

FEE HARMONIZATION STUDY



Prepared for:
The Organization of American States
Department of Sustainable Development
Washington DC

Prepared by:



December, 2013



Mr. Richard Huber
Chief of Section, Department of Sustainable Development
OAS
Washington, DC

November 25, 2013

Dear Mr. Huber,

In keeping with the Terms of Reference for the OAS Fee Harmonization Project (PO#331385), please find enclosed first draft of the report. This draft report reflects the detailed consultations that we have had with both government officials and the private sector in St. Lucia, Dominica, St. Kitts and Nevis, Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada and St. Vincent and the Grenadines and the OECS Yacht Committee in order to address:

- A harmonized yacht fee policy;
- A marketing strategy to increase yacht visitors to existing marine protected areas and potential marine protected areas that are intended to meet the Caribbean Challenge

The draft report has been sent to each of the countries participating for comments. Their comments will be included in the final report, expected to be submitted by December 15, 2013.

I would welcome any comments that you might have so that I might incorporate them in the final plan.

Yours truly,

Todd Koenings
Executive Director

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Organization of American States' (OAS), through its General Secretariat, Department of Sustainable Development, conducts the ReefFix Program. The program is an integrated coastal zone management tool that works with countries to assist them in meeting their international commitments to establishing and managing marine protected areas.

As part of this program, Saint Lucia, Grenada and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines expressed interest in preparing a study to explore fee harmonization for sailing and motor vessels entering protected areas throughout the region. Their interest stemmed from the belief that yachties would see the establishment of similar fees as a positive development and make cruising more feasible, less confusing and bring in more revenue for marine protected area management.

In addition, the countries wished to explore a marketing strategy to achieve a balance between increased visitations and associated environmental and social impacts so that the very marine protected areas and environments that yachties seek and cherish in the region are protected into the future.

Global Parks, a volunteer non-government organization of mostly retired American and Canadian protected area officials was selected to undertake the study. Mel Turner, Global Parks' director from Vancouver, conducted the study.

2. CONSULTATIONS

Consultations were held in each of the six Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) countries that had expressed interest in the study. Fisheries and park officials responsible for marine protected areas, mostly national marine parks or marine management areas and marine reserves, were contacted and meetings set up. In addition, consultations were extended to customs officials as almost all countries have fees associated with yacht entry and/or cruising in their territorial waters.

Consultations were also held with the Caribbean Marine Association, which represents many of the marine industry providers in the Caribbean.

In addition, a presentation was made in Grenada in November to the OECS Yacht Committee where harmonized fees and a marketing strategy were discussed. The OECS Yacht Committee, established by the mandate of the OECS Council of Tourism Ministers and facilitated by the OECS Economic Development Policy Unit, has, as part of its mandate, the consideration of harmonized fee structures and incentives as they apply generally to the yachting sector. The Committee is comprised of representatives from the various states. A number of the representatives are from the private sector.

3. LEGISLATION

Generally, marine protected areas in the region are established under national fisheries or parks legislation. Of interest to this study, the fisheries legislation language to establish marine reserves for the countries is essentially harmonized. The 1983 *Fisheries Act* for Antigua and Barbuda, the 1984 *Fisheries Act* for St. Lucia and for St. Kitts, the 1986 *Fisheries Act* for Grenada and for St. Vincent and the Grenadines and the 1987 *Fisheries Act* for Dominica all generally state:

...Minister by Order may declare a marine reserve for:

- a) to afford special protection to flora and fauna and to protect and preserve the natural beauty and habitats of aquatic life
- b) to allow for natural regeneration of aquatic life
- c) to promote scientific study and research
- d) to preserve and enhance the natural beauty

Regulations associated with marine reserves established under this legislation allow for the setting and collection of fees.

The majority of the marine protected areas are assigned to government departments to manage. However, the fisheries legislation also allows the management of marine areas to be assigned from the Minister to a designated local authority. To date, the Scott's Head Soufriere Marine Management Area in Dominica (SSMA) and the Soufriere Marine Management Area (SMMA) in St. Lucia have been established under this governance model. Sandy Island/Oyster Bed Marine Protected Area on Carriacou Island in Grenada is expected to be established with a similar governance authority.

In St. Vincent, the *Mustique Company Act* (1982) has designated a private company to manage public lands and foreshore in the Mustique Marine Conservation Area.

These local authorities enact bylaws, including the establishment of fees, to manage their respective area.

Legislation to establish marine parks is more varied in description but essentially the same in purpose.

In St. Kitts, the 1987 *National Conservation and Environmental Protection Act*, in Dominica, the 1990 *National Parks and Protected Areas Act*, in St. Lucia, the 1990 *St. Lucia National Trust Act*, in Antigua and Barbuda, the *National Parks Act* and the *National Parks (Amendment) Act 2004*, in Grenada, the 1991 *National Parks and Protected Areas Act* and in St. Vincent, the 1997 *Marine Parks Act* and the 2002 *National Parks Act* all grant authority to establish a national marine park. In addition, other national legislation associated with heritage protection or planning control also provides opportunities to designate national marine parks.

