

# Marine Protected Areas - a new interactive online map

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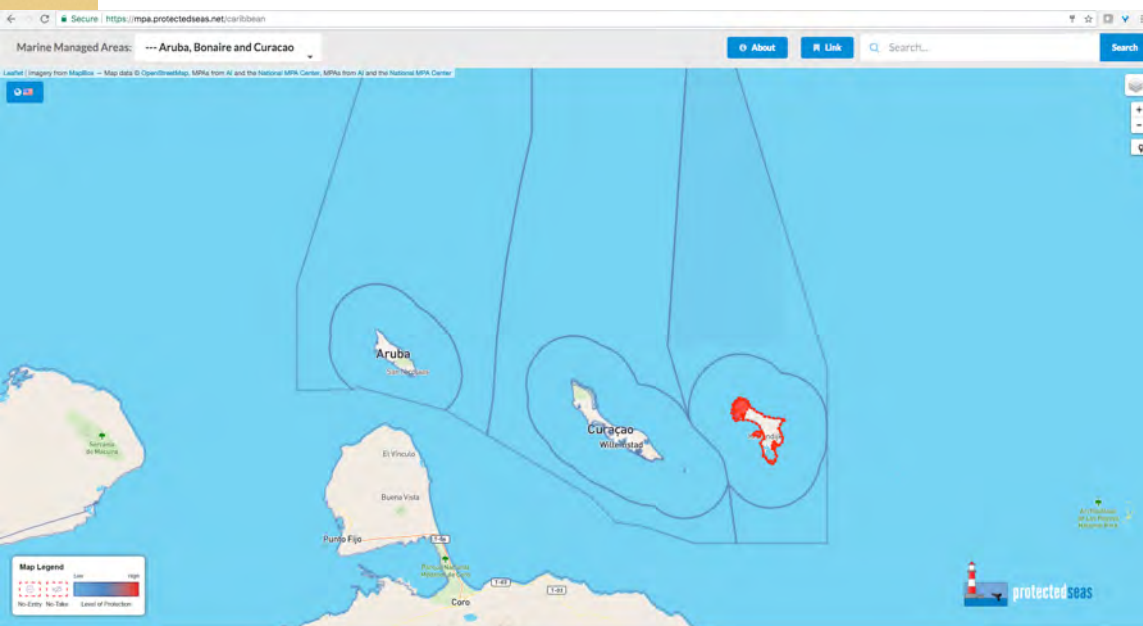


Figure 1: Map view of Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao.  
Source: <https://mpa.protectedseas.net/caribbean>

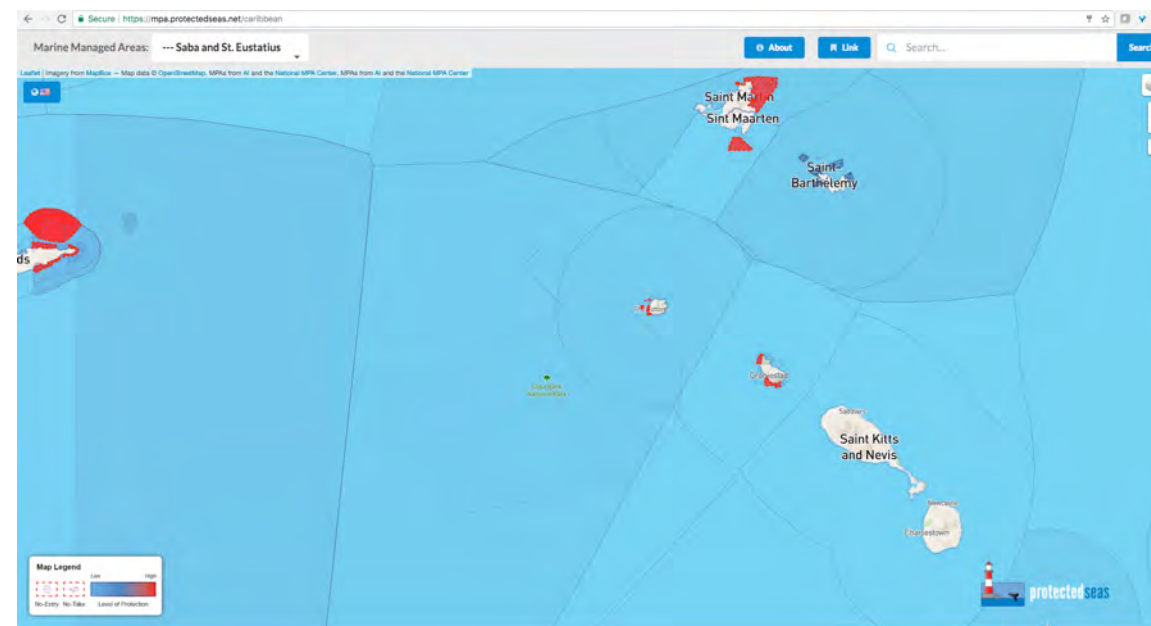


Figure 2: Map view of Saba, St. Eustatius, and St. Maarten.  
Source: <https://mpa.protectedseas.net/caribbean>

The Dutch Caribbean has a new way to access marine protected area (MPA) information focused on ease of use for boaters, fishermen, and the public. Available online at ProtectedSeas.net is an interactive online map of marine protected and managed areas for our islands and the Caribbean as a whole. The map provides one-click access to detailed MPA information such as allowed activities, regulations, management resources, and links to official publications. In July 2017, with help from DCNA, ProtectedSeas largely completed the Dutch Caribbean (see Figure 1 and Figure 2).

