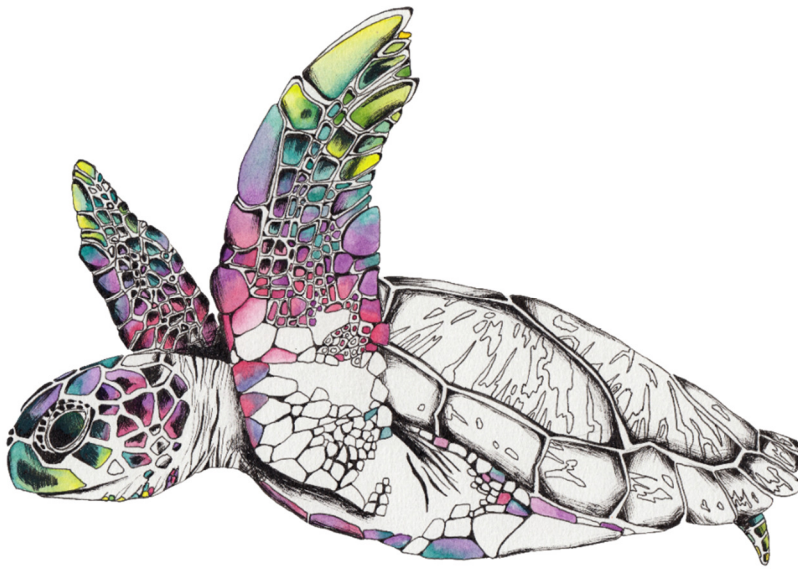


ACTION AND MONITORING REPORT 2017

SEA TURTLE CONSERVATION CURAÇAO



JANUARY 2018

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1. INTRODUCTION

This report describes the activities undertaken by Sea Turtle Conservation Curaçao (STCC) in 2017. While STCC officially became an NGO in May of 2017, we have been active in conservation since 2014. The goal of the organization is to protect sea turtles and their habitats through research, conservation and education and to do so long term. To this end STCC also has been focusing on setting up diverse income streams, to build to a financially stable organization.

2017 has been quite a busy year for us. Right after becoming an NGO STCC had a coordinating role during the clean-up activities that resulted from the Trinidad oil spill in May 2017. This generated quite some exposure in the local community.

STCC conducted nest monitoring and in-water surveys to get a better understanding of the sea turtle populations around Curaçao. We performed 35 turtle rescues, registered 10 poaching cases and helped about 4600 hatchlings make it to the sea during the 2017 season.

Furthermore, a partnership with Global Giving was established. Global Giving is an international crowd funding platform for nonprofit organizations. Being part of this platform enables us to receive donations from abroad more easily. Locally we initiated a partnership with Limpi, a new recycling company that uses marine debris and used plastic to make souvenirs. STCC sorts out the useful plastic debris and gives this to Limpi and Limpi transforms the debris into desirable items like exclusive souvenirs. Especially for STCC they designed a small statue, the so called turtle buddy. Each turtle buddy contains 140 grams of marine debris. They are sold at local dive shops generates additional revenue for STCC, moreover it also gives the organization extra exposure and helps to create awareness about plastic pollution.

STCC was recognized by the “Stichting Dierenbescherming Curaçao” with an award for the project of the year that really made a difference. This is truly motivating and we hope that in 2018 our efforts will ensure even bigger results for the protection of sea turtles and their habitats.

We are extremely grateful for all the support that we get from volunteers and sponsors and we are hoping that we can keep counting on your support in the future.



Sabine Berendse
Founder & Director

2. RESEARCH & MONITORING ACTIVITIES

2.1 Nest monitoring

Around the world there are 7 species of sea turtles. Four of these turtles were known to nest on Curaçao historically. Since the last leatherback nest has been recorded in 2006, we now assume there are still 3 sea turtle species nesting on Curaçao: the green turtle, the hawksbill and the loggerhead. All of these sea turtles are either endangered or critically endangered according to the IUCN red list. Sea turtles play important roles in the ecosystems they inhabit, ecosystems on which humans depend. This makes it really important to protect sea turtles as best as we can. The survival rate of sea turtles is extremely low. Out of every 1000 sea turtles born, just 1 reaches adulthood. That is why it is of vital importance to monitor and protect nesting activity. With the ratification of “Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles (IAC)” in 2014 the government of Curaçao officially acknowledged this too. During the nesting season STCC monitors nesting areas to record the distribution, seasonality and abundance of sea turtle nesting, because successful conservation strategies are built upon foundations of solid evidence.

From the 15th of May until the 15th of December 4 routes were monitored 3 times a week. These beaches were checked for turtle tracks, by at least two volunteers. When tracks were discovered, the beach patrollers established the type of activity and registered the activity. Three types of activity are possible, namely: a dry run, an attempt or a nest.

1. A Dry run is when a turtle crawled over the beach but did not make a *body pit**
2. An Attempt is when a turtle made one or more body pits, but does not lay eggs
3. A Nest is when a turtle actually lays eggs, recognizable by a *covering***

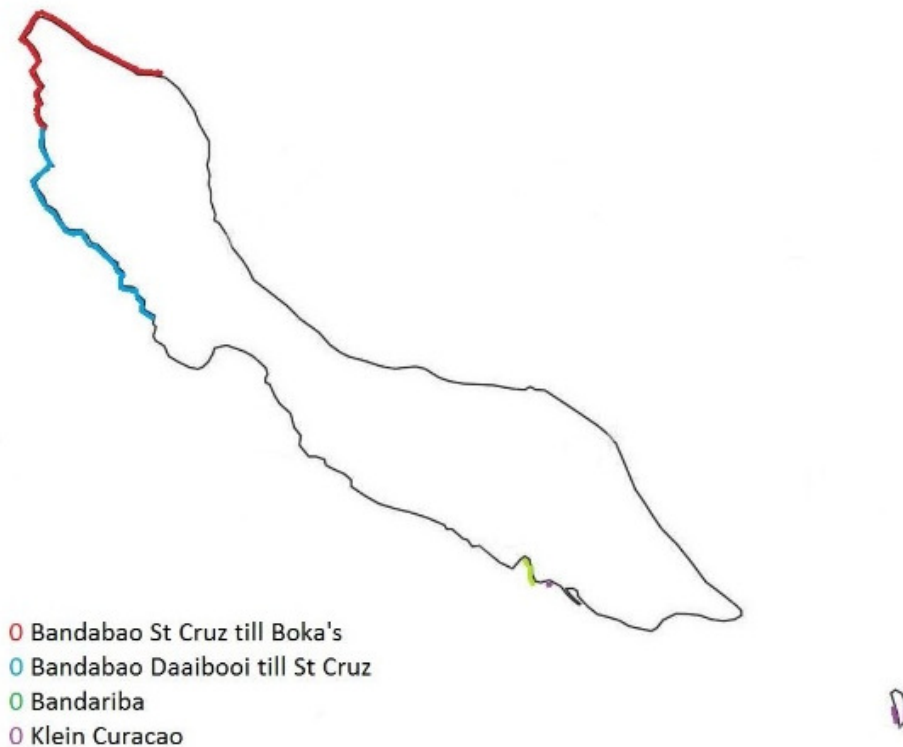


FIGURE 1 MONITORED BEACHES IN 2017

The routes that were monitored:

1. Klein Curaçao – the entire sandy coastline of the island.
2. Banda Ariba – Caracasbaai, Baya Beach, Tugboat Beach and Directorsbay
3. Banda' Bou – Portomari, Daaibooi, Cas Abou, Santa Martha, Santa Cruz, Santu Pretu
4. Westpunt – Un Boka, Dos Boka, Boka Djegu, Boka Mansalina, Playa Kalki, Playa Piskado, Playa Forti, Kleine Knip, Grote Knip, Jeremi, Lagun

Upon the discovery of a nest the nest could be confirmed if an experienced staff member or volunteer is present. Confirming a nest would mean that you would have to dig until you reach the first egg. Then you cover the nest again. If a nest is not confirmed it is recorded as a suspected nest. This means no eggs were not sighted but the tracks show an obvious covering which suggests that a nest was laid.

