ANWB.

As part of the process to strengthen the relationship with DCNA’s Dutch Partners, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been drafted, which will be used to formalize the working relationship between DCNA and partner organisations. The MoU sets out the context for joint co-operation, indicating how member organisations agree to work together. Members took this document back to their respective organisations for review and authorization. Once the MoU has been signed, the DCNA Partners group themselves will review and make decisions about any future initiatives as well as new groups or organisations who might want to become involved.

Based on work lead by IUCN NL’s Imke Gilsing, DCNA has developed an in house reference text ‘Dutch Partners Handbook’ with detailed information about each organization, their representative and the kinds of projects and initiatives which might be considered mutually beneficial.
Biodiversity conservation

Management plans
Management plans are a critical planning tool for protected areas. Although some parks in the Dutch Caribbean have existed for decades, few have up to date management plans. DCNA has been assisting by providing not only a peer-reviewed template and process for the development of management plans but also a qualified person to lead the process and write the plans.

| Goal: | This project aims to assist park management organizations to develop management plans for each protected area |
| Islands: | St Maarten, Saba, St Eustatius |
| Lead: | Park management organizations – Kalli De Meyer |
| Contractor: | Duncan MacRae – Jan Blok (Staatsbosbeheer) |

Status:
DCNA has been working closely with the park management organizations to help them develop useful and interactive management plans. These have been designed as guiding documents for protected area managers and staff as well as useful reference documents for stakeholders. A standardized template was developed containing four inter-related sections:

• detailed contextual introduction
• comprehensive description of the management environment
• clearly defined actions, work plans and budgets
• changes and developments (between reviews)

Work on terrestrial management plans for the islands of Saba, St Eustatius and St Maarten commenced in September 2007 and all three are scheduled for completion by September 2008.

Management plans have been developed with extensive stakeholder consultation. For Saba, St Eustatius and St Maarten data was ground truthed by Staatsbosbeheer’s Jan Blok. The plans are being written by Duncan MacRae and will be send for review both on island and to an expert panel selected from the WCPA (World Commission on Protected Areas)

Completed
Bonaire National Marine Park plan: completed 2006
St Maarten Marine Park plan: completed 2007
Statia National Marine Park plan: completed 2007

Funder: Park management organizations with funding, technical assistance and support from DCNA and in kind contributions from Staatsbosbeheer (for eight weeks of Jan Blok’s time)
**Turtle conservation**

Turtle conservation has been a long term priority for the islands of the Dutch Caribbean and turtles were chosen as a flag ship species by DCNA because they are not only globally endangered and charismatic creatures but also because they are a true transboundary species. At its inception DCNA therefore invested substantially in supporting turtle tracking work on the islands both to gain scientific knowledge about turtle range states as well as a basis for public outreach and education. More recently this focus has shifted towards building capacity on the islands so that they can develop and implement their own programmes with support from the Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire.

**Turtle tracking**

| Goal: | The goal of this project is to learn the geographical range of marine turtles which breed on islands of the Dutch Caribbean using advanced satellite telemetry techniques. |
| Islands: | St Eustatius, St Maarten, Curacao, Bonaire |
| Lead: | Kalli De Meyer |
| Contractor: | Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire |
| Status: | Satellite transmitters are attached to sea turtles, typically when they come onshore to lay their eggs. On the windward islands a total of 5 transmitters have been placed on turtles since 2006. In 2007 there were plans to place two tracking devices on turtles from Curacao had to be postponed as basic beach monitoring data was not available. Instead these tracking devices were used on Bonaire [Eloise, Darwina]. This satellite tracking work is used to engage the public in turtle conservation issues by showcasing the turtles' migratory behavior, and to build local capabilities for performing advanced sea turtle conservation projects. In 2007 DCNA supported STCB by granting them two transmitters one of which was used for the turtle that's adopted and named by Her Majesty Queen Beatrix as well as funding the collation of all the information related to the original 2005 sea turtle outreach programme and posting this to their website. |
| Weblink: | [www.seaturtle.org/tracking/?project_id=97](http://www.seaturtle.org/tracking/?project_id=97) [www.dcnanature.org/activities/project6.html](http://www.dcnanature.org/activities/project6.html) |
| Funder: | DCNA |