In all instances, fee establishment is associated with regulations attached to the respective park legislation.

4. EXISTING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS & THE CARIBBEAN CHALLENGE

Table 1 shows the existing protected areas with a marine component within the six OECS countries addressed in this study.

TABLE 1 Existing Marine Protected Areas

Dominica	Cabrits National Park Scott's Head Soufriere Marine Reserve
St. Lucia	Soufriere Marine Management Area Canaries/Anse la Raye Marine Management Area Port Sable Environmental Protection Area/Marine Reserve Maria Islands Nature Reserve? Pigeon Island National Park and Landmark? Frigate Islands Nature Reserve? Marquis Mangroves Marine Reserve Rodney Bay Artificial Reefs Marine Reserve Anse Marin Reef Marine Reserve Marigot Bay Mangroves Marine Reserve Grand Caille/Rachette Point Marine Reserve Anse L'Ivrogne Reef Marine Reserve Anse Pointe Sable-Mankote Marine Reserve Maria Islet Marine Reserve Savannes Bay Mangrove Marine Reserve Malgretoute Reef Marine Reserve Anse de Pitons Reef Marine Reserve Esperance Harbour Mangrove Marine Reserve Praslin Mangroves Marine Reserve Fond d'Or Marine Reserve Louvette Mangroves Marine Reserve Grand Anse Beach & Mangroves Marine Reserve Bois d'Orange Mangrove Marine Reserve Cas-en-bas Mangrove Marine Reserve Choc-Bay Mangrove Marine Reserve Anse Chastanet Marine Reserve Anse Cochon Artificial Reef Marine Reserve Anse Galet/Anse Cochon Reef Marine Reserve Vigie Bay Artificial Reef Marine Reserve Moule-a-Chique Artificial Reefs Marine Reserve Caesar Point/Mathurin Point Reefs Marine Reserve Anse la Verduze Artificial Reef Marine Reserve
St. Kitts	No designations
Antigua	Nelson Dockyards National Park North East Marine Management Area Devils Bridge National Park Fort Barrington National Park Cades Bay Marine Reserve Diamond Reef/Salt Fish Tail Marine Reserve Codrington Lagoon National Park
St. Vincent	Tobago Cays Marine Park Bequia Marine Conservation Area Canouan Marine Conservation Area

	South Coast Marine Conservation Area Isle de Quatre Marine Conservation Area Mustique Marine Conservation Area Petit St. Vincent Marine Conservation Area Union Island/Palm Island Marine Conservation Area
Grenada	Woburn/Clarks Court Bay Marine Protected Area Moliniere/Beausejour Marine Protected Area

The majority of the marine reserves in all the countries have been designated for fisheries protection as the major purpose. However, the national parks, the marine management areas and the marine conservation and protected areas all have yachting as an integral component in their overall management.

Details of the services such as mooring buoys that are offered to yacht visitors at each marine protected area are found in Appendix 1.

The Caribbean Challenge is an international initiative adopted by eight Caribbean countries to protect and manage a system of marine and coastal protected areas that cover at least 20% of their near shore and coastal environments by 2020. In this study, all countries except Dominica have accepted the challenge and are working towards meeting the commitment.

To meet the Challenge, several countries including Grenada and St. Vincent have completed Cabinet-approved protected area system plans while others such as St. Lucia have draft plans. St. Kitts is currently embarking on the preparation of a system plan. The establishment of marine protected areas is significant to the yacht visitors as the areas have the potential, with protected area management, to provide a safe, protected environment with developed facilities.

5. FEES & WILLINGNESS TO PAY

A significant component of the Caribbean Challenge is to ensure that the marine protected areas are provided with sustainable funding for management.

Generally, funds to manage protected areas come from two revenue streams: central government and, where central government allows, user fees. On occasion, donor contributions also supplement funding for park management.

Within protected areas, fees are often set based on the concept of public good and private good. Public good recognizes that protected areas contribute to societal needs such as natural and cultural conservation, health, education and livelihoods. Private good recognizes that protected areas provide individual needs mostly associated with many forms of recreation.

Often, central governments determine the amount of public good provided by protected areas and, based on that and other government priorities, contribute towards their management. Some OECS countries such as Antigua and Barbuda, St. Lucia and Grenada have conducted studies to estimate the level of contribution that yachting overall makes to their economy. For Grenada, a 2013 report, *The Marine and Yachting Sector in Grenada-Economic Impact*

Assessment Report, estimated that the sector, over all, contributed some \$130 million¹ or 6% of Grenada's GDP to Grenada's economy. The contribution of each marine protected area though represents only a part of that total, however even that is significant. Recent studies, such as the 2013 *Economic Valuation of Parks and Protected Areas: Annandale/Grand Etang Forest Reserves and Sandy Island/Oyster Bed Marine Protected Area* state that the yachts contribute some \$200 daily to the local economy.