A data form is filled out. The location of the nest is registered and after 45 days the location is checked during each monitoring for signs that the nest might have hatched. If the nest has hatched the nest is excavated. All the empty egg shells and the remaining dead eggs are counted to establish the nest success. All the information is recorded on the data form. In *Appendix II Nest monitoring data form 2017* the data form is included.

On Curaçao and Klein Curaçao we registered a total 46 turtle nests, of 3 different species. Loggerhead, hawksbill and green turtles. 7 of the recorded nests were outside of the standard monitoring routes. For these type of reports STCC is dependent on good Samaritans to inform us about their observations. Since there are sea turtle nests outside the current monitoring routes, it is likely that there is more turtle activity than we were able to record. This is a good reason to further expand the monitoring.



FIGURE 2 DRY RUN AT KLEIN CURAÇAO

2.2 Traditional in-water survey

Besides the adult females that come to Curaçao to nest, we also have 2 species of sea turtles that live around Curaçao year-round. That are resident juvenile green turtles and hawksbill turtles. The green turtles mainly live in the seagrass ecosystems which are their traditional foraging grounds. But besides the seagrass beds there are also several places other where juvenile green turtles are regularly seen and known to eat fish scraps, thrown in the water by fishermen. The hawksbill turtles are mostly seen on the reefs.

If we want to protect the juvenile sea turtles around Curaçao we need to gather basic information about their abundance in specific locations, their behavior, movement patterns and health status. Also in time we can get information about the growth rates of these turtles. That is the reason we, like most sea turtle conservation programs with juveniles in the water, conduct traditional in water surveys.



FIGURE 3 IN-WATER SURVEY AT WACAWA

In January a traditional in-water survey was conducted in collaboration with Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire (STCB). Sue Willes and Gielmond Egberts from STCB joined the team from STCC to do the second in-water survey for Curaçao. The key foraging grounds at Boka Ascencion, Wacawa and Klein Curaçao were included in the survey. The same areas that were included in 2015.

The sheltered inlets of Wacawa and Ascencion, along the windy Northern Shore of Curaçao, are characterized by high sea grass cover. Consequently these area are important foraging grounds for green sea turtle. During the survey the sea turtles are caught here by the use of a net. Volunteers snorkel alongside a net, that is set out over the grass meadow or bordering it. As soon as a turtle gets entangled in the net it is immediately brought up to the surface so it can breathe. The turtle is untangled and taken to shore, where it is measured and examined at a field station.



FIGURE 4 FIELD STATION IN WACAWA WHERE THE MEASUREMENTS ARE TAKEN AND DATA IS COLLECTED

Carapace length and width, tail length and weight are registered on the. Beak content is checked. Also the turtle is checked for fibropapillomatosis tumors and other abnormalities. DNA and isotope samples are taken, the turtle gets flipper tags, pictures are taken and then the turtle is released again.

On Klein Curaçao the situation is completely different. The leeward side of the island is characterized by a sandy sea floor with little sea grass cover, coral reef and coral rubble habitat. Although there is not a lot of seagrass it is still a place where green sea turtles are regularly seen. A net cannot be used at this location. Here the turtles are caught using the hand catch technique. A free diver will bring up the turtle and the measurements will be taken in the boat or on the shore. The turtle is subjected to the same examination as those captured by net.

In total 34 turtles were captured and released in this survey. None of the turtles captured in the survey showed any signs of fibropapillomatosis.



FIGURE 5 VOLUNTEERS FOR THE IN-WATER SURVEY AT WACAUA

2.3 Snorkel survey

To effectively protect sea turtles around the island it important to know where they can be found. Data about presence and abundance is essential to make effective management decisions and also to note and understand changes. For that reason STCC conducts snorkel surveys. Participants swim on an imaginary line, and scan the whole area for turtles and count them.



FIGURE 6 SNORKEL SURVEY TRACK



FIGURE 7 CONDUCTING SNORKEL SURVEYS

2.4 Photo identification

Curacao has a few unique sea turtle hotspots where sea turtles can be viewed up close. As there are only a few spots in the world where sea turtles can be seen swimming alongside people in clear blue water, these spots offer a unique opportunity to learn more about the individual sea turtles and their behavior. Since photo identification is a non-invasive, upcoming research technique to gain information about sea turtle populations, STCC decided to start a pilot project using pictures to identify resident turtles at the 2 most famous sea turtle hotspots of Curacao: Playa Piskado and Klein Curaçao. Divers and snorkelers are encouraged to share their pictures with STCC. That way they become *citizen scientists** and STCC is able to generate more data. It also a great opportunity to get more people involved in sea turtle conservation. In 2017 we were able to identify 70 sea turtles by the drawings on their head. Additional benefits are that more people keep an eye out for hooked and entangled turtles, as a result we can improve our response time and also we have more footage to use for educational purposes.



FIGURE 8 SOME OF THE RESIDENT TURTLES OF KLEIN CURAÇAO

2.5 Threat registration

To get a better insight into the local threats to sea turtles it is important that incidents involving sea turtles are recorded. This will help to make educated management decisions about which threats need to be given priority. In 2017 it became clear that poaching and hooking/entanglement are major issue of concern. Hooking incidents mainly occur at Playa Piskado and Klein Curaçao, where green turtles are feeding from fish scraps.

On the beaches obstructions like beach chairs and lighting are threatening our sea turtles. A lot of beach managers do not pile up beach chairs at the end of the day. This is a problem for sea turtles that come up to nest. Lighting increases safety for humans, but it disorients sea turtles. One female loggerhead got disoriented at Koredor this year. Furthermore use of heavy machinery on the beach compresses the sand, which makes it more difficult for sea turtles to nest and might destroy nesting sites that have not been recognized.

We had a major incident at Wacawa in which we lost 9 juvenile green turtles. During high tide in a storm 11 sea turtles ended up on the wrong side of the dam. When the water level went back to normal the sea turtles were trapped on the wrong side of the dam, unable to go back to the sea. Volunteers that were hiking in the area found the animals and were still able to help 2 of them. For the others help came too late.

On particular beaches we recorded predation. Especially beaches that are used by humans intensively have a severe predation risk due to feral pigs, stray dogs and rats. People often leave food items behind, attracting these kind of animals.



FIGURE 9 STRANDING EVENT WHERE 9 TURTLES WERE FOUND DEAD IN WACAWA

3. CONSERVATION

3.1 Sea turtle rescues

The most direct conservation activity that STCC performs are sea turtle rescues. Unfortunately there are lots of different ways a sea turtle can get into trouble and needs rescuing. Since more and more people know about STCC, we get more and more reports about turtles in trouble. A report of a turtle in trouble can be called in for a variety of reasons, such as disoriented adults and hatchlings, lethargic or otherwise sick turtles, but most reports are for hooking and entanglement incidents. In 2017 no less than 35 sea turtle rescues were performed. This means that a team of STCC will go out to the reported site to look for the turtle and try to help him.

Most of the turtles fortunately could be helped directly on the spot. But a few times the hook was too deep to reach or the wounds were too severe, so medical attention from a veterinary was required. Fortunately the turtles could be helped and all could be released again after a period of observation.

So far we were able to cover the medical costs with the donations that we received. The costs for medical care for a turtle are up to Ang 2000,- (+/- USD 1100,-) which might become an issue for STCC.



FIGURE 10 TURTLE RELEASES & OPERATION

3.2 Beach and underwater clean ups

Pollution and habitat degradation is one of the most important threats to sea turtles. Marine debris on the nesting beaches causes a lot of problems for adult females that come up the beach to nest and for the hatchlings that try to find their way to the ocean. In the ocean plastic forms a major threat to wildlife, because they might mistake it for food. Animals ingest quite a lot of plastic, with horrible consequences. In addition, entanglement in plastic items and ghost gear is often seen.

