



5 February 2017

To the Executive Council of the Public Entity of Sint Eustatius
Acting Lt Gov Mr. Julian Woodley
Van Tonningenweg
Oranjestad
Sint Eustatius

Dear Mr. Woodley,

Sint Eustatius National Parks (STENAPA) has received a copy of a letter (dd 1 February 2017) from State Secretary M. van Dam about the status of the Marine Environment Ordinance (MEO) and the reply from the Executive Council to this letter dated 2 February 2017. Thank you for involving us in your correspondence with the Dutch government.

Our organization is open to discuss with you, and other stakeholders and experts, how to pave a way forward through the deadlock. At STENAPA we realize the significance a harbor is to Statia's economic development. However, as the organization on the island that is mandated to protect nature, we continue to have great interest in conserving the island's marine life and biodiversity for the future. We have discussed in 2016 the possibility with your government to organize a multi-stakeholder round table conference on the island, where we can work towards a shared vision and approach. It is with great pleasure that we repeat this offer.

Without going into detail regarding your letter to Mr. Van Dam, there is one item that needs to be clarified. On the bottom of the first page it is stated that the Executive Council has executed the changes in the boundaries of the marine protected area in good consultation with the stakeholders such as STENAPA. STENAPA, which has been managing the marine park quite successfully for twenty years, was never involved in the design of the amendment to the MEO, nor has it endorsed the changes. It was only after the approval by the Island Council in 2015 that we received the text of the draft amendment to the MEO.

STENAPA, National Parks Office, Gallows Bay, St Eustatius, Caribbean Netherlands

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On 25 April 2015, STENAPA sent a protest letter and many protests from other relevant stakeholders followed. Since then we have been consulted a few times about the level of conservation in the amended situation, but it was always emphasized to us that the Amendment itself was not up for discussion as it was a done deal. We kindly request you not imply that STENAPA has endorsed the new boundaries of the park in any way.

Given this, we would like to emphasize that we wish to open a dialogue on how we can create a green environmentally friendly harbor that would not only be an economic driver for the island, but that can also continue to serve as a model, both regionally and globally. Our door is always open to discuss next steps with you. Until then, we as STENAPA will always work hard to maintain the park according to international standards. Nature conservation and economic prosperity are not opposites. Together we must find a way to move forward to make Statia prosperous!

Kind regards,

Dr. Teresa Leslie, president of the board of STENAPA

Mike Harterink, treasurer STENAPA

Jessica Berkel BSc, marine park manager

cc. Island Council of the Public Entity of Sint Eustatius, State Secretary of Economic Affairs M. van Dam, secretariat Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA)

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