In many instances, the government contribution is not sufficient to cover off all management expenses and in some cases, central governments are unwilling to cover off any expenses, determining that protected areas must be self sufficient: always an onerous assignment.

User fees are the common option employed to cover off the private good and to complement any contributions made by central government towards protected area management. Willingness-to-pay studies can be conducted to assist in setting a user fee structure. Several studies have been conducted in the Caribbean in an effort to guide park managers in the establishment of user fees.

In 1998, a study entitled *Social and Economic Impacts of Marine Protected Areas: A Study and Analysis of Selected Cases in the Caribbean* surveyed visitors on willingness-to-pay user fees in the Wreck of the Rhone Marine Park in the British Virgin Islands, Saba Marine Park in the Netherlands Antilles, the St. Lucia Marine Management Area (now the SMMA) in St. Lucia and the Reserve Islets Pigeon in Guadeloupe. The yachting sector expressed a willingness-to-pay substantially more for anchorage and mooring fees that were in place at the time.

In 2001, a University of York study was conducted in the Soufriere Marine Management Area, *Preliminary results from Reef Valuation study, Saint Lucia, West Indies 2000-2001*, in an effort to determine what visitors would pay on a daily basis to dive and snorkel. Based on the results of the study, fees to participate in these activities in the SMMA were recommended: fees that are in place today, some 14 years later.

In 2006, the St. Eustatius National Parks Foundation in the Netherlands Antilles, conducted a similar study, *A Willingness to Pay Study for Park Fees: Quill/Boven National Park, St. Eustatius Marine Park, St. Eustatius, Netherlands Antilles*, to seek the views of park visitors on their willingness to pay a higher user fee in order to sustain the National Park system's marine and terrestrial conservation objectives. As with the earlier study, some 75% of those interviewed supported a willingness to pay for higher fees in an effort to meet that objective.

In 2010, the Government of St. Vincent prepared *Willingness-to-Pay Study, St Vincent and the Grenadines*. Although, for the purpose of this study, only entrance and activity (dive and snorkel) fees were addressed, over 80% of the study participants expressed a willingness-to-pay for the management of protected areas.

Though there is a considerable willingness by users to support marine protected areas, beyond the contributions of central government and not only in the Caribbean but world-wide, there is an expectation that there will be value for fees charged, a clear indication of the fee purpose and fee retention by the protected area management agencies.

¹ All financial numbers are in Eastern Caribbean currency.

In most instances, the payment of fees was linked to the protection of scenic and natural values, both under and above water, quality of the experience, information, facilities and services.

The setting of fees though needs to consider not only whatever government contribution is allocated but also the management needs of the particular marine protected areas. These needs can vary widely. Some protected areas could be extensively developed with facilities that need maintenance and some could require a constant level of environmental and/or visitor monitoring. Some require both.

In the six OECS countries, yachties are subject to custom fees to enter each country and user fees to enjoy selected marine protected areas.

Table 2 reflects the fees charged by each country to cruise into its waters.

Table 2

Custom Entry and Cruising Fee

Fee (in ECS rounded)	St. Vincent and the Grenadines	St. Lucia	St. Kitts	Dominica	Antigua	Grenada
Custom Entry	0	25	30	0	<20' - 27 <40' - 32 <80' - 43 <100' - 54 <120' - 70 >121' - 86	<40' - 50 <60' - 75 <80' - 100 >80' - 150
Cruising (per person)	35	0	19	6	17	8

Table 3 reflects fees charged, primarily in marine protected areas, by either the government, a local authority granted management over a protected or de facto protected area or a concession operating in a protected or de facto protected area.

(in EC\$ rounded) d - days(s)	St. Vincent and the Grenadines^{1,2}	St. Lucia³	St. Kitts⁴	Dominica⁵	Antigua⁶	Grenada⁷
Mooring Buoy	Tobago Cays 45-d 90-3d Mustique <70' - 200 - 3d <85' - 300 - 3d <100' - 400 - 3d >100' - 500 - 3d	<40' - 40 - 2d - 80 - 7d <70' - 54 - 2d - 100 - 7d >70' - 162 - d	<35' - 40 - 2d - 54 - 7d <60' - 54 - 2d - 67 - 7d <90' - 67 - 2d - 80 - 7d	27-d	MARINE RESERVE (proposed) <20' - (40-67) - d - (54-81)-7d <50' - (54-81) - d - (67-95)-7d <60' - (67-95) - d - (81-108)-7d PRIVATE 54 - d 324-7d	27-d
Anchoring	0	0	0	0	MARINE RESERVE (proposed) <70' - (81-108) - d - (95-122)-7d <90' - (95-122) - d - (108-135)-7d <90' - (108-135) - d - (122-148)-7d NATIONAL PARK \$0.15/foot -d \$0.81/foot -7d \$3.11/foot -30d	0
Entry Fee	10	5	0	0	3	0
Dive Fee	0	14	0	6	3	6d 27-annual
Snorkel Fee	0	0	0	6	3	3d
Charter Permit	140 - 30d 1,400-annual		0	0	45 - 7d 65 - 30d 650-annual	0

