

DCNA Board meeting
17-19th March 2013
St. Eustatius

Summary of presentations

Attendees

Board members

Leendert van Driel (<i>Vice Chair</i>)	Financial expert
Kerenza Rannou	STINAPA Bonaire
Paul Stokermans	CARMABI, Curaçao
Steve Piontek	STENEPA, St. Eustatius
Tadzio Bervoets	St. Maarten Nature Foundation
Frensel Mercelina	NGO representative (Uniek Curaçao)
Rueben Thompson	NGO representative (Emilio Wilson Estate Foundation)
Glenn Thodé	Governance expert
Ron Gomes Casseres	Financial expert

Note: apologies for absence received from Kai Wulf – DCNA Secretary and Saba Conservation Foundation representative

Special guests

Governor Holiday	St. Maarten Governor
Lt. Governor Berkel	St. Eustatius Governor
Commissioner Tearr	St. Eustatius Commissioner for the Environment
Mr. Jaap Leewenburg	General Secretary to His Majesty King Willem-Alexander
Letita Buth	Trust Fund Committee Member
Ron van der Veer	Fundraising Committee Member
Willem van Hees	STINAPA Bonaire, Interim Director
Paul Hoetjes	Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs (RCN)
Baud Schoenmaeckers	Synergos Communication
Roberto Hensen	St. Eustatius Department of Agriculture
Johan Stapel	Caribbean Netherlands Science Institute, St Eustatius
Dr. Barry Spergel	Conservation Finance Expert

Secretariat staff

Kalli De Meyer	Executive Director
Nathaniel Miller	Assistant Director
Elise Benedictus	Accounting Officer
Emeray Martha	Administrator

Welcome address

Governor Berkel of St. Eustatius welcomed the DCNA Board members and special guests to St. Eustatius. He emphasized the importance of sustainable development on our islands balancing the need for nature conservation and economic development.

Safeguarding nature

Presentation of the final draft of the promo video (PSA) for STENAPA, promoting nature conservation on St. Eustatius, which is intended to be used as part of their campaign to raise funds.

Fundraising: introduction – Tadzio Bervoets

Presentation outlined the strategies for building fundraising capacity.

- Trust Fund
 - Conservation Trust Fund: history
 - Conservation Trust Fund: status
- Thematic funding
- Building fundraising capacity
 - Strategies
 - Tools

Conservation Trust Fund: history – Letitia Buth

Presentation provided an overview of the establishment of DCNA and the Trust Fund initiative from the 1990's onwards including:

- Unstable funding situation for parks in the 1990s
- Nature Forum meetings which flagged acute financial situation of the parks
- Dutch Parliamentary motion to commission Trust Fund Study in 1998
- Central Government development of "*Begroting- and Financieringsplan*" in 2000
- Trust Fund study 2003-2004
- Dutch Parliamentary motion in 2004 calling for a substantial financial contribution to the Trust Fund (Dietrich motion)
- Establishment of DCNA and Trust Fund in 2005
- Start up (matching) funding provided by the Dutch Postcode Lottery
- Ministry of the Interior ten year subsidy providing Euro 1 million per year for ten years (of which Euro 750,000 is used to capitalize the Trust Fund)

Conservation Trust Fund: status – Leendert van Driel

- Requirements of the annual reporting to the Ministry of the Interior are onerous, particularly the smaller parks and DCNA is therefore struggling to comply with the Ministry's reporting requirements for annual audit letters and this hurts DCNA's credibility.
- An Emergency Fund was established out of DCNA reserves and has so far been used to provide 'stop gap' funding to the Nature Foundation, Saba Conservation Foundation and STENAPA
- DCNA has been unable to raise sufficient additional funds to reach the necessary Euro 24 million to fully capitalize the Trust Fund as was originally planned.

Trust Fund assets as of 31st December 2013 totalled US\$ 14 million:

- US\$ 1.3 million held on Rabobank (to be transferred into trust fund portfolios)
- US\$ 7.9 million held with The Arbor Group (UBS USA)
- US\$ 4.8 million held with Schretlen Bank

[Arbor Group made 7.6% net profit on the US portfolio in 2013; Schretlen made 5% net profit on the Euro portfolio.]

Building fundraising capacity: strategies – Tazio Bervoets

Presentation reviewed the DCNA Board approved strategy to build capacity for fundraising through:

1. **Enhancing decision makers understanding of the need to conserve nature**

Opportunities for dialogue include:

- Development of management contracts and/or service level agreements between parks and island governments
- Development of platform for dialogue
- TEEB studies (lead by Dr Pieter van Beukering)
- Sustainable finance study (conducted by Dr Barry Spengel)
- Development of Biodiversity Strategy

2. **Assisting conservation organisations through trainings / workshops**

3. **Exploring on-line fundraising opportunities – Nathaniel Miller (ppt)**

Presentation focused on three aspects:

- Crowd source funding opportunities
- Adoption programmes
- Donate now !