Because it is better to prevent incidents than to try and fix them, volunteers of STCC clean nesting beaches on every monitoring check. Furthermore STCC organizes a monthly clean up either on the beaches and/or underwater, to at least try and keep the amount of plastic and ghost gear on the beaches and underwater as limited as possible.



FIGURE 11 CLEAN UP ACTIVITIES

3.3 Promotion of a ban to single use plastic

When you visit the beaches of Curaçao early in the morning, you will find a lot of plastic items that were left behind by beach visitors. Since most of these items can't be recycled and are not biodegradable single use plastic forms the biggest threat, not only to sea turtles and their habitats, but to all life forms. Cleaning the beaches does not solve the problem and this problem needs to be addressed globally. For STCC it is important to help put it on the political agenda of Curaçao. In joint force with Greenforce, Curaçao Clean Up and Plastic Free Curaçao STCC collected signatures for a petition that was offered to the minister of GMN (Health, Environment and Nature), Suzy Camelia Romer. More than 5000 signatures were collected to ban certain single use plastic items. This was meant as a stimulus for the government to adjust legislation and enforcement and to take measures for a better and more sustainable future.



FIGURE 12 HANDING OVER THE PETITION TO MINISTER SUZY CAMELIA ROMER

3.4 Clean up Trinidad oil spill

In April there was an oil spill in Trinidad and Tobago. In May the oil spill reached the Curaçao shorelines, affecting some of the most important sea turtle nesting beaches on Curaçao and Klein Curaçao. STCC coordinated the cleanup of the oil spill at Klein Curaçao, Un Boka, Dos Boka, Boka Djegu, Boka Mansalina and the Wacawa beaches and inlets. The clean ups took about 3 weeks and over 100 individuals came out to give a hand.



FIGURE 13 CLEANING OF THE OIL AT KLEIN CURAÇAO



FIGURE 14 CLEANING OF THE OIL AND PLASTIC AT WACAWA

One turtle was found at Klein Curaçao that seemed to be a victim of the oil spill. After being under the care of veterinary practice Doest for a few weeks the turtle named KayCee recovered enough to be released again.

3.5 Poaching reports

Poaching is still a direct threat that sea turtles face on Curaçao. The majority of the people from Curaçao seem to be ignorant about the endangered and protected status of sea turtles. This was shown by a Facebook post selling a sea turtle. Although several people reacted straight away, informing the seller about the fact he is doing something illegal, a very large group reacted with surprise. STCC filed a complaint against the seller, police investigated, but unfortunately the justice department did not pursue the case. This was a big disappointment for STCC and shows that there are still major challenges in enforcing existing legislation to protect sea turtles.

In total 11 poaching cases were recorded in 2017. Due to fast notification by the police department STCC was able to save 6 green turtles.

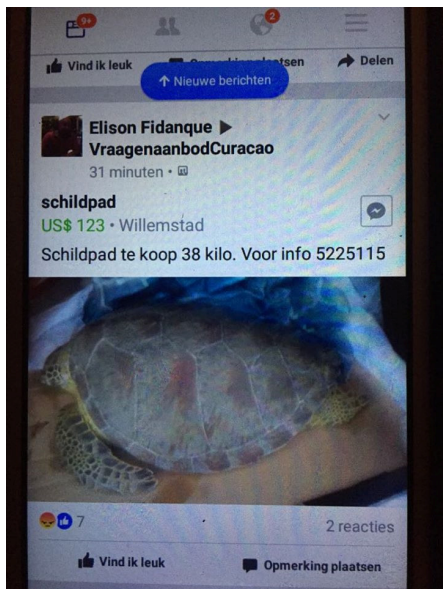


FIGURE 14 POACHED TURTLE SOLD THROUGH FACEBOOK



FIGURE 15 POACHED TURTLES FOUND IN THE VEERIS RESORT



FIGURE 16 SEVERED GREEN TURTLE HEAD FOUND IN JAN THIEL

4. EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Effective protection of sea turtles and their habitats depends on people. Since the behavior of people is the main reason sea turtles and their habitats are threatened, the only solution in the long term is a massive change in behavior. This is a real challenge and starts with education and outreach. For behavioral change to occur, people need to understand why it is necessary, as well as and they also should be motivated to make a change.

Although we see a gradual increase in awareness, there is not yet enough support to ensure long term protection of endangered sea turtles and their habitat. Our efforts in education and outreach focus on informing people about the fact that we have endangered sea turtles in our waters, that they share our environment, that they play an important role in keeping our ecosystems healthy and that they should be viewed as a sentinel species, which basically means that if sea turtles are not doing well we should be extra careful, because the things that are affecting their survival will also impact ours.

We have followed different strategies to reach different groups.

4.1 Including the public



FIGURE 17 STCC VOLUNTEERS TOGETHER WITH THE CURAÇAO NATIONAL SOCCER TEAM

We try to include the public in all our activities. Whether it is nest monitoring or people joining us for a turtle release, we try to involve bystanders and explain what it is that we do. Because first hand experiences are usually the best way to make people aware and willing to change their behavior.



FIGURE 18 TURTLE RELEASES IN WHICH THE PUBLIC IS INVOLVED

4.2 (Social) media

Social media is a promising tool to reach local as well as international audiences. In 2017 we focused on Instagram and Facebook. On Instagram we were able to get 26.4K followers and on Facebook we have reached 3582 followers. The traditional local media picked up on our messages and we frequently appeared in the newspapers and on television.

Newspaper “Antiliaans Dagblad” also placed page fillers that asked people to contact us in case that saw a turtle related incident.



FIGURE 19 STCC IN THE NEWS

4.3 Presentations

STCC will take every opportunity to give presentations about sea turtles and their importance. We will customize the presentations to the audience. In 2017 STCC gave presentations to 16 primary school classes. Some of these classes joined us for a field trip. Furthermore we also gave presentations to the schools that visited the movie the Red Turtle during the Curaçao International Film Festival Rotterdam. We introduced the movie by telling the children about the importance of sea turtle conservation and the efforts of STCC to protect them around Curaçao. Fundamental in these presentations are the tips shared with the children about how they too can make a difference.

STCC also gave presentations to the Brittanic Club, the round table 40+ and to regional colleagues in the WIDECASST meeting.



FIGURE 20 STCC GIVING PRESENTATIONS

4.4 WIDECAST annual meeting

In March STCC hosted the annual WIDECAST meeting in the Acoya hotel. Sea turtle experts from all over the Caribbean region attended the meeting to share experiences and expertise. The meeting was covered by local as well as international media, giving STCC extra exposure. The participants were also taken on a turtle tour, visiting Ascencion, the Sea Turtle Exposition made/curated by STCC in the Savonet Museum in 2016 and Playa Piskado.



FIGURE 21 WIDECAST GROUP PICTURE

4.5 Signage

In cooperation with Shunshine Livingstone and several local dive shops and business owners STCC was able to place information signage at Playa Piskado. The signage showed several resident turtles and the information was available in 7 different languages. Local fishermen had the honor to cut the red ribbon at the unveiling.



FIGURE 22 PART OF THE CONTRIBUTORS TO THE SIGNAGE CREATED FOR PLAYA PISKADO

4.6 “Can you see” song

To reach people from outside our standard audience we partnered with some young local musicians to create a song to promote awareness about sea turtle conservation. The song was written by Gino James and composed by Reuben van Lierop. 13 Local musicians sang a part of the song.



FIGURE 23 REUBEN VAN LIEROP AND GINO JAMES DURING THE RECORDING OF THE SONG

5. Funds

Crucial for a successful long term strategy is securing enough funds to cover the costs and build a financial buffer for the future. Different strategies were pursued to set up a diverse income stream. Local funds, individuals and companies were asked to support the work of STCC. STCC became a member of Global Giving. Global Giving is an international crowd funding platform for nonprofit organizations. Being part of this platform enables us to receive donations from abroad more easily. Several grant proposals were written, but due to natural disasters that struck the region the fundraising efforts did not secure the amount that we aimed for.