User fees in Table 3 represent:

1. St. Vincent-mooring and activity fees in Tobago Cays National Park
2. Mustique Marine Conservation Area
3. St. Lucia-mooring and activity fees collected in Soufriere Marine Management Area
4. St. Kitts-mooring fees collected at Nevis Harbour
5. Dominica-mooring fees collected in Prince Rupert Bay adjacent to Cabrits National Park
6. Antigua-mooring and anchoring fees collected in Nelson Dockyard National Park and proposed mooring, anchoring and activity fees in North East Marine Management Area
7. Grenada-mooring and activity fees in Sandy Island/Oyster Bed and Beausejour/Molinere Marine Protected Areas

In any event, willingness to pay is a moot point for the yachting sector as there has been a 25-year history of marine protected area fees: the sector is well accustomed to paying a fee for expected services and support of marine protected area establishment and management.

6. EXISTING MARKETING STRATEGIES FOR MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

The existing marine protected areas that have been reviewed all have information in separate brochures, reports and web information that is both official and unofficial and all are viewed as being in competition with each other; in some cases with a marketing strategy that is protected.

In addition, several websites such as the Caribbean Marine Protected Area Network and Forum, Caribbean Natural Resources Institute and Caribbean MPAs provide resource information about the designated marine protected areas but little about yachting opportunities.

Since 1998, studies such as *Marine Protected Areas in the Caribbean: A Tourism Marketing Study* have identified the need to target the yachting sector by upgrading promotional material, establishing and protecting sites and developing facilities, taking care to consider carrying capacity, both in and adjacent to designated sites.

The OECS Yacht Committee's implementation plan includes the objective to increase travel and length of stay by advertising and the Committee, recognizing the competition between the various OECS countries, has a strong interest in developing a regional marketing strategy in an effort to increase the world market share of yacht cruising in the Caribbean.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the consultations with government officials charged with managing and promoting marine tourism in marine protected areas, with the private sector who provide services to the yachting community and are directly affected by fee policies and with the OECS Yacht Committee which provides a regional rather than territorial perspective, recommendations on harmonized fees and a marketing strategy to increase visitors to the marine protected areas, with social and environmental carrying capacity limits, were prepared.

Harmonized Fees

The concept of a harmonized fee for marine protected areas in the six OECS countries, though interesting, is difficult to justify as there is variation in each country's philosophy of charging custom fees to visitors entering the country and supporting protected areas, and yachting generally, through central government funding allocations. There is also variation in each marine protected areas' needs for development and management. Given the different philosophies in central government financial support and the management needs of each marine protected area, it is unrealistic to expect that fee harmonization, calling for a similar entry, mooring, activity, concession permit fee to marine protected areas across the OECS countries, should be a goal.

Recommendation 1

Abandon the concept of establishing a harmonized fee for yachts across the OECS marine protected areas. All OECS governments should adopt a fee policy and schedule based on the level of support from central government and the management needs of their marine protected area system.

Recommendation 2

All OECS governments should review the economic contribution that the yachting sector makes to their economy and determine a fair and reasonable return of that contribution to support their marine protected area system.

However, what could be harmonized is the stated purpose of the fees, their calculation and application and their nomenclature.

The purpose of the fees is to offset the overall costs of managing a particular protected area. In some instances, such as Grenada, a portion of the overall management costs is furnished by central government. In other instances, such as the Nelson Dockyards National Park, central government does not provide basic funding and all management expenditures need to be offset by revenues generated. In all instances however, the purpose of charging a fee is to recover the funds necessary to provide a particular level of management to the protected area, including operations (compliance, environmental protection, environmental monitoring and research, safety and security), maintenance, capital maintenance and capital development.

Recommendation 3

All of the protected area management authorities, both government and non-government, need to state clearly, during their direct contact with visitors and in their marketing, that fees are collected for those purposes stated above and to demonstrate that the visitors are getting a particular value for paying the fee.

How fees are calculated, particularly mooring, varies widely. In some countries such as Antigua, St. Lucia and St. Kitts and Nevis, mooring and anchoring are calculated by the length of the yacht: length categories vary significantly. In other countries such as St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Grenada, there is a flat charge, regardless of length and based on length of stay.

Entry fee calculation for associated activities, such as snorkeling and diving, also vary in the way they are collected. In some instances, a flat entry fee is charged: in others, the entry fee is compounded with the other activities so those visitors wanting to snorkel in a protected area pay the entry fee and the activity fee(s), necessitating additional management costs associated with identifying and monitoring the visitors.