**Monitoring protocols**

The monitoring of the natural and cultural resource base plays a crucial role in evaluating the effectiveness of protected areas and is an important tool for improving the principles of reserve design and management. For this reason monitoring protocols should be developed for both terrestrial and marine ecosystems using standard biophysical and socio-economic criteria so that a regional picture of the state of the resources and user perceptions of them can be built.

| Goal: | Phase 1. Gather and review information on the monitoring methods currently being employed by the marine parks in the Dutch Caribbean and make recommendations for a standardized system of monitoring for all parks based on current best practices, park resources and needs |
| Islands: | Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, St Eustatius, St Maarten |
| Lead: | Kalli De Meyer |
| Contractor: | Dr Kenneth Buchan |
| Status: | Phase 1 of the project is completed and Dr Buchan submitted a draft report in July 2006. No further action taken to date. |
**Measuring management success**

The need for adaptive management and accountability are being recognized as important components of successful park management and are critical to successful fund raising.

- **Goal:** To provide detailed information on the management success of each park in the Dutch Caribbean, including the external environment (context), issues and threats and the park operational management.
- **Islands:** Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, St Eustatius, St Maarten
- **Lead:** Kalli De Meyer
- **Contractor:** Duncan MacRae MSc
- **Status:** From January – June 2005 the first phase of this project was successfully initiated, including the first round of data collection and processing. This resulted in a draft first report and mini reports for each island.
  
  During 2006, the mini reports were refined, based on feedback from the Parks themselves and the data collection forms (questionnaires) were modified.
  
  The second round of data collection began in December 2006 and continued into the first quarter of 2007. It was found that the park personnel required considerable support to complete the questionnaires accurately.
  
  Based on field experience and analysis of data submitted in the first two phases of the project a strategic decision was taken that DCNA should provide assistance to the park staff on site with data collection. This will increase standardization of reporting and will provide much more complete data sets for each island. Therefore from January 2008 DCNA will send a qualified data collector to assist parks on site with data collection.

- **Weblink:** [www.dcnanature.org/activities/project4.html](http://www.dcnanature.org/activities/project4.html)
- **Funder:** Phase 1: Central Government Department of Nature and Environment, Thereafter: DCNA

**Baseline information**

Gathering basic information on the islands, their natural resources and protected areas of the Dutch Caribbean was identified as a priority project in June 2004. It was also identified as a major knowledge gap during the execution of the Management Success project. Whilst a wealth of information already exists, this is scattered and often not readily accessible. In February 2005 DCNA was therefore charged with the task of collating all of the readily accessible information on the islands biodiversity, protected areas and conservation activities.

**Baseline information on islands and parks**

- **Goal:** To collect and collate information on terrestrial and marine ecosystems, species and protected areas of Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, St Maarten, Saba and St Eustatius as well as conservation management organizations in a standard, easy to access format.
- **Islands:** Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, St Eustatius, St Maarten
- **Lead:** Kalli De Meyer
- **Contractor:** Various
- **Status:** Detailed information has been collected for both the Windward Islands and the Leeward Islands. Reports have been produced and distributed to Board members and their staff and some of the information is already available on the DCNA website. It has already been used to produce Fact Sheets on each island for promotional purposes.
- **Weblink:** [www.dcnanature.org/conservation/index.html](http://www.dcnanature.org/conservation/index.html)
- **Funder:** DCNA
Species database for the Dutch Caribbean

Goal: This project aims to consolidate the existing information on the biodiversity (particularly the species richness along with the number of threatened, endangered, endemic and keystone species) of the islands into an easy to use database.