5.1 Grant and project proposals

Local funds that were approached for support were:

1. Prins Bernard Cultuur Fonds
2. Fundashon Bon intenshon
3. Projectfonds van de Vertegenwoordiging van Nederland in Willemstad (VNW)
4. Waitt Institute – ROC grant
5. Disney Emergency Fund

None of these supported STCC in 2017, but Prins Bernard Cultuur Fonds postponed the decision about our proposal to 2018.

5.2 Local companies



FIGURE 24 ADD FOR THE ADOPT-A-NEST PROGRAM

To give local companies an easy way to support our cause and simultaneously increase their exposure, the Adopt-A-Nest program was introduced. Companies that adopted a nest were:

1. Avanti Financial Services
2. CMTC
3. Sixt Car Rental
4. Tafelronde 40+ (2x)
5. Curaçao Financial Group
6. Turtle Inn in Belize
7. International School
8. CPA
9. Onderlingehulp
10. Guardian Group
11. Kooyman BV



FIGURE 25 NEST ADOPTIONS

5.3 Sponsorships in kind

For our regular activities we have two amazing sponsors, which have been essential for activities on Klein Curaçao. Both Mermaid Boat trips and Miss Ann Boat trips took our volunteers to the island twice a week and also gave us shelter for the times we had overnight missions.

5.4 Mutually beneficial partnerships

In July a pilot was set up in partnership with Limpi, a young recycling company that uses marine debris to make souvenirs. Upon our request they made a few “Turtle buddies”. This product was a great hit and is now being sold in several dive shops. The recycled plastic products, that help keep the beaches clean and also support two local initiatives seem to be in high demand.



FIGURE 25 TURTLE BUDDIES

5.5 Support from individuals

There are quite a lot of people that support the aim of STCC, locally as well as internationally. To make it easier for the international community, and also to increase exposure, STCC became a partner of Global Giving. Their crowdfunding platform gives information about STCC and people can support our cause financially via all the regular payment methods.

Locally there are a lot of dive operators that put a small donation box for STCC on their counter. They often tell their guests about the work STCC does, especially when the guests have encountered a sea turtle during one of their dive trips.

5.6 Merchandise line

There is a demand for merchandise products from STCC. The first item that we added was a STCC shirt, for which Ilse Koster made a lovely design. It started out when people at the beaches would ask volunteers where they could buy a shirt. We decided to try and sell some shirts for the public, with just a print on the front.

Via the partnership with LIMPI the turtle buddies were introduced. The statues made from about 140 grams of marine debris, have proven to be popular souvenirs. The fact that it helps to keep the beaches of Curaçao clean seems to be a very attractive benefit, for which people would like to spend some money.

At the end of the year we made a calendar which we sold to generate some additional funds. The calendar was made with the help of EJPEG, Naturepics and Tramm Imaging.



FIGURE 26 STCC MERCHANDISE

5.7 Turtle tours

In our turtle tours we invite people to go with us and explore, enjoy and assist in our monitoring activities. We explain about the important role sea turtles play in their habitat. We show them sea turtles in their natural environment and let them assist us in visually checking the turtles for hooks and lines and taking their picture from a respectful distance. We believe this experience encourages people to become more engaged in sea turtle conservation.

Tours are always guided by experienced STCC members and include visits of nesting or foraging sites and sometimes participation in surveys. Depending on the abilities and interests of the participants we offer custom made experiences. In total 11 tours were organized with a total number of 119 participants.

6. Preview into 2018

The objectives for 2018 can be split into four types of activities; research, conservation, education and outreach and fundraising. STCC has objectives for each of these areas.

6.1 Research

The research program for 2018 has the following objectives:

1. Continue the nest monitoring on the four monitoring routes. This is necessary to collect data on the long term population status of nesting turtles on Curaçao. It is known that inter-annual fluctuations in nesting activity are common in sea turtle nesting behavior, therefore regular monitoring is essential for understanding long term trends. STCC hopes to also include temperature data from the main nesting beaches. Since temperature influences the gender of the hatchlings and also the overall nesting success it is really important to get basic temperature data for our nesting beaches.
2. Do traditional in-water capture surveys twice. The first should take place in January and the second in July. These surveys will be conducted using nets to capture live turtles. The turtles will be measured, tagged, sampled (DNA and isotope) and photographed. This data will contribute to important data about the population demographics of the sea-turtle population around Curaçao.
3. Set up a citizen scientist data collection for pictures of resident turtles. From the 1st of August we want to start an intensive program where volunteers actively collect pictures from resident turtles. Citizen scientists are not researchers but they are people with an interest in conservation that want to give a hand. This is good because we can exponentially increase our data collection and we simultaneously increase engagement and awareness.
4. Collect data on the quality of sea turtle habitats either through direct monitoring or by assessing the results from other available studies. This type of data can be used to improve nesting sites or habitat through measures such as planting vegetation or removing permanent and/or temporary structures.
5. Collect data on pressures affecting sea turtles such as the occurrence of hooking and entanglement, the amount of ghost gear present, the amount of marine debris, the effects of coastal development and others. This data will contribute to the planning of future conservation activities.

6.2 Conservation

The conservation activities planned for 2018 include:

1. The continuation of beach cleanup activities in order to improve the quality of nesting sites. On the windward side of the island this mainly concerns marine debris. On the leeward side of the island, the origin of the pollution is mainly land based. STCC hopes to partner up with GNM as well as operators of beaches, to prevent pollution. This should be done by placing additional garbage cans, better system of emptying the garbage bin and an overall reduction of the use of single use plastic.
2. Organize monthly (underwater) cleanups. This is meant to prevent turtles from getting entangled in ghost gear and also to prevent them from ingesting plastic.
3. Place signage at Klein Curaçao that informs visitors about sea turtles and the do's and don'ts.
4. Continue with rescues of entangled and hooked or other wise injured turtles and making stranding reports to keep an up to date for effective threat assessment.

6.3 Education and outreach

The education and awareness objectives for 2018 are:

1. Launch the song and videoclip “Can you see”. The song that was made in 2017, with the help of 13 musicians, will get an official videoclip. When it is finished it will be launched. It will be offered to different radio and television stations and it will be posted online. We are hoping the video will have an enormous engagement.
2. We will give at least 12 presentations for groups on Curaçao. We will also give presentations in Holland, Belgium and Germany for school classes. This will happen around the ISTS for which we will travel to Kobe. In Kobe we will do a poster presentation and in March we will present our results during the WIDECAST annual meeting in Trinidad.
3. We will take at least 120 people on a turtle tour. Giving the participants an opportunity to see see turtles from relatively close by and teaching them about the important roles sea turtles play in keeping the ecosystems they inhabit healthy.
4. STCC will develop an online freely available book, which tells the story about Pointy, the turtle that got hooked. This book will contribute to creating awareness.
5. STCC will develop an educational coloring book that teaches children about sea turtles. The book will be freely available to download online, but there will also be a minimum of 500 hardcopy’s printed, which will be provided to children of Curaçao as a Christmas gift.
6. The old information sign on Klein Curaçao will be replaced with a new sign that includes information about the resident turtles there.
7. In the summer we will organize a holiday plan that gives children with an interest in nature the opportunity to learn more about sea turtles.

