Project: Conch restoration, Lac bay, Bonaire
IUCN NL/WATW # 600498

Activity: Determine conch population size and age structure through capture, mark, recapture etc
Indicator: Conch population numbers (juvenile/mature) e.g #/ha

After the initial baseline study tagging was started in November 2007. Tags used are the 1005-4 size 4 fish & small animal tags of the National Band and Tag Co. In previous studies (Glazer et al., 1997, Delgado et al., 2002) the 898 size 4 tag (aluminum) (Delgado, pers. com) has been used with monel wire and a plastic sleeve. This procedure has been slightly adjusted. We opted to use for both wire and tag monel in order to reduce corrosion. In order to prevent fouling (render the tag unreadable) a plastic sleeve was slipped over the tag.

Fig. 2: Tag used, numbered 00001 through 01000

Fig. 3: Conch tagged

The data from the 1999 and 2007 and our baseline study from August through October 2010 were used to select area’s with relative high conch abundance. Conch found at those locations are put in a container filled with seawater. For tagging the monel wire with the numbered tag were wound around the lowest whorl (with the largest spines) avoiding the opening. In this way the wire will not encumber the conch or block growth. After tagging the conch is measured and set out in the immediate area.

1: From Glazer et al., 1997. Tagged juvenile conch, A = tag, B = monel wire, C = plastic sleeve. SL = siphonal length
Sofar 139 conch have been tagged. The majority of the tagged conch were juvenile and subadult. Size classes are skewed because not all areas have been covered yet, sofar we have covered part of the shallows (juvenile habitat) and part of White Hole (mature adults). Location of released conch is recorded (tagged conch are released at the site of tagging). During the remainder of the project (and possibly longer) we will look for tagged conch in Lac Bay. Data will give information on movements, growth, population size, mortality and predation.