Recommendation 4

Where countries choose to schedule mooring fees on boat length, length categories should be harmonized. It is recommended that three categories be used (less than 40 feet/40-70 feet/greater than 70 feet).

Where countries choose to schedule mooring fees on length of stay, the length of stay should be harmonized. It is recommended that two categories be used (2 days or less/3-7 days).

Similarly, efforts should also be made to simply levy a daily entry fee per person regardless of length of stay or activities participating in.

Recommendation 5

Those marine protected areas that are actively managed and not charging an entry fee or anchoring fee or charter permit fee should consider doing so if it is economically feasible.

Nomenclature is always important when describing fees: with yachties, seemingly more so. To emphasize the importance of conservation in a protected area, the SMMA refers to the mooring fee as a coral conservation fee; elsewhere it is called a reef protection fee or just a mooring fee. This conservation emphasis is important as it relays both a message and a purpose to the yachtie.

In addition, nomenclature associated with the designation of a marine protected area is also important as the words “marine park”, “marine protected area” and “marine conservation area” all have various connotations to yachties. In most countries where yacht visitors reside, the designation of “marine park” reflects an understanding of a protected environment and use by the yachting community.

Recommendation 6

All OECS countries should refer to the fee for the use of a mooring buoy as a Coral Conservation Fee and where yachts are accepted and encouraged as part of the overall management plan for a marine protected area, consideration should be given to using the term “national marine park” in the official name of the marine protected area.

Marketing Strategy

Several of the existing protected areas, including the Soufriere Marine Management Area, Nelson Dockyard National Park and Tobago Cays, that encourage yachting have their respective websites, social media sites and brochures as part of their individual and competitive marketing strategy. Although not a protected area as yet, the Nevis Harbour Authority has its own brochure on its mooring system and regulations associated with the designated mooring area.

In addition, several related websites, such as Caribbean MPAs, highlight marine protected areas although more for resource information than visitor services.

All of the managers of the existing marine protected areas have indicated that they intend to continue marketing their marine protected areas in a competitive environment and to protect their marketing plans. However, they all agree that there is a real and present need to expand the Caribbean market and encourage more yachts to visit the region. In order to increase use of the yachting sector to the region, a regional coordination is required to compete with other yachting destinations such as the Mediterranean. In this instance, the OECS Yacht Committee can play a major role by coordinating and implementing a regional marketing strategy, including highlighting the benefits to yachties provided by marine protected areas.

Recommendation 7

The OECS Yachting Committee should prepare a marketing strategy that will grow the visitation of yachts to the overall Caribbean region. The strategy, developed in concert with the OECS countries Ministry’s of Tourism and the marine protected area managers should include print and electronic information as well as attendance and promotion at international boat shows in Europe and on the East and West coasts of North America.

An important part of this marketing strategy, and in keeping with approved marine protected area system plans, is the designation and development of additional marine protected areas that welcome yachts: an initiative in harmony with the commitment to the Caribbean Challenge.

Recommendation 8

Under a phased approach and recognizing that 2020 is only six years away, all OECS countries participating in the Caribbean Challenge should designate marine protected areas identified in approved system plans, prepare management plans for those marine protected areas to ensure a balance between protecting the marine protected area's resources and providing use to the yachting community and implement fee structures to ensure enhanced marine protected area management.

DRAFT

APPENDIX 1

NOTES OF CONSULTATIONS

ST. LUCIA

CONSULTATION NOTES

Meetings held September 23, 2013 at Fisheries Cooperative, Castries, Saint Lucia and September 24, 2013 at Soufriere Marine Management Area (SMMA), Soufriere, Saint Lucia

Attendees: Vaughn Charles, Chair, SMMA
Jeannine Compton-Antoine, Manager, SMMA
Peter Butcher, Senior Ranger, SMMA
Mel Turner

1. Project Review
Mel reviewed the project's TOR and Global Parks' selection to complete the project. Jeannine provided background to the initiative itself that led to the TOR, giving everyone a good background to the project and its expected goals, in particular for the southern OECS nations of St. Lucia, St. Vincent and Grenada.
2. Soufriere Marine Management Area
Vaughn reviewed the composition of the SMMA Board and its governance model. Discussions also addressed designation of two moorage areas in the SMMA with some 40 mooring buoys, future expansion of the SMMA to the north, services and facilities currently provided and, at the SMMA office in Soufriere scope of current ranger duties.

The 8 rangers, currently stationed in Soufriere, provide assistance to the yachts on moorage locations, maintain the SMMA infrastructure, patrol the SMMA three times a day, assist in first aid, fire and police protection as needed and undertake environmental monitoring and support. Almost 3,000 yachts arrived in the SMMA in 2012.

3. Yacht Fees
Vaughn outlined the existing yacht fees (Table 2), how they are set through SMMA bylaws, their accounting and their determination based on comparables elsewhere in the OECS.