6.4 Fundraising

In 2018 the fundraising bar needs to be raised to secure a future for STCC. Sea turtle conservation is a long term effort, which deserves dedicated advocates that can focus on protecting sea turtles. A divers and steady income stream is very important to guarantee the sustainability of STCC. Several products will be developed to generate income:

1. Further develop the partnership with recycling company Limpi. They make amazingly creative products from marine debris collected by STCC volunteers.
2. Apply for research grants and other external sources of funding.
3. The nest adoption program again aims to have 30 sea turtle nest adopted by companies.
4. Adopt-a-turtle will be developed, to give individuals the opportunity to help sea turtles.
5. Get sponsorships for specific needs: like a pickup truck and underwater camera’s
6. Create mutually beneficial partnerships

APPENDIXES

Appendix I Glossary

Body pit	an hole in the sand on the beach where a female turtle pushed or threw away the top layer of sand. This makes it easier to dig a deep enough whole and an egg chamber because it is less likely to cave in
Citizen scientist	an individual who voluntarily contributes his or her time, effort, and resources toward scientific research. These individuals don't necessarily have a formal science background.
Covering	If a sea turtle has finished laying her eggs she will first push sand on top of the eggs, move a little bit to the front and then she will throw sand to the back to disguise her nest.
Fybropapillomatosis	a disease that affects sea turtles around the world that causes tumors growth externally as well as internally

Appendix II Nest monitoring data form 2017

Turtle activity DATA SHEET nr. _____

Date: ____-____-2017 Time: ____:____

Hawksbill/ Green/ Loggerhead / Leatherback

Observers: _____

Locatie: _____

GPS point: N _____ W _____

Activity type: DRY RUN / ATTEMPT / NEST

Nest Confirmed: No / Yes

If not, why not? _____

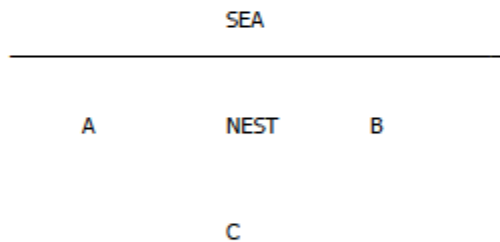
body pits: _____

Track length: _____ m

Track width: _____ m

Freshness: Same night / 1 night / 2 nights

Map if confirmed:



A – nest =

B – nest =

C – nest =

Remarks: _____

Expected hatching date: _____

HATCHED NEST REVIEW

Date: ____-____-2017 Time: ____:____

Hawksbill/ Green/ Loggerhead/ Leatherback

Observers: _____

GPS point: N _____

W _____

Empty egg shells: _____

Dead eggs: _____

Empty Eggs _____

Eggs with early development embryo _____

Eggs with late development embryo _____

Total size (dead eggs + empty egg shells) _____

Dead hatchlings: _____

Live hatchlings: _____

- Take picture of hatchling (dead as well as alive) next to ruler
- Weight of the hatchling _____

Estimated hatch date: _____

- Group the different categories and put 10 together – count 2 times just to be sure
- Take a picture for the records
- Take sample for DNA study
- Take sample for isotope study
- Take a picture of plastic you encountered during excavation
- Put empty shells, eggs and dead hatchlings back in the nest and cover with sand

Appendix III In-water survey data form 2017

IN WATER DATA SHEET Tortuga Blanqu – Green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) Sheet _____

Male female ?? recap new Date _____ Turtle _____

Tag left _____ right _____ PIT left right _____ Time capture _____

Location _____ GPS _____

Capture method _____ Participants _____

Measured by _____ Weight: _____ SCL _____

Tail length _____ Width: _____ CCL _____

Observations FP: Yes / No Locations of the tumors _____

Recap re-sighting behavior

Appendix III List of tagged turtles 2017

Date	Location required	Species	max CL -cm	Weight kg	Tag Left	Tag right
20170212	Wacawa	Cm	47.8	12.9	WH9754	WH9752
20170212	Wacawa	Cm	56	18.6	WH9757	WH9773
20170212	Wacawa	Cm	38	6.2	WH9772	WH9771
20170212	Wacawa	Cm	53.3	17.7	WH9759	WH9758
20170212	Wacawa	Cm	46.2	10.3	WH9768	WH9769
20170212	Wacawa	Cm	33	3.8	WH9611	WH9612
20170212	Wacawa	Cm	40	6.9	WH9023 R	WH9613
20170212	Wacawa	Cm	40.9	6.4	WH9614	WH9615
20170212	Wacawa	Cm	35	4.8	WH9616	WH9617
20170212	Wacawa	Cm	40.2	7	WH9618	WH9619
20170212	Wacawa	Cm	45.2	10.7	WH9621	no flipper
20170212	Wacawa	Cm	48.6	11	WH9622	WH9624
20170213	Klein Curacao	Cm	37	5.7	WH9629	WH9628
20170213	Klein Curacao	Cm	29.8	2.8	WH9765	WH9764
20170213	Klein Curacao	Cm	46.4	10.1	WH9760	WH9763
20170213	Klein Curacao	Cm	49.2	13	WH9767	WH9766
20170213	Klein Curacao	Cm	37.1	5.5	WH9625	WH9653
20170214	Ascencion	Cm	55.5	15	WH9650	WH9630
20170214	Ascencion	Cm	35	3.9	WH9631	WH9631
20170214	Ascencion	Cm	29.5	3.3	WH9633	WH9634
20170214	Ascencion	Cm	48.4	11.6	WH9655	WH9636
20170214	Ascencion	Cm	31.3	3.3	WH9640	WH9702
20170214	Ascencion	Cm	39	6.2	WH9642	WH9641
20170214	Ascencion	Cm	40.5	7.5	WH9644	WH9643
20170214	Ascencion	Cm	35.5	4.5	WH9649	WH9648
20170214	Ascencion	Cm	30.9	3.3	WH9647	WH9646
20170214	Ascencion	Cm	37.4	5	WH9776	WH9777
20170214	Ascencion	Cm	37.2	5.8	WH9780	WH9778
20170214	Ascencion	Cm	50.5	13.5	WH9781	WH9782
20170214	Ascencion	Cm	33	4.3	WH9783	WH9784
20170214	Ascencion	Cm	40	6.5	WH9785	WH9786
20170214	Ascencion	Cm	30.2	3.5	WH9788	WH9789
20170214	Ascencion	Cm	31.2	3.4	WH9787	none
20170214	Ascencion	Cm	40.2	6.4	WH9790	WH8791
20170312	Klein Curacao	Cm	53		WH9625	WH9653
20170420	Klein Curacao	Cm	32		WH9629	WH9628
20170506	Playa Piskado	cm			WC1401	WC1402
20170516	Klein Curacao	cm	54		WH9656	WH9657
20170701	Playa Piskado	cm	30		WH9626	WH9675

20170702	Klein Curacao	cm	56		no	WH9638
20170708	Playa Piskado	cm			WH9658	WH9659
20170714	Playa Piskado	cm			WH9799	WH9800
20170721	Playa Piskado	cm		32	WH9673	WH9674
20170728	Playa Piskado	cm			WH9792	WH9793
20170830	Lagun	cm				WH9697
20170907	Veeris Resort	Cm	29.5	2.7	None	none
20170907	Veeris Resort	Cm	30	2.6	WH9693	none
20170907	Veeris Resort	Cm	40	6	WH9692	WH9677
20170907	Veeris Resort	Cm	34	4	WH9676	WH9678
20170907	Veeris Resort	Cm	36	4.4	WH9680	WH9679
20170907	Veeris Resort	Cm	44	8.7	WH9682	WH9681
20170911	Playa Piskado	Cm	35		WH9690	WH9691
20170916	Playa Piskado	Cm		33	WH9673	WH9674
20171019	Playa Piskado	Cm	43		WH9604	WH9605
20171126	Playa Piskado	Cm			WH9604 R	WH9605 R
20171126	Playa Piskado	Cm			WH9686	WH9660
20171227	Playa Piskado	Cm			WH9673	WH9674
20171229	Playa Piskado	Cm			WH9686	WH9663

Appendix II Protocol in-water survey

Needed materials for 2 working stations:

- 2x Caliper 400 mm
- 2x Caliper 1200 mm
- 2x Measuring tape
- 2x Weighing hook
- 3x Weighing bag
- 200x Scalpels
- 200x Sample tubes
- 5x marker
- 5x pencil
- 4x Sample tube containers
- 150x Flippertags large
- 150x Flippertags small
- 3x Tag applier large
- 3x Tag applier small
- Lysol spray that kills 99,9% of all viruses and germs
- Paper towels
- 3 boxes of gloves
- 6 small buckets
- 100x Towels
- 100x Data forms
- 25 noodles
- 4x camera
- 3x folding table
- Shading tent
- Alcohol
- Hand sanitizer
- Garbage bags
- Container for used scalpels
- First aid kit

In water:

- Boat
- Net
- Towels
- Pocket knife
- 10x Snorkel sets and flippers

Preparation:

Working station

1. Set up the working stations.
2. Make sure all the needed material is there.
3. Make sure each station has the following roles filled:
 - a. Researcher or veterinary that takes all the measurements.

