



Réserve Naturelle Nationale
de Saint-Martin



Réserve
Naturelle

SAINT-MARTIN a well managed TREASURE of BIODIVERSITY

A Fragile natural Heritage

Several emblematic species are present in the Reserve. Among them are humpback whale, 4 species of sea turtles, red-billed tropicbird, brown noddy, least tern, mangroves, skink, iguana, various coral species and seagrass beds. All these species contribute to the great richness of local ecosystems, that are still fragile. This great biodiversity is indeed constantly exposed to pressure from touristic activities and coastal development. Those pristine areas benefit from 15 years of legal protection.

a Biodiversity and Touristic hotspot in the Caribbean

Réserve naturelle of Saint-Martin (French West Indies) created in 1998 extends over 3054 hectares with three different ecological backgrounds and five main ecosystems sheltering a remarkable biodiversity : ponds, mangrove swamps, coral reefs, seagrass beds of phanerogams and dry forest. The french part of the island includes 14 ponds sheltering a rich avifauna (120 species). This 33 sq miles French and Dutch island with 100 000 residents is a popular destination for 2 million tourists each year. Preserving our natural heritage in this context is a day-to-day challenge.

A well managed Marine Protected Area

This MPA is managed by a non governmental organization employing 6 persons : 1 director, 3 rangers, 1 head of cooperation, environmental awareness unit and 1 scientific officer. Réserve naturelle aims to meet 3 main objectives. Manage in order to maintain the biodiversity and ecological functionality of the protected areas. Protect by implementing legal protection and regulations within the park. Inform by allowing a large public to visit and know more about environmental issues.

A 5 years management plan has been approved from 2010-2015 with 7 long-term objectives :

- Improvement of knowledge on flora and fauna ;
- Control of the anthropological impacts on the protected areas ;
- Extension of the legal protection to new areas ;
- Restoration of degraded areas and fighting the spread of invasive species ;
- Communication and environmental education ;
- Means optimization for the quality of the mission ;
- Regional cooperation within the Caribbean.

This management requires the annual implementation of scientific programs to monitor fauna and flora healthiness.

Réserve naturelle officially authorizes eco friendly commercial activities within its boundaries such as diving clubs, boat rentals, day charters. Such companies pay a 1,52 euros fee per day / person which is an important income for the management of the Marine Protected Area.

a Recognised management

This MPA do have a role to play through different criterias : conservation value, wilderness, critical habitats, biodiversity, connectivity, resilience and socio-economic benefits. The management performed since 1998 is now well known and recognised. That's why Reserve was labelled as RAMSAR (2011) and SPAW Protected areas (2012). Those awards are not only rewarding the manager for its actions in favor of biodiversity protection at the local level, but also at the regional level. Those awards are a guarantee for our financial partners.



Conservatoire
du littoral



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