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**Tobago Cays Marine Park:
Are the conditions for successful
co-management likely to be met?**

BERTHA SIMMONS AND PATRICK McCONNEY



Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES)
University of the West Indies, Faculty of Pure and Applied Sciences,
Cave Hill Campus, Barbados

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ABSTRACT

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BERTHA SIMMONS AND PATRICK MCCONNEY

The Tobago Cays Marine Park (TCMP) is located in the Grenadines island chain at the southern end of St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG). The Park's islands, reefs and shallows cover almost 15 nautical square miles, mostly within the 10 fathom depth contour, including five uninhabited cays. The Cays are of great ecological, economic, social and cultural importance to SVG. In 1997 the Cays were acquired by the SVG government and declared a marine park; currently it is under the management of a multi-stakeholder board selected by Cabinet. Despite various projects and proposals to revamp the park, the board of management and small field staff struggled with inadequate capacity and equipment to manage the Park. The area has been undergoing systematic degradation and has recently suffered impacts from hurricanes Ivan and Emily. As it is heavily used for marine tourism, it also provides the main source of income for the inhabitants of nearby communities on Mayreau and Union Island who recently opposed a government initiative to privatise the management of the park. This case study seeks to determine whether current conditions favour successful co-management of the TCMP. In order to determine this, interviews and focus groups were conducted with user groups and members of the management board. Secondary data analysis was undertaken. The TCMP is seen by some as a "paper park", with no real implementation. Local communities are aware of this situation and are attempting to have their voices heard by insisting that they play a role in the management decision-making process in order to make the park more successful. Despite this initiative, co-management may have little chance of success unless State authorities facilitate more meaningful stakeholder involvement.

Keywords: Co-management, Grenadines, MPA, stakeholders

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1 INTRODUCTION

The nation of St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) is an archipelago in the Windward Islands of the Eastern Caribbean, lying 100 miles to the west of Barbados. St. Vincent is the main island, and stretching some 72 km to the south is the chain of 34 islands plus cays known as the Grenadines. Among them are the Tobago Cays. The major islands, north to south, are Young Island, Bequia, Mustique, Canouan, Mayreau, Union, Palm and Petit St. Vincent (Figure 1.1).



Figure 1.1 Location of St. Vincent and the Grenadines

The SVG population is estimated to be about 100,000 with the majority of the people living in mainland St. Vincent and less than 9% dispersed throughout the Grenadines. The labour force is estimated at 67,000 with 20% unemployment, and real GDP growth was 1.4% in 2002 (Eastern Caribbean Central Bank 2003)

The banana industry, known also as St. Vincent Green Gold has been one of the mainstays of SVG's economy. The island's dependency on a single crop, however, has been viewed as an obstacle to development. This industry has had major set backs due in part to natural hazards such as the tropical storms of 1994 and 1995 that wiped out a substantial part of the crop, and economic hazards that include the loss of European preferential markets.

The decline of the banana industry has severely affected the country especially in rural areas where the government had not set in place adequate safety nets. As a way to address this decline as well as to strengthen and diversify its economy, the government is seeking to develop and promote tourism. St. Vincent is promoting 'sand, sun and sea' tourism, plus adventure and heritage tourism. The island is also capitalizing on the publicity brought by the Walt Disney movie "Pirates of the Caribbean – The curse of the Black Pearl" which was filmed in locations on mainland St. Vincent and in the Tobago Cays.

The Tobago Cays are the main nautical tourism attraction in the Grenadines, and the main direct and indirect income generator for the nearby communities. In 1997, through Statutory Rules and Orders No. 40, the Tobago Cays were declared a national Marine Park. There was a series of studies done on the area and its management before and after its declaration as a park. Resource user groups and the communities in general are interested in protecting and sustaining livelihoods that depend on the Tobago Cays Marine Park (TCMP). The existing rules and regulations governing the park are accepted and followed by the majority of user groups; however there is a need to update the legislation, and strengthen operating mechanisms and governance structures in order to improve park management. Management capacity is limited.