Discussion also ensued on fee collection by third parties, from charter boats, confusion with Customs' fees on moorage, fishing fees and political support for non-yachting fee collection, in particular the proposed entry fee to the SMMA, which has been approved but not implemented.

Currently, about X% of the overall SMMA revenue comes from yacht fees and all fees are retained by SMMA.

4. Marketing
Vaughn and Jeannine outlined the present extent of marketing the SMMA generally and the yachting sector in particular.
5. Other topics
General discussion occurred on other services to yachties (wifi, pump out stations, garbage collection, marketing) being considered by SMMA to support fees

CONSULTATION NOTES

Meeting held September 23, 2013 at Ministry of Tourism Offices, Castries

Attendees: Nigel Mitchell, Director, Tourism Development Program, Ministry of Tourism

Jeannine Compton-Antoine, Manager, SMMA

Mel Turner

1. Project Review
2. Yacht Tourism Policy
Nigel explained that there was not a separate tourism policy or strategy for yachting that would address issues such as fees and marketing. St. Lucia has an overall tourism strategic plan that the yachting sector falls under. He also confirmed that a separate study identifying the value of the yachting sector to St. Lucia's overall economy is unknown.
3. Establishment of Marine Protected Areas
Discussion occurred on the concept of establishing a system of marine protected areas to attract the yachting sector.
4. Other topics
Nigel offered to forward previous reports that might be pertinent to the project.

CONSULTATION NOTES

Meeting held September 24, 2013 at OECS Office, Morne Fortune, St. Lucia

Attendees: Rodinald Soomer, Head, Economic Development Policy Unit (EDPU), OECS

Lorraine Nicholas, Program Officer

Mel Turner

1. Project Review
2. Review of OECS Yachting Committee Structure and Implementation Plan
Lorraine reviewed the TOR for the Committee and the implementation plan for harmonized tourism policies developed through consultations by the EDPU. Components of the implementation plan include harmonization on fee structures and marketing.

On marketing, the implementation plan calls for sensitizing the yachting public about SAILCLEAR (pre Customs clearance) adopted by most countries with the exception of Antigua, developing an awareness guide, participating in international boat shows (countries will be represented in Fort Lauderdale this year), and staging more regatta events in the Caribbean.

Specific mention of marine protected areas as destinations is not contemplated at the international boat shows.

3. Establishment of Marine Protected Areas
Discussion occurred on the concept of establishing a system of marine protected areas to attract the yachting sector.

CONSULTATION NOTES

Meeting held September 24, 2013 at Marigot Marina, Marigot Bay, St. Lucia

Attendees: Bob Hathaway, Vice President, Caribbean Marine Association and former SMMA
Board Member

Mel Turner

1. Project Review
2. Fee Harmonization and Establishment of Marine Protected Areas
Bob outlined the rationale behind the confusion over the Custom's Permit to Moor fee and presented his thoughts on harmonized fees, stressing that harmonization should focus on the purpose of the fee rather than the amount of the fee.

On the establishment of marine protected areas, Bob noted that a business plan was being prepared for the SMMA, that marine protected areas required management.

DOMINICA

CONSULTATION NOTES

Meeting held September 25, 2013 at Scotts Head-Soufriere Marine Reserve (SSMR) Office, Soufriere, Dominica

Attendees: Linton Etienne, Head Warden
Mel Turner

1. Project Review
2. SSMA
Linton reviewed the purpose of the SSMR and confirmed that yacht moorings were deemed an incompatible use within the SSMR. He outlined the management structure of the SSMA, the fees charged to divers, their compliance with fee collection and the duties of the wardens. All fees collected are retained by the SSMR.

CONSULTATION NOTES

Meeting held September 25, 2013 at Fisheries Office, Roseau, Dominica

Attendees: Andrew Magliore, Chief Fisheries Officer
Mel Turner

1. Project Review
2. Dominica Marine Protected Areas
Andrew reviewed the Soufriere Scotts Head Marine Reserve, its establishment and its governance under a Local Area management Authority. He confirmed that there was no mooring permitted in the SSMR due to user conflicts.

He also noted that there were designated anchorages for yachts at Roseau, Mero and Portsmouth but these areas had not been designated as marine protected areas. Both the local community and government through EU Eco-Tourism development programs have established buoys and the local community collects fees for moorage and other services without a formal agreement from Fisheries.

In addition, Andrew noted that the buoys at Portsmouth have been installed outside the boundaries of the marine component of Cabrits National Park (Prince Rupert Bay). In this instance, which is the largest anchorage in the Commonwealth, the buoys are maintained and

fees collected by the Portsmouth Association for Yacht Security (PAYS). The Fisheries Department is reviewing the need to license the local communities that are providing the services and the need to certify and train the service providers to ensure a consistent product.

