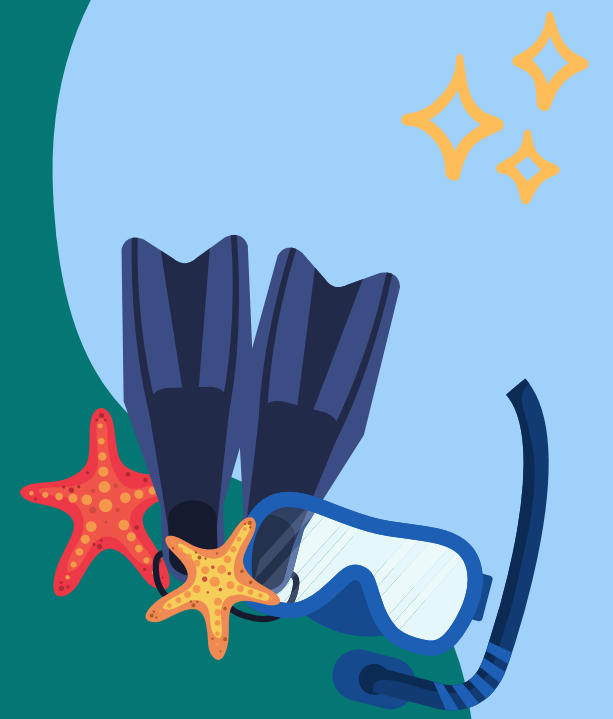


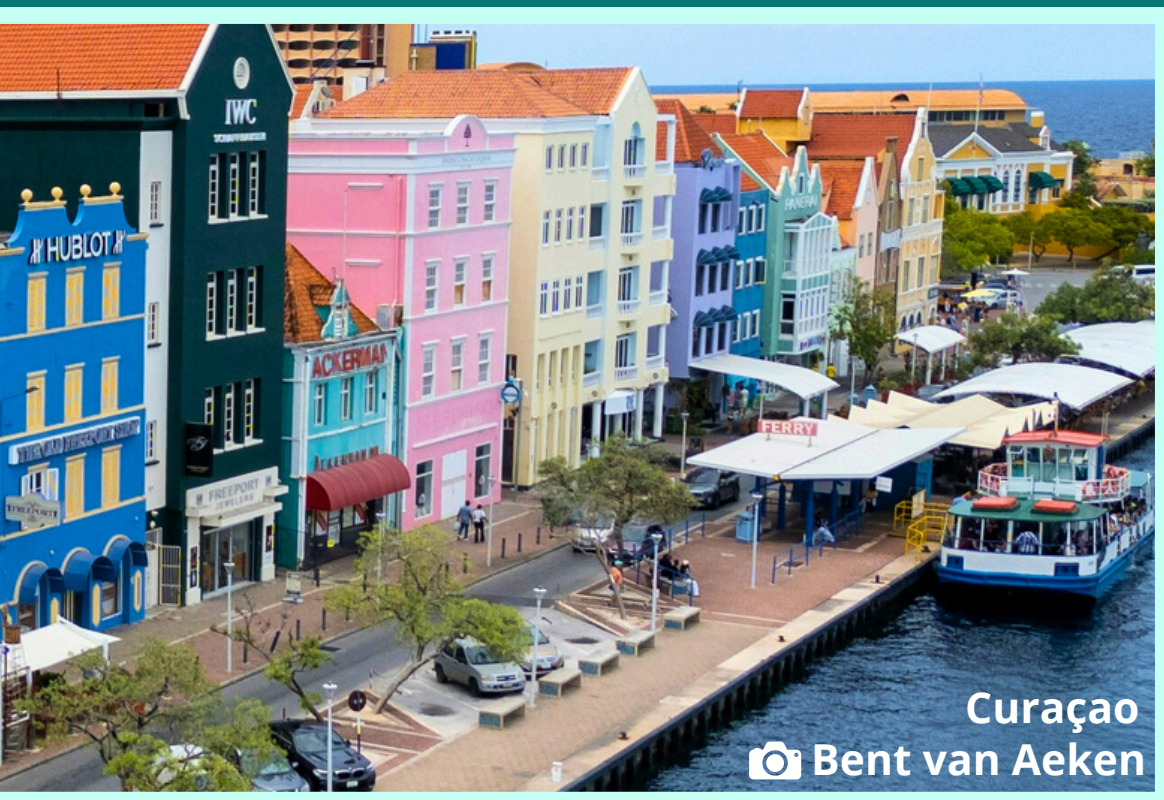


OCEAN
OBSERVATORY
DUTCH CARIBBEAN



OCEAN-FRIENDLY TOURISM

You might have already learnt about protecting our sea, now let's understand what it means to have sustainable (ocean-friendly) tourism in the Dutch Caribbean!



Curaçao
Bent van Aeken

WHAT IS TOURISM?

Tourism is all about **visiting and exploring new places**, having fun, and going on adventures—and the Dutch Caribbean is a dream destination! A huge part of tourism across the islands is the **recreational activities** that can happen in and around the sea. Whether it's **diving** the vibrant reefs of Saba to swim with turtles, **kayaking** through mangroves in Bonaire, or **walking** along the colourful coastlines of Curaçao, every island has its own unique marine environment to enjoy.

DID YOU KNOW?

Caribbean reefs alone are worth around **\$140 billion** per year from tourism!



Have you read about marine protection?

One way to minimise the impacts of tourism is by creating **Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)**, which are special ocean zones where **nature is protected**. Learn more about marine protection [here](#)!



WHERE CAN TOURIST ACTIVITIES HAPPEN?

The islands' MPAs include **zones** to help people and nature share the ocean safely. Some zones allow activities like snorkeling and diving, while others protect sensitive habitats where fishing or boating isn't allowed. **Knowing what you can do in each zone** helps to make sure the health of the ocean is balanced!

TYPES OF ZONES

Fishing Zones: Fishing is allowed, but only in a sustainable way through methods like artisanal fishing. Certain species may be protected, and certain catch sizes or seasonal restrictions can apply.

No-take Zones: No fishing or collecting anything natural here—this is a safe space for marine life!

Recreational Zones: People can swim, snorkel or dive, as well as other activities like windsurfing, but they must be careful not to harm marine life, especially corals or important habitats like seagrass.



Beckie Scaife (Turtle & Ray)



WHAT ARE THE IMPACTS OF TOURISM?



HOW COULD DECLINING NATURE IMPACT TOURISM?

A survey carried out in Aruba showed that around **50%** of the visiting tourists **wouldn't come back** if the health of the environment declined. All the more reason to protect our nature!

WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE TOURISM?

Ocean-friendly tourism, or sustainable tourism, means **visiting places in a responsible way** to make sure visitors have the lowest impact and damage to the environment and local people as possible. Well-managed tourism in MPAs—through education, rules, and sustainable practices—can turn visitors into ocean protectors, helping **preserve the Dutch Caribbean's marine environment** for future generations.



DID YOU KNOW? In Aruba, there are only 120,000 people who live there, yet they get **2 million tourists** visiting each year! This includes people from cruise ships as well as those staying overnight. Imagine the damage that could cause if tourism wasn't managed properly?

Follow MPA rules: Respect zoning and never take anything from the ocean. Also, check where you might have to pay a fee to use the zone!

Support eco-friendly local businesses: Choose tour guides and restaurants that protect nature.



Be mindful when snorkeling or diving—**don't touch corals and marine life.**



HOW CAN WE BE RESPONSIBLE TOURISTS?

Keep beaches and oceans clean by removing any trash you find and disposing of it properly.

Use eco-friendly skin products: Some sunscreens harm corals, so use reef-safe products.