Islands: Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, St Eustatius, St Maarten

Lead: Kalli De Meyer

Contractor: Alice Ramsay MSc, Rob van de Vechte

Status: The first phase of data collection was completed with high quality lists obtained covering the terrestrial flora of the windward islands and Aruba as well as the marine fauna of the leeward islands. A skeleton FileMaker database has been build to accommodate the information. This needs to be tested and the species lists then need to be imported into the database and made publically available.

Since MINA has invested in a similar database project, DCNA has discontinued its work and will assist MINA in the future by hosting their database.

Funder: DCNA

Legislative inventory

Goal: This project aims to create handbooks for the law enforcement agencies and pocket guides for the law enforcement officers on the nature and environmental legislation of Saba, St Eustatius and St Maarten with the option to extend this to Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao if there is a similar need.

Islands: Saba, St Eustatius, St Maarten

Lead: Kalli De Meyer – Nicole Esteban

Contractor: Alison Glass – Macha le Poole

Status: An inventory has been made of all of the relevant conservation and environmental legislation on the statute books in the Windward Islands of Saba, St Eustatius and St Maarten. This has been translated into English by a Dutch speaking lawyer, Macha le Poole. The legislation has been compiled into an Environmental Legislation Handbook for each of the Windward Islands. It is being typeset and will be finalized and printed in 2008.

Discussions are underway to establish whether this would also be valuable for the Leeward islands of Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao.

Funder: DCNA

Conservation Review

This book will bring together all of the currently available information on the natural resources and conservation activities on each of the Dutch Caribbean islands.

The book will be used as outreach material for fundraising (particularly within the European Union) as well as being a useful reference text for the islands themselves.

Goal: Produce an in depth account of the natural resources and conservation activities of the islands of the Dutch Caribbean

Islands: Aruba, Bonaire, Curacao, Saba, St Eustatius, St Maarten

Lead: Kalli De Meyer

Contractor: Environics [Alison Glass]

Status: Environics will collate all available information, perform a gap analysis, gather outstanding information and produce standardized text on each island, similar to the information available for other overseas territories. This volume, which is aimed at an educated lay audience, will contain a wealth of information on the biodiversity and conservation value of the islands. It is intended to go to press in 2008.

Funder: DCNA
Promotion and communication

Communication strategy

A communication strategy was developed at the Board meeting in November 2005. This document has guided the production of targeted outreach and communication materials, presentations and press releases used to raise the profile of DCNA within the Dutch Caribbean and internationally.

Communication materials

Graphic designer Robert Jan (R.J) van Oosten joined the DCNA team at the beginning of 2006 to work on the design elements of the communication plan. He developed the DCNA design look (‘huisstijl’) and logo and has been involved in the design of all of DCNA’s excellent outreach and communication materials.

Communication expert, Steve Tooze a professional journalist, assists DCNA on an ad hoc basis with the implementation of its communication strategy. He has written various press pieces and material for DCNA’s website.

Throughout the year 2007 R.J van Oosten was kept busy designing a range of new outreach materials for DCNA. His creations included an exciting new design for the 2006 Annual Report and a new version of DCNA’s colourful booklet, which gives detailed information on the islands, their parks and conservation initiatives as well as background on DCNA and its role in the Dutch Caribbean. DCNA’s new brochure is not only gorgeous and informative but is unusual in that it includes the added functionality of doubling as a CD wrap.

RJ also designed a range of colourful and eye-catching materials, which capture the beauty of biodiversity in the islands and can be used effectively to raise awareness about DCNA including a very popular series of bookmarks, postcards, cards, fliers compliments slips and posters.
Newsletter and travel logs

Two new initiatives were started in 2007 to add to DCNA’s communication plan. In addition to all the new outreach materials DCNA produced its very first newsletter with stories about Conservation International’s work on the Saba Bank, an update on turtle tracking and an article on DCNA’s trust fund. It was distributed in hard copy as well as electronically both within the Dutch Caribbean and beyond. However, when DCNA’s staff level plummeted half way through 2007 it proved too challenging to bring out a second newsletter. This initiative will be taken up again in 2008.