The team is currently wrapping up the Caribbean and moving on to Central and South America. They invite comments, feedback, or questions on their map and specific MPAs. Available now in English, ProtectedSeas plans to make MPA information available in each country's official language soon. Volunteer help with translation is always appreciated.

The ProtectedSeas Marine Managed Area Mapping project began two years ago in an effort to fulfill the need for a one-stop resource for ocean users to find out not only where MPAs are located, but also which activities are restricted. It provides area-specific information such as where fishing, anchoring, or diving, are allowed (see Figure 3). ProtectedSeas is currently working to expand these categories to include indicators for over 25 different activities, many of which are specific to certain fishing gear. By making this information available for free online and working with nautical charting companies to include MPA information on boating navigation maps, ProtectedSeas hopes to improve awareness and compliance of these special places so critical to ocean health.

In the United States, ProtectedSeas work has been recognized via a public-private partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Marine Protected Areas Center. While

scouring U.S. state and federal regulations, the team discovered marine managed areas such as species- and gear-specific regulations, which are not MPAs, but contained place-based restrictions with conservation benefits. Adding these areas to their maps helps show a more comprehensive picture of management practices. The team also includes key restrictions for each nation's exclusive economic zone, or EEZ and Territorial Sea.

ProtectedSeas completed their map of U.S. marine managed areas at the end of 2016 and contains a dataset of nearly 4,000 sites. Afterwards, the team tackled the high seas and created the first ever high-seas map with all marine managed areas beyond national jurisdiction with associated management measures. This was released at Oceans Conference at the United Nations in New York City in June 2017 (<https://mpa.protectedseas.net/highseas>). Since then, the team has been working hard on the Caribbean which is nearing completion.

Would you like to share a news item?  
Please e-mail us: [research@DCNAnature.org](mailto:research@DCNAnature.org)

Photo by: © Rudy van Gelderen

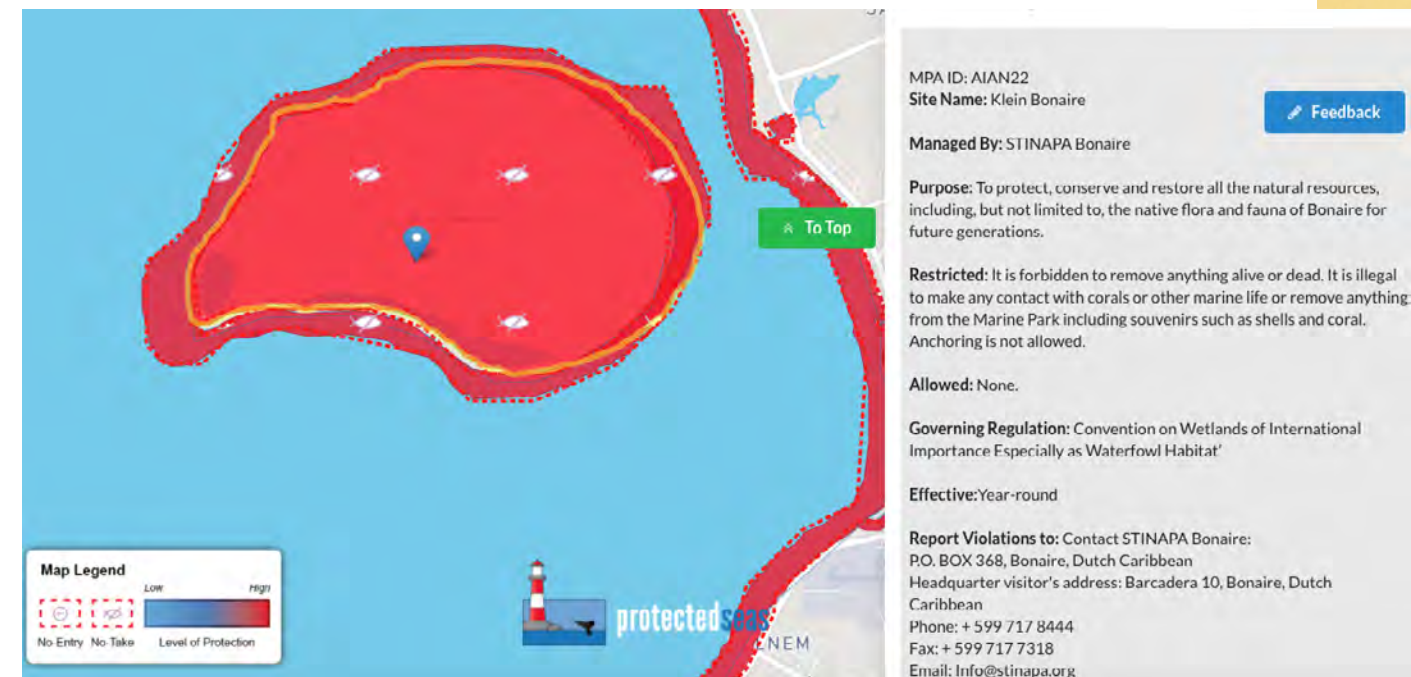


Figure 3: View of details of Klein Bonaire. In the right panel you can find information on the management organization, purpose, restrictions and governing regulations.

Source: <https://mpa.protectedseas.net/caribbean>