- b. Assistant researcher that helps with the handling of the turtle.
- c. Someone to write down the measurements.
- d. Someone to take pictures.

In water team:

1. Everybody should make sure they have eaten and drunken enough for being in the water for at least an hour and a half.
2. Put on enough sun protection. Preferably everybody is wearing long sleeves.
3. The safety briefing will be given when everybody is ready to go in the water.
4. The net will be put in the water. As soon as the net is in snorkelers will start patrolling the net to see if turtles are entangled and if so to bring them up.

Protocol:

SAFETY COMES FIRST! If anybody feels uncomfortable at any time, please announce yourself. There will be a safety coordinator appointed that will decide if the net has to come out of the water early. No risks will be taken with volunteers of turtles.

1. Snorkelers will patrol the net from the moment it goes into the water until it is completely out. If they encounter a turtle they bring it up to the surface so the turtle can breath and then they entangle it from the net. It is either brought to the working station or placed in the boat, to be taken to the working station at a later time.
2. The net will stay in the water for an hour or it might be taken out early if the safety coordinator that is on the dock keeping an overview decides that to be best.
3. At the working station the turtle is measured, tagged and the samples are taken. All the date is recorded and there are pictures taken from all the sides of the head of the turtle with 2 camera's. After the data forms are filled in completely, and this is cheched, the turtle is released again. Sample tubes will receive the data and the tag numbers of the turtles and stored in order.
4. The measuring table and all the used materials are cleaned 3 times. First all the moist is taken away with a paper towel. The table and materials are disinfected with Lysol and finally the table and the materials are ringed with sweet water, before the next turtle is placed on the table

Appendix IV STCC in the media

Bed and Breakfast Europe

Een wereld zonder schildpadden?

Schildpadden draaien al heel wat jaren mee op onze aardbol. Ze waren er al toen er nog dinosaurussen rondliepen. Jammer genoeg zijn zeeschildpadden tegenwoordig een bedreigde diersoort. Dit betekent als er wereldwijd niets voor deze dieren wordt gedaan, ze er straks niet meer zijn. Het werk van Sea Turtle Conservation Curaçao is daarom ongelofelijk belangrijk.



De geboorte van een schildpad bekijk je hier.



Sea Turtle Conservation Curaçao is een vrijwilligersorganisatie onder de vlag van Carmabi. Sabine Berends is de karktrekker van dit initiatief. Sabine: 'We hebben vier soorten schildpadden op Curaçao. De Hawksbill schildpad legt haar eieren in Shete Boka, terwijl de groene zeeschildpadden op Klein Curaçao nestelen. Loggerheads vinden een plaatsje voor hun eieren op sommige stranden aan de zuidkust. En dan hebben we nog de levensgrote leatherback, die zwemt in de wateren rondom Curaçao, maar waarvan nog nooit een nest op ons eiland is gevonden.'

Terug naar start

Sinds 2014 brengt een groep vrijwilligers de schildpaddenpopulatie van Curaçao in kaart. Schildpadden hebben een speciale levenswandel. De jonge schildpadjes die het uiteindelijk lukt om uit het ei de zee te bereiken, gaan de wijde wereld in en komen pas twintig jaar later terug. Om hun eigen eieren te leggen op de plek waar ze vandaan komen.

Eén op duizend

Sabine: 'Een schildpad legt 100 tot 150 eieren. Per broedsizoen doet ze dat twee tot vier keer. Dat zijn er genoeg zou je denken, maar feit is dat maar één op de duizend eieren een volwassen schildpad wordt. Daarom is het ook zo belangrijk dat we de steeds schaarser wordende nesten beschermen. En de omstandigheden voor de nesten op Curaçao verbeteren. Dit kan al heel eenvoudig door onze stranden schoon te houden. In 2015 telden we op Klein Curaçao 54 nesten. Omdat het eilandje schoner is geworden, hebben we er het afgelopen jaar 77 nesten mogen vinden. Waar uiteindelijk - als je het puur rekenkundig bekijkt - uiteindelijk acht volwassen schildpadden uit voortkomen.'

Ruim je rommel op

'We zijn er nog lang niet, benadrukt Sabine Berends. 'Het begin is gelukkig gemaakt. We werken met een fijne groep vrijwilligers, maar iedereen op Curaçao kan een steentje bijdragen. Door je rommel op te ruimen na een stranddag. En door ons te melden als je schildpadden activiteiten opmerkt. Allemaal dingen die geen geld kosten, alleen wat tijd. Een kleine moeite voor een groot resultaat.'

Wil je een nest adopteren? Kijk dan op de facebookpagina van Sea Turtle Conservation Curaçao.



SEA TURTLE Conservation Curaçao



Everybody loves sea turtles, whenever one is spotted people point and cheer. These graceful reptiles can live from eighty up to a hundred years, the females reach sexual maturity at twenty, reproduce every three to four years and can lay up to two hundred eggs when they nest. And yet these beautiful creatures are becoming extinct. Not because of natural causes, the sea turtle population has been dwindling dramatically...because of us.

By Tamara Neuman

Sabina Bredius is one of the supervisors of the Turtle Conservation Curaçao. She talks enthusiastically about all the different projects they have undertaken so far and are currently working on to help protect sea turtles and as she warms up to the topic she becomes surprisingly more joyful. One thing she always says sea turtles face daily, mostly due to human behavior. She has become these beautiful creatures' fiercest protector.

Marijndé and Mies Anst' boat operators who take us to Klein Curaçao

three times a week so we can monitor the turtles and look for nesting sites.

Curaçao has several feeding areas where previously sea turtles used to be spotted. Some turtles also swim in the Playa Piskado but many of the turtles observed here are overfed. "Last January, two female turtles were observed here one overfed. "Last January, two female turtles were observed here one overfed. "Last January, two female turtles were observed here one overfed."

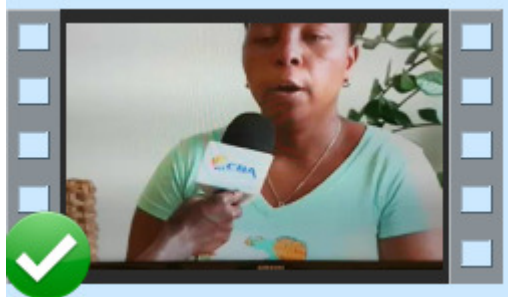
They also want to start showing the habits of our local turtle tracking system. In 2015, trackers were placed on three green turtles who nested at Klein Curaçao. "The turtles traveled 100 kilometers per day. One ended up in Mexico, one in St. Kitts and the other one in Los Rios, Ecuador. We now want to study the behavior of our own juveniles to understand their feeding and diving patterns and see if certain patterns, such as the increase in tracking activity, affects their behavior and in which way."

The trackers are expensive so Sabina and her team are working on creative ways to generate funds. "I believe art and nature go hand in hand and a good way to make people appreciate nature is through art. We've gotten a lot of cooperation from fishermen artists who've made artwork depicting sea turtles, to help our cause. In my opinion art is often undervalued, so to make it more accessible to people with a lower budget while still respecting the artist's work, we try to make a deal with the artist to sell an agreed upon maximum number of copies at a fraction of the cost after they've sold the original."

Sabina is also adamant about making a music video about turtles. "We are still working out the specifics but we've definitely decided who we want to work with. By now, there've discovered a group of boys aged 16 to 21 who motivate the public: immediately by rapping promotional lyrics about whatever people tell us. Just out of curiosity I suggested SEA TURTLES and the boys immediately picked up on it and started rapping a turtle song. It gave me goose bumps! The video will help depict Curaçao as a tourist destination to observe turtles, serve as an entertaining instructional video and promote our young talents (call that a win-win-win situation!)."