CONSULTATION NOTES

Meeting held September 27, 2013 at Customs Office, Portsmouth, Dominica

Attendees: Amos Yankey, Customs Officer

Mel Turner

1. Project Review
2. Customs Procedures
Amos reviewed the custom clearances and fees (Table 1), including overtime fees, for Dominica and the anchorage areas at Portsmouth (Prince Rupert Bay), Mero and at Roseau. He noted that Dominica had an in/out clearance for yachts staying two weeks or less.

CONSULTATION NOTES

Meeting held September 27, 2013 at Portsmouth Association for Yacht Security (PAYS), Portsmouth, Dominica

Attendees: Cobra, President, PAYS

Mel Turner

1. Project Review
2. Yachting Services
Cobra reviewed the history of the buoys in Prince Rupert Bay. The Government of Dominica provided some 30 buoys and they are maintained by PAYS through a “word-of-mouth” agreement. PAYS collects fees \$27/night and provides security and other services as requested.

ST. KITTS & NEVIS

CONSULTATION NOTES

Meeting held September 30, 2013 at Customs Office, Charlestown, Nevis

Attendees: Ken Pemberton, Operations Manager, Nevis Port Authority

Mel Turner

1. Project Review
2. Custom Fees
Ken outlined the custom procedures for St. Kitts and Nevis. Yachties report to a customs office and pay a flat fee (Table 1) based on tonnage-\$30 for vessels under 100 tons and \$70 for those over. Like Dominica, St. Kitts and Nevis has an in/out clearance.
2. Nevis Yacht Mooring
Ken explained the Nevis yacht mooring system. Basically, there is a mooring area from Windy Hill to Charlestown along the west coast of Nevis where the Port Authority has installed some 100 buoys and charges mooring fees (Table 2). The area acts as a *de facto* marine protected area as in addition to the buoys, which are compulsory to use, a number of regulations common to marine protected areas are enforced by port police.

Fees collected go into the Port Authority’s general revenue.

CONSULTATION NOTES

Meeting held September 30, 2013 at Fisheries Office, Basseterre, St. Kitts

Attendees: Marc Williams, Director, Department of Marine Resources

Mel Turner

1. Project Review

2. Marine Protected Areas

Marc explained that there are, at present, no designated marine protected areas in St. Kitts. However, substantial background information on marine resources has been assembled and the government is considering the establishment of a marine management area, two miles seaward of the high water mark, around the entire country. Marc also noted that a preliminary marine protected area is under consideration for the Narrows, the marine area between St. Kitts and Nevis. Before formal designation of any marine protected areas occurs, a management plan for the overall marine management area would need to be prepared and consultation would need to be conducted.

Marc also noted that 8 buoys had been installed in South Frigate Bay and yachties are encouraged to use them rather than damage the sea grass and coral communities by anchoring. There is no charge for the use of the buoys.

Marc also confirmed that a system of marine protected areas would encourage tourism generally and yacht tourism in particular, in the area.

ANTIGUA & BARBUDA

CONSULTATION NOTES

Meeting held October 2, 2013 at Antigua Yacht Club, Falmouth, Antigua

Attendees: John Duffy, President, Caribbean Marine Association

Mel Turner

1. Project Review

2. OECS Yacht Committee

John noted that the Caribbean Marine Association was an observer member on the Committee and assisted in developing the Committee's implementation plan. He felt that the tourism sector of the OECS could play a coordinating and implementing role in the marketing of the yachting sector to make the Caribbean more of a destination-one sea. Many islands. Currently the concern of hurricane limits the yachting season to some 6 months yet the British Virgin Islands have the same probability of hurricane events, yet they have a 12-month season.

3. Marine Protected Areas

John noted that there was little demand for buoy mooring in Antigua due to the size of the yachts: marinas were generally preferred. However, he also noted that in the southern OECS islands, charters were in the majority and many yachties were hesitant to anchor and would prefer buoys. As such, a system of marine parks that provided security, were scenic and lessened the impact on reefs and the benthic environment would be positive.

CONSULTATION NOTES

Meeting held October 3, 2013 at Fisheries Office, St. Johns, Antigua

Attendees: Cheryl Jeffrey-Appleton, Chief Fisheries Officer

Julien Lawrence, Manager, North East Marine Management Area

Mel Turner

1. Project Review

2. Antigua and Barbuda Marine Reserves

Cheryl and Julien outlined the 3 existing marine reserves around Antigua and the one marine reserve in Barbuda. There is no existing marine reserve system plan but several areas have been suggested for additions.

The largest reserve, the North East Management Area, has 29 buoys. There is currently no charge to use these buoys but an overall fee structure, included in a proposed *Fisheries Act* regulation, that addresses not only yacht mooring and anchoring fees but other users fees including permit fees and activity fees such as kayaking and snorkeling as well. Once the fee structure is approved, the fees collected are intended to be placed in a special account, as requested through stakeholder consultation, to further the management of marine reserves. The proposed fee structure is based on what others are charging in similar situations and the expected cost of managing the marine reserve.

