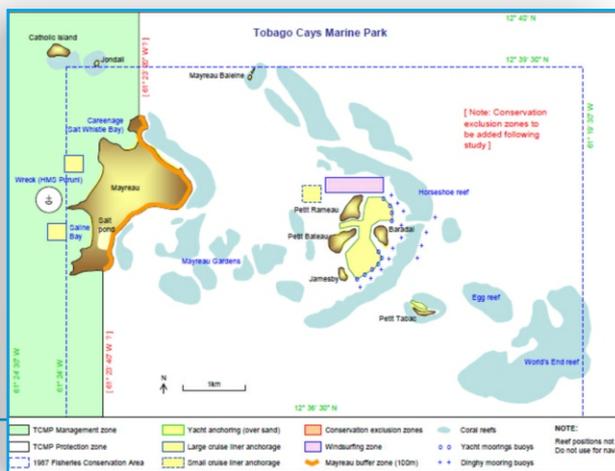




The Protocol on Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Wider Caribbean (SPAW):

Tobago Cays Marine Park

- A SPAW listed site -



Identification

Country: Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Name of the area: Tobago Cays Marine Park
Administrative region: Southern Grenadines
Date of establishment: 12/23/1997
Geographic location:
 Longitude X: 12.6375
 Latitude Y: -61.3625
Date of listing under SPAW: 09 December 2014

Contacts:
 Contact address: Clifton Union Island St. Vincent & the Grenadines
 Website: www.tobagocays.org
 Email address: kenawillo@hotmail.com

Introduction

The Tobago Cays are of great ecological, social, cultural and economic importance to St Vincent and the Grenadines and Grenada. The Tobago Cays Marine Park (TCMP) comprises of five small uninhabited cays, and one larger inhabited island, located in the Southern Grenadines. The area is stunningly beautiful, with pure white sand, crystal clear waters, plentiful coral reefs, and rich biodiversity. Four of the cays - Petit Rameau, Petit Bateau, Jamesby and Baradal – lie within a semi-circular reef, known as Horseshoe Reef, while the fifth cay (Petit Tabac) lies just outside the reef. Mayreau is a larger island to the west of the cays, inhabited by about 270 people. The Tobago Cays were designated a conservation area in 1987 (under Fisheries Regulations), but the Tobago Cays Marine Park was not created until late 1997. The cays are surrounded by fringing and bank-barrier coral reefs, which are important for

marine biodiversity conservation. There are sea grass beds within the cays which are important feeding groups for threatened turtles. Mayreau has patches of endangered mangrove ecosystem, and the islands and cays are host to many protected animal and bird species.

The area has long been a popular spot for tourists including yachts, divers, cruise ships and day trippers. Over 80% of yachts visiting the Grenadines visit the TCMP. The area was previously used as a fishing spot by locals, and protection of the area is likely to have benefited fishers by providing a safe breeding ground for fish. Tourism is central to the economies of the Southern Grenadines (including Union Island, Mayreau and Canouan) and the TCMP is a key tourism draw card.

SPAW criteria met

- Ecological criteria**
- Representativeness
 - Conservation value
 - Rarity
 - Naturalness
 - Critical habitats
 - Diversity
 - Connectivity/coherence
 - Resilience

- Cultural and socio-economic criteria**
- Productivity
 - Cultural and traditional use
 - Socio-economic benefits

Site description

General features of the site

Size: 66 sq. km

Terrestrial surface under sovereignty, excluding wetlands:

5 sq. km

Wetland surface: 1 ha

Marine surface: 60 sq. Km

National status of your protected area: Marine Protected Area

Marine ecoregion: 64. Eastern Caribbean

Management structure, authority

The TCMP is governed by a Marine Parks Board, which contains 10 members, including a chairperson. The 10 members are comprised of: 2 NGO representative, 1 nominee of the Ministry of National Security, 1 nominee of Ministry of Tourism, Director and Deputy Director of Grenadines Affairs, the Chief Fisheries Officer, the Director of Finance (or nominee), the Solicitor General (or nominee) and the Commander of the Coast Guard (or nominee).

The Park Manager runs the operations of the TCMP, with a number of rangers, wardens, office attendants and administrative assistants. There is a total of 13 staff.

Management plan

The TCMP Management Plan 2007-2009 is the current management plan, despite never being approved by Cabinet and 5 years out of date. The plan outlines the legal basis for the TCMP, its history, environmental and social values, as well as impacts and threats. It outlines the mission, goals and objectives of the authority, its organisational framework, administrative and financial arrangements and the structure and role of the board. The management of the park is discussed including the zoning of the park, fees, licences of vendors and tourism

operators, and participatory measures. Also it gives guidance on monitoring and evaluation, research, surveillance and enforcement, and the need for education and awareness campaigns.

Main fauna populations and/or those of particular importance present (resident or migratory) in the area:

The TCMP contains a number of important threatened species, both terrestrial and marine. There are populations of Brown Pelican, Bridled Terns and Iguanas in the park, and there are many migratory birds which pass through the area. The beaches and sea grass beds are feeding and nesting grounds for Green Turtles, Hawksbill Turtles and Leatherback Turtles. The reefs are home to many species of listed coral from the Milleporidae, Alcyonacea and Scleractinia families, there are also populations of Queen Conch and Caribbean Spiny lobster in the park.

Inhabitants inside the area or in the zone of potential direct impact on the protected area:

Inside the area:

Permanent: 271

Seasonal: Not given

In the zone of potential direct impact:

Permanent: Not given

Seasonal: Not given

International status and Date of designation

Biosphere reserve: No

Ramsar site: No

Significant bird area: No

World heritage site (UNESCO): No

Others: No

SPAW Site : 09 December 2014



Links

PA LISTING : www.spaw-palisting.org

CaMPAM : <http://campam.gcfi.org/campam.php>

UNEP-CEP : www.cep.unep.org/

SPAW-RAC : www.car-spaw-rac.org