Cooperation between artists and active involvement by people in general is essential to protect our turtles and Sabina is especially proud of the way the staff at a few shops was handled. "We had over a hundred people helping to clean the affected beaches. We've collected the oil debris while also picking up whatever plastic items had washed ashore while others contributed with drinks and snacks for the volunteers working the sites. It shows that the community cares about the environment and about our turtles. It gives me hope, because the bottom line is that we depend on our ocean, if we don't protect it, what's going to do for us?"

They now have a weekly monitoring schedule covering four different trunks and approximately thirty volunteers to help monitor these areas. "We rely completely on volunteer work and donations as we don't get governmental funding so we are extremely thankful to be able to help protect our sea turtles."



Antilliaans Dagblad

Jaargang 14 nr. 93 - NAF 1,50/US\$ 0,85 incl. OB Donderdag 23 maart 2017

MFK-leider: OM ligt	2	Insel Air vliegt weer op tijd	5	Vakbonden Isla bezoeken China	9	Bonaire: Pieters mag PDB leiden	17	Vijf doden bij aanslag Londen	25
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Pisas tijdelijk premier

'Cooper nog niet door screening'

Van een onzer verslaggevers
WILLEMSTAD - Gilmar 'Pik' Pisas, de huidige Statenvoorzitter van MFK, wordt morgen tijdelijk tot premier benoemd.

Van de kandidaat-ministers voor het interim-kabinet zijn er op dit moment twee bij wie de screening nog niet is afgerond, zij worden morgen niet beëdigd. Nadat de screening van deze twee kandidaat-ministers is afgerond, wordt Pisas minister van Justitie. De namen van de bewindslieden die morgen aantreden, worden vandaag bekendgemaakt.

Dat heeft politiek leider Gerrit Schotte van MFK gisteravond bij TeleCuraçao verklaard. Schotte verklaarde gistermiddag in een interview met journalist Yves Cooper al dat Charles Cooper, de nummer twee op de verkiezingslijst van MFK, op dit moment niet de beoogde premier is. De nummer twee op de verkiezingslijst van MFK verklaarde zelf een tijd terug in de media dat hij gevraagd was om premier van het interim-kabinet te worden. Sinds een paar dagen doet het hardnekkige gerucht de ronde dat Cooper niet door de screening is gekomen. Charles Cooper was gisteren niet bereikbaar voor commentaar.

In gesprek met TeleCuraçao ontdekte Schotte dat Cooper niet door de screening is gekomen. Het screeningsproces is in het geval van Cooper en een andere kandidaat-minister die door Schotte niet bij de naam werd genoemd, nog niet afgerond,

aldus de politiek leider. Er zijn zaken die nog afgehandeld moeten worden, aldus Schotte die als voorbeeld gaf dat wanneer een kandidaat-minister een openstaande schuld bij de Belastingdienst heeft, er eerst een betalingsregeling moet zijn getroffen voordat die persoon minister kan worden. De MFK-leider verklaarde ook dat de installatie morgenmiddag om 15.00 uur plaatsvindt. De bevoeging werd door Schotte uitgenodigd om bij Forti aanwezig te zijn om het nieuwe kabinet te begroeten. Om 18.00 uur wordt er bij het Wilhelminaplein een toost uitgebracht.

De overgangsregering heeft in tegenstelling tot het huidige demissionaire kabinet de volledige steun van de 12 parlementsliden, aldus Schotte tegenover journalist Cooper. Tijdens de eerste constituerende vergadering van de ministerraad zullen er besluiten worden genomen. Een daarvan is om de ministers van het vorige kabinet op grond van een aangenomen motie verantwoordelijk te stellen voor besluiten die niet conform de comptabiliteitsregels zijn genomen. Alle besluiten die niet volgens deze regels zijn genomen worden door de overgangsregering teruggedraaid.

Op pagina 11
Twee nieuwe Statenleden

Curacao speelt gelijk tegen El Salvador

Van een onzer verslaggevers
WILLEMSTAD - De Curaçaose selectie speelde gisteravond in het stadion Antoine Maduro een vriendschappelijke oefenwedstrijd tegen El Salvador als voorbereiding op de twee belangrijke toernooien die het nationale elftal deze zomer gaat spelen. Curaçao begon met een sterke opstelling met Eloy Room in het doel en Reangelo Janga in de spits met Brandley Kuwas, Gevaro Nepomuceno en Jarchino

Amonia achter hem. Kemy Agustien en Leandra Bacuna stuurden het elftal vanuit het middenveld aan, Ayrton Statie, Darryl Lachman, aanvoerder Cu-

co Martina en Shanon Carnelia vormden de achterhoede. Bondscoach Bicentini wilde veel spelers aan het werk zien en wisselde dus veel. Invaller Feliciano Zschustschen opende de score in de 70e minuut, maar in de laatste minuut kwam El Salvador nog langszij met een doelpunt van Rodolfo Zelaya.

Zeeschildpaddenteam en nationaal elftal



In het Acaya Hotel is gisteren de tweedaagse conferentie begonnen van het Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network (Widcast) die is georganiseerd door de lokale Sea Turtle Conservation Curaçao (STCC). Toevallig loogert ook het nationaal voetbal elftal van Curaçao in dit hotel, in verband met de vriendschappelijke oefenwedstrijd tegen El Salvador gisteravond. Beide teams zijn stajdbaar, geacht op hun einddoel, en een gezamenlijke foto was dan ook snid gemaakt.

Op pagina 11
Zeeschildpaddenteam conferentie op Curaçao

FOTO MICHELLE PORS DA COSTA GOMEZ

Tromp slecht uit screening VDSM

Van een onzer verslaggevers
WILLEMSTAD/PHILIPSBURG

Aberware

5-6-7 APRIL 2017

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CBCS-president Emsley Tromp is, in tegenstelling tot de twee andere directeurs Jerry Hasselmeyer en Alberto Romero, niet goed door het Sint Maartense veiligheidsonderzoek gekomen. Reden voor de regering in Philipsburg te besluiten Tromp geen verklaring van geen bezwaar te verstrekken. Dit is bekendgemaakt door minister van Financiën Richard Gibson van Sint Maarten, die er meteen aan toevoegt dat Tromp nog het volle recht heeft in beroep te gaan. Gibson verwijst naar het veiligheidsonderzoek door de Veiligheidsdienst Sint Maarten (VDSM).

Op welke gronden de president van de Centrale Bank niet zonder kleerscheuren uit de screening is gekomen, maakte Gib-

son niet bekend. Het zal echter zeker ook te maken hebben met het strafrechtelijk onderzoek - 'in privé', zoals het Openbaar Ministerie bij herhaling heeft aangegeven - dat sinds de tweede helft van 2016 tegen hem loopt, waarin overigens nog geen vervolgingsbesluit is gevallen. Zolang Tromp in de gelegenheid is bezwaar te maken tegen de bestuurlijke beschikking van de regering van Sint Maarten, kunnen de landen Curaçao en Sint Maarten (de zogeheten vermogensagerechtigden) geen nieuwe president benoemen. Zo geeft Gibson aan. Tromp nam vorig jaar zelf voor onbepaalde tijd vakantie toen hij door het OM als verdachte werd aangemerkt in de zaak Saffier naar vermeende belasting-

ontduiking en witwassen. Zijn pensioenontschutting werd ook bestempeld als verdachte. Tijdens een dienstreis in Amerika werd huiszoeking in zijn woning gedaan. Om het onderzoek niet te verstoren, stelde hij directeur Hasselmeyer aan als interim-president. De verdieningen, waarover sindsdien nauwelijks meer iets is vernomen, waren voor Gibson en zijn toenmalige Curaçoise ambtgenoot José Jardim aanleiding te besluiten tot schorsing van Tromp. Dat kon echter niet zonder aanbeveling van de RvC, die - naar later bleek - in meerderheid schorsing 'prematuur' vond.