Cheryl and Julien noted that one of the most significant issues facing the Department was trying to ensure safe passage in the North East Marine Management Area due to unmarked reefs and shoals.

There is no marketing of the marine reserves to encourage yachts and any promotion is the responsibility of the Ministry of Tourism.

CONSULTATION NOTES

Meeting held October 4, 2013 at Nelson Dockyards National Park, Falmouth, Antigua

Attendees: Anne-Marie Martin, Superintendent, Nelson Dockyards National Park

Brian Cooper, Head, Environment Unit, Nelson Dockyards National park

Mel Turner

1. Project Review

2. Nelson Dockyards National Park

Anne-Marie outlined the governance of the national park and its funding. The Park receives no subsidy from Antigua central government. She also outlined the arrangements and fees for anchoring, mooring at buoys (which are provided and managed by concession) and berthing at the park.

2. Marketing

Anne-Marie noted that attracting yachts to each of the countries was very competitive and marketing initiatives are guarded. She also noted that her market is very resilient to economic conditions and oriented to quality service. The park is represented at international boat shows. She also noted that fees were a “drop in the bucket”, especially when compared with other world yacht destinations.

SAINT VINCENT & THE GRENADINES

CONSULTATION NOTES

Meeting held November 5, 2013 at the National Parks, Rivers and Beaches Office, Kingstown, Saint Vincent

Attendees: Andrew Wilson, Director, National Parks, Rivers and Beaches Authority
Mel Turner

1. Project Review

2. St. Vincent and the Grenadines Marine Protected Areas

Andrew reviewed the marine protected area system for St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Tobago Cays is the only marine park and it was established with its own legislation and autonomous management board prior to the establishment of the National Parks, Rivers and Beaches Authority.

Fees for using Tobago Cays are regulated by the legislation establishing the park and are set by the management board. Fees include mooring-there are some 10 buoys-and entrance. National Parks works with the Tobago Cays administration on common management issues associated with training and promotion.

There are marine reserves established under the *Fisheries Act* and some have private, unauthorized mooring buoys associated with them. In the case of Mustique Island, a separate piece of legislation, the *Mustique Company Act*, assigns management of the marine conservation area to the private Mustique Land Company who provides mooring and anchoring opportunities for a fee.

The 2010 *SVG National Parks and Protected Area System Plan 2010-2014* proposes to re-designate a number of the existing marine reserves, in particular the South Coast Marine Conservation Area, to marine park status. As part of the re-designation process, all marine park proposals require a financial plan component, including a fee structure.

3. Marketing

The National Parks, Rivers and Beaches Authority coordinates its marketing with the Ministry of Tourism. The Tobago Cays Marine Park is always prominent in any marketing by the Ministry of Tourism. The Marine Park has its own website and park brochure.

GRENADA

CONSULTATION NOTES

Meeting held November 7, 2013 at Fisheries Office, St. Georges, Grenada

Attendees: Roland Baldeo, Marine Protected Area Officer
Mel Turner

1. Project Review

2. Grenada Marine Protected Areas

Roland outline the marine protected area for Grenada. Currently, there are two protected areas established. Sandy Island/Oyster Bed is yet to be established however a local management board is in place. There are some 10 mooring buoys in both Sandy Island and Molinere. There are no recognized facilities currently at Clarks Court.

Fees for mooring, diving and snorkeling are collected at Sandy Island and Molinere. It is estimated that fees account for about 50% of the revenue required managing the protected areas

The Protected Area *System Plan for Grenada* proposes an additional seven marine protected areas, several of which would cater to the yachting community.

3. Marketing

Marketing for the existing protected areas is associated with Ministry of Tourism initiatives.

Draft Minutes from the OECS Yacht Committee Meeting, November 7, 2013 in Grenada

4. Yacht Fee Harmonization

A presentation was delivered by a Director of Global Parks, an international non-governmental organisation (NGO). Its function is to mobilise a cadre of volunteer veteran conservation professionals to transfer knowledge, experience, and proven practices that create and strengthen protected areas and national park systems world-wide. The presentation focused on a study commissioned by the Organisation of American States (OAS) to develop a comprehensive, harmonised yachting policy and fee structure for Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the OECS. For this agenda item, the opportunity was also taken to explore the feasibility of harmonising the fee structure for the yachting sector in light of local variations in fees (amount), terminology, specific services charged for and criteria for application of fees (e.g. length of vessels).

Decision

1. *Given the apparent challenge in establishing standard fees across the region, the consensus is to harmonise the types of yachting services charged for, the criteria for application of fees and the processes and procedures for payment.*
2. *The CMA will develop a draft list of standard types services to which fees are/should be applied in the OECS.*
3. *More attention should be paid to establishing marine parks in the OECS and enforcing regulations therein given that the region is endowed with unique marine resources.*