DCNA also produced travel logs for its trips to Ecuador in August 2007 and the Netherlands in September 2007 to give Board members, Patrons, Partners and others more insight into the international component of DCNA’s work.

Board materials

A completely revised Board book was produced for each Board member and distributed at the DCNA Board meeting in May 2007 and again in November 2007. The Board Book was produced on CD ROM with a customized inlay and index.

www.DCNAnature.org

The content of the website was last substantially overhauled in 2006. Since then new feature stories have been written for the website home page and all of the home page introductions have been modified and improved. Additional website material has included Board bios, along with biographies for Patrons and short introductions to all of the sub contractors working with DCNA. A short history of DCNA was written along with pieces on the funding from both the Dutch Ministry and the Dutch Postcode Lottery. The website is now due for its second major overhaul.

Park Guide Books

DCNA is working with STINAPA Bonaire and STENAPA, St Eustatius to develop the first in a complete series of Guide Books for the protected areas of the Dutch Caribbean. The dual aim of the Guide Books is to provide content rich educational material on the parks, their biodiversity and management activities as an attractive outreach item featuring site descriptions / excursion guides to the parks. The educational material will come primarily from the respective park management plans and will be supplemented with site descriptions and used to produce the final print ready text for the first three books in a series of Guide Books. Graphic designer R.J van Oosten has agreed to work on this project and has already created a concept for the guidebook series. Prince Bernhard Nature Fund, who is providing US$ 34,500 in start up funding, is generously funding the project.
## Financial Reporting

**Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance**  
**Profit & Loss**  
**January through December 2007**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ordinary Income/Expense</th>
<th>Jan - Dec 07</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8010 UNrestricted income</td>
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<tr>
<td>8040 restricted BZK</td>
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<tr>
<td>8060 restricted PBFN</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Expense</td>
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<td>000 capital investment</td>
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<td>44 Parks Operational Support (BZK)</td>
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<td>45 Essential operational support</td>
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<td>Other Income/Expense</td>
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<td>Other Income</td>
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<td>Other financial income</td>
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<td><strong>Total Other Income</strong></td>
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<td>Other Expense</td>
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<td><strong>Net Income</strong></td>
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## Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance

### Balance Sheet

As of December 31, 2007

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<th>Dec 31, 07</th>
<th>Dec 31, 06</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ASSETS</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Assets</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checking/Savings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000 · Petty cash</td>
<td>-1,410.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>1110 · MCB current account</td>
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<td>1120 · MCB savings account</td>
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<td>60,384.88</td>
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<td>1130 · Rabobank (Current account)</td>
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<td>1140 · Rabobank (Trust Fund)</td>
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<td>Current Asset</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Fixed Assets</td>
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<td>Other Assets</td>
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<td><strong>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Current Liabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Credit Cards</td>
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<tr>
<td>1150 · VISA card</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Credit Cards</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other liabilities</td>
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<td>Taxes and social security payab</td>
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<td>136,963.71</td>
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</table>
Nature parks of the Dutch Caribbean

**Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance**
Kalli De Meyer
Kaya Grandi 20, Bonaire
tel: +599-717-5010
cell: +599-780-5010
www.DCNAnature.org

**Fundacion Parke Nacional Arikok**
Roy Croes
Santa Cruz 82-A, Aruba
tel: +297-585-1234

**STINAPA Bonaire**
Elsmarie Beukenboom
Barcadera, Bonaire
tel: +599-717-8444
www.stinapa.org

**CARMABI**
Dr. A. Debrot
Piscadera Baai, Curaçao
tel: +599-9-462-4242
www.carmabi.org

**Saba Conservation Foundation**
Jan den Dulk
Fort Bay, Saba
tel: +599-416-3295
www.sabapark.org

**STENAPA**
Nicole Esteban
Gallows Bay, Statia
tel: +599-318-2884
www.statiapark.org

**Nature Foundation**
St Maarten:
Beverly Nisbeth
Wellsburg road 1-A apt. 25
Phillipsburg, St. Maarten
tel: +599-544-4267