Op pagina 13
'Termin screening al maanden vertraakt'



Foto



Zeeschildpaddenconferentie op Curaçao

Door Michelle Pors-da Costa Gomez

WILLEMSTAD - Widecast, het Caribisch netwerk voor onderzoek naar en bescherming van zeeschildpadden organiseert op dit moment de jaarlijkse conferentie voor coördinatoren uit het Caribisch gebied en Midden- en Zuid-Amerika op Curaçao. Vertegenwoordigers van verschillende organisaties uit meer dan 25 landen zijn op het eiland samengekomen om een kijkje te nemen in de keuken van Sea Turtle Conservation Curaçao. Daarnaast wordt informatie uitgewisseld over nieuwe wetenschappelijke methoden, innovatieve hulpmiddelen om het werk te vergemakkelijken, zeeschildpaddenprojecten in de regio en worden de koppen bij elkaar gestoken om het netwerk van bescherming van de met uitsterven bedreigde diersoorten, te versterken en uit te breiden.

Sabine Berendse, sinds 2014 coördinatrice van Widecast op Curaçao, legde op de eerste ochtend uit wat de werkzaamheden van Sea Turtle Conservation Curaçao (STCC) inhielden vanaf het moment dat de eerste activiteiten werden ontplooid. Met een team van ongeveer 30 vrijwilligers, van wie de jongste 15 jaar oud, is gemiddeld op nesten van de reptielen op het eiland en op de kustlijn van Klein Curaçao, zijn 'in-water surveys' uitgevoerd om in kaart te brengen wat de bewegingspatronen van zeeschildpadden in de ondiepe wateren rond het eiland zijn en is daarmee een duidelijker beeld verkregen over de zeeschildpadden die lange en korte tijd in de wateren van het eiland rondzwemmen. Tevens is een tracking project geïnitieerd waarbij 3 soepschildpadden met een satelliet tracker werden 'getagd' en gevolgd om te achterhalen waar de schildpadden, die op Curaçao nesten hadden gelegd, uiteindelijk naartoe gingen. Naast het moni-



Deel van het STCC-team.

toren van nestactiviteit is de grootste uitdaging van het team de kustvervuiling geweest. Als voorbeeld toonde Berendse foto's van een hevig vervuilde kustlijn van Klein Curaçao waarbij verschillende lagen plastic van jaren over elkaar heen lagen en daarmee succesvolle nestactiviteiten van de zeeschildpadden verstoorden. Het besluit de kustlijn op te ruimen was snel genomen en met de hulp van lokale sponsors en bootoperatoren die Klein Curaçao als bestemming hebben, werd de kust van het kleine eiland stukje bij beetje opgeruimd. „Een enorme uitdaging wat betreft inzet en logistiek. Het eiland ligt 2 uur varen uit de kust van Curaçao en alle opgeruimde troep van Klein Curaçao moest naar het vaste land gevaren worden”, aldus

Berendse. De resultaten mochten er echter zijn, want het aantal nesten op het eiland is bijna verdubbeld nadat de kust was vrijgemaakt van het afval en de schildpadden er vrij konden bewegen.

Naast plastic afval, waarvan het meeste niet van Curaçao zelf afkomstig is, is ook het plaatsen van mistnetten een probleem op het eiland. Schildpadden blijven in de netten vastzitten en verdrinken. Bij meldingen van dergelijke netten aan STCC wordt er dan ook direct werk van gemaakt om deze netten te verwijderen. Het verwijderen heeft echter niet kunnen voorkomen dat een aantal zeeschildpadden slachtoffer werd en op de lijst van strandingen werd geplaatst. Ook ongelukken met motorboten, dood als gevolg van het eten van plastic en andere factoren speelden een rol bij de strandingen die de afgelopen paar jaar voor Curaçao zijn bijgehouden.

Beschermingsmaatregelen en onderzoek zijn niet de enige activiteiten die zijn ontplooid in de afgelopen paar jaar. Ook educatie speelt een grote rol in de werkzaamheden en dat is te zien aan de expositie over zeeschildpadden in de maasina-



Tijdens clean-ups gevonden flessendoppen verwerkt in een beeld van een schildpad.

FOTO'S MICHELLE PORS-DA COSTA GOMEZ

de socialmediapagina's? en 'Hoe zorg je ervoor dat je andere mensen geïnteresseerd maakt dan die reeds geïnteresseerd zijn in de natuur?' zorgden ervoor dat de 'strategie voor het inzetten van social media' als een van de onderwerpen werd opgevoerd voor de groepsdiscussies die in de middag zouden gaan plaatsvinden. Ook de inzet van een grote groep jongeren als vrijwilligers bij de 'in-water surveys' van STCC was aanleiding voor enthousiaste reacties. Het is een publiek geheim dat ionaeren in de tie-

beeld zou kunnen gaan dienen voor hoe andere organisaties in de regio soortgelijke projecten aanpakken.

Zeeschildpadden zijn een verbindende factor voor de organisaties, zowel gouvernementeel als non-gouvernementeel, die deel uitmaken van Widecast, en die aanwezig zijn op de conferentie die ook vandaag verder gaat met presentaties, groepsdiscussies en besprekingen en een tripje naar de zeeschildpaddenexpo en de baai van Ascension. Zeeschildpadden spelen de hoofdrol.



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A picture is worth a thousand words

Curaçao voor het eerst gastland

Schildpadden centraal bij conferentie



Foto: Kay Wong

Ard Vreugdenhil de STCC-coördinator tijdens zijn toespraak.

WILLEMSTAD — Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network (Widecast) organiseert haar jaarlijkse conferentie vandaag en morgen op Curaçao. De aftrap vond vanochtend in het Acoya-hotel plaats met een openingspeech van Karen Eckert, executive director van Widecast. Hierop kroeg de Sea Turtle Conservation Curaçao (STCC), als gastland de gelegenheid om de zestig deelnemers uit 25 verschillende landen uit de regio in te lichten over de lokale inspanningen voor het behoud van de schildpaddenpopulatie.

Widecast heeft als doel om met gebundelde krachten de bedreigingen voor schildpadden in het Caribisch gebied te reduceren, waarbij me





Appendix V Congratulation letter of WIDECAST director

Appendix VI STCC supporters, partners and volunteers in sea turtle conservation

The success achieved in 2017 would not have been possible without the support and assistance of many people and organizations, both local and international. STCC would like to thank all their supporters, partners and volunteers for their contributions and support throughout the year.

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Appendix V. Ways to donate

You can support STCC by making a donation. We greatly depend on the support of generous people. Whether it is \$10, \$100 or \$10.000 or a donation in kind, it will help ensure that we can keep on protecting sea turtles and their habitats around Curaçao.

STCC is a member of Global Giving. Through our project site on their website, <https://www.globalgiving.org/projects/help-protect-endangered-sea-turtles-in-curacao>, you can easily make a donation choosing from all the major accepted payment methods.

To make a donation locally on Curacao:

Beneficiary: Friends of Sea Turtle Conservation Curaçao
Bank: Maduro & Curiel's Bank (Curaçao) N.V.
Account number: 30128106

To make a donation from the USA:

Beneficiary: Friends of Sea Turtle Conservation Curaçao
Account number: 30128106
Beneficiary Bank: Maduro & Curiel's Bank (Curaçao) N.V.
Swift Code: MCBKCWCU
Correspondent Bank: Standard Chartered Bank
Swift Code: SCBLUS33

To make a donation from Europe:

Beneficiary: Friends of Sea Turtle Conservation Curaçao
Account number: 30128106
Beneficiary Bank: Maduro & Curiel's Bank (Curaçao) N.V.
Swift Code: MCBKCWCU
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If you have any questions or ideas for giving, please contact us at info@seaturtleconservationcuracao.org or call the director Sabine Berendse at +5999 5652271