4. **Developing major donor programme – Kalli De Meyer (ppt)**

Explained the US model of major donor acquisition through membership programmes, types of major donors (young entrepreneur – traditional philanthropist) and the process of solicitation, welcome and engagement with major donors. Options include:

- Low touch: donate now ! with largely automated responses to donations
- High touch: more personalized, frequent and detailed reaction to donations

Fundraising: tools – Nathaniel Miller – Kalli De Meyer

Presentation provided an overview of the tools needed for successful fundraising:

- Database (for "Constituent Relationship Management")
- Payment facility (PayPal NL and other options)
- Design look (under development)
- Promotional materials (promo PSAs for each island, website enhancements and on site materials)
- Tax deductible status

Tax deductible status: NL (ANBI)

DCNA has already acquired tax deductible (ANBI) status with the Dutch Tax Office

Tax deductible status: USA (501C3)

Options include:

- Setting up charitable ("Friends of") non-profit organisation in the USA and then applying for tax deductible (501c3) status with the Internal Revenue Service
- Establishing a Donor Advised Fund making use of a third party organisation with tax deductible status

Sustainable Finance study – Paul Hoetjes

Presentation provided background information on the Financial Sustainability study to be launched at the Board meeting (March 2014).

The project has come as a direct result of actions identified in Nature Policy Plan for the Caribbean Netherlands, which was approved in 2013. Project leadership is being provided in collaboration with Wereld Natuur Fonds, who have contracted conservation finance expert Dr. Barry Spergel to undertake the study. DCNA is a partner in the project.

The project aims to develop a roadmap for the sustainable financing of protected areas (parks) throughout the Dutch Caribbean and recommendations for decision makers and other key stakeholders.

Objectives are to:

- Reassess the financial requirements for park day to day management
- Provide a gap analysis of financial requirements vs actual income
- Assess existing and potential new sources of funding
- Include an update on the status of the Trust Fund
- Suggest a strategy to fully fund conservation management

The importance of having substantial involvement from Aruba, Curaçao and St. Maarten was discussed as well as the need for all governments to be involved.

Sustainable Finance: examples – Dr Barry Spergel

Dr Barry Spergel provided numerous specific examples of various funding mechanisms which have been used to fund nature conservation in other countries including fines, payment for off shore oil/gas, departure taxes, fees for development, real estate taxes etc.

Conservation – Nathaniel Miller / Elise Benedictus / Emeray Martha Neuman

Presentation included an update on projects, training and capacity building.

- Bird conservation: focus was on the achievements during the last five years of bird conservation work, funded by Vogelbescherming NL
- Changes to Management Success project mean that data collection will now be done on-line instead of on site
- The development of new citizen science applications thanks to funding from the Ministry of Economics
- Financial administration: two well attended workshops with park managers and administrators aimed at building the capacity of the parks to address issues related to financial administration

Feedback was requested from parks and conservation organisations on future requirements for bird conservation on the islands.

DCNA Articles of Incorporation – Ron Gomes Casseres

DCNA's Articles of Incorporation were found to be hampering the good governance of the organisation. Specifically Board members agreed, in addition to changes, which would bring the Articles up to date, to reallocate Board seats originally set aside for international NGOs and instead elect an additional representative of a Dutch Caribbean non-profit nature conservation organisation and two additional Board experts.

Having sought legal advice DCNA's Board reviewed and agreed a suite of proposed changes to the Articles.

Governance

New Board officers were elected as follows:

- Leendert van Driel was elected as Board Chair until November 2013
- Glenn Thodé was elected as Vice Chair
- Paul Stokkermans was elected as Treasurer
- [Kai Wulf is Secretary]

Finance Committee approved the draft DCNA 2013 Financial Statement.

Executive Committee is to review and take a decision about how to proceed with non-profit status in the USA. Ron van der Veer will find out if the Dutch ANBI status is acceptable to the US Internal Revenue Service.

Ron Gomes Casseres and Glenn Thodé will meet with the Board members of the park organisations and their island government representatives to discuss nature conservation on the islands and the future role of DCNA.

Ron van der Veer and Jaap Leeuwenburg will use their networks to encourage a shift towards a more Kingdom oriented vision in the context of nature conservation.

In order to create greater awareness of nature conservation on our islands, all general newsletters and bulletins, such as BioNews, in which nature conservation activities and programmes are described which are conducted on the Dutch Caribbean islands by the parks and other nature conservation organisations in partnership with DCNA will be distributed (digitally) to create as wide a readership as possible on all six islands.