Disturbing findings about governance that emerge from the above-mentioned studies include the apparent tardiness of government decisions and directives for action on issues pertaining to the park, the TCMP management board's lack of autonomy and the apparent absence of governmental will to enter into real partnerships with local NGOs and CBOs in the Grenadines. The park's management board includes representatives both from government and civil society, who are appointed by Cabinet. The surrounding communities have been trying to enter into a management partnership with the government in order to establish effective management for the Cays conducive to environmental conservation and self-sustainability of the park.

This case study researches the possibility of establishing co-management arrangements for the Tobago Cays Marine Park. It uses a framework of institutional analysis focused on a set of conditions found necessary elsewhere in the region and world for successful co-management. It examines the TCMP context in order to determine what needs to be addressed for conditions to favour successful co-management, if this is at all feasible.

This research is the seventh in a series of case studies (two each in Barbados, Belize and Grenada) on the conditions for coastal resource co-management in the Caribbean. The United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) sponsored the original Caribbean Coastal Co-management Guidelines Project that was implemented from 2002 to 2004 by the Caribbean Conservation Association (CCA) in collaboration with investigators from the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES). This project sought to ensure that people in the Caribbean, especially the poor, could effectively engage in successful partnerships with government for sustainable livelihoods in the context of well-managed coastal resources. The study addressed both the natural resource and human institutional aspects of co-management. Through a series of participatory investigations in case studies of conditions that

favour, or do not favour, the co-management of coastal and marine resources at selected sites the project derived guidelines for developing successful co-management in the Caribbean. Uptake is being promoted by interaction with target institutions and potential beneficiaries, and wide dissemination of outputs.

CERMES continued applied research through its 2002-2005 Coastal Resources Co-management Project (CORECOMP), funded by the Oak Foundation, that sought to strengthen co-management institutions in Barbados, Belize and Nicaragua by capacity building and learning by doing, from practice to policy. This complementary graduate research was funded by the Oak Foundation, but the findings and any errors or omissions are solely the responsibility of the authors. The case study report is intended for access and uptake by a broad readership. This case, when combined with others, will contribute to future comparative analyses and additional material for the regional guidelines for successful co-management that were developed from previous project outputs. This research can be used by TCMP stakeholders, including CERMES and several other entities that are currently collaborating to improve marine management in the Grenadines. Ultimately, it may contribute in some small way to the empowerment of TCMP user groups and nearby communities even if only through the acquisition of knowledge.

Based on the arrangement of the previous studies, the following chapters describe the research framework and methodology. The report continues with a description of the resources, socio-economic dimensions of the case and institutional and organizational arrangements pertaining to the study area. Exogenous events are briefly addressed prior to the chapter on interactions and outcomes related to co-management. Finally, there is a discussion with conclusions on the conditions for successful co-management of the Tobago Cays Marine Park.

2 RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

2.1 Defining co-management

Definitions of co-management focus on sharing management responsibility and authority between government and stakeholders (e.g. Pinkerton 1989; McConney 1998; Brown and Pomeroy 1999; Pomeroy 2001; Berkes et al. 2001). The fundamentals of what co-management should be, and is in practice, have been extensively researched (Jentoft 1989; Kuperan and Abdullah 1994; Pomeroy and Berkes 1997). Co-management encompasses several possible arrangements that are often depicted as a spectrum constructed from the relative sharing of responsibility and authority between government and stakeholders (Pomeroy and Berkes 1997; Berkes et al. 2001) (Figure 2.1).

As in the case of participation (Arnstein 1969), there are various positions on the scale, and authors use different terms for co-management and its degrees. For example, the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) uses “participatory management” (see extensive document list at www.canari.org). The terms participatory management or co-management are gaining popularity in Caribbean government and NGO circles, and among some resource users (CANARI 1999; CANARI 2000; CANARI 2001; CCA 2001). These concepts, however, are not always fully understood by their users. Conceptual and practical research issues therefore include the degrees of co-management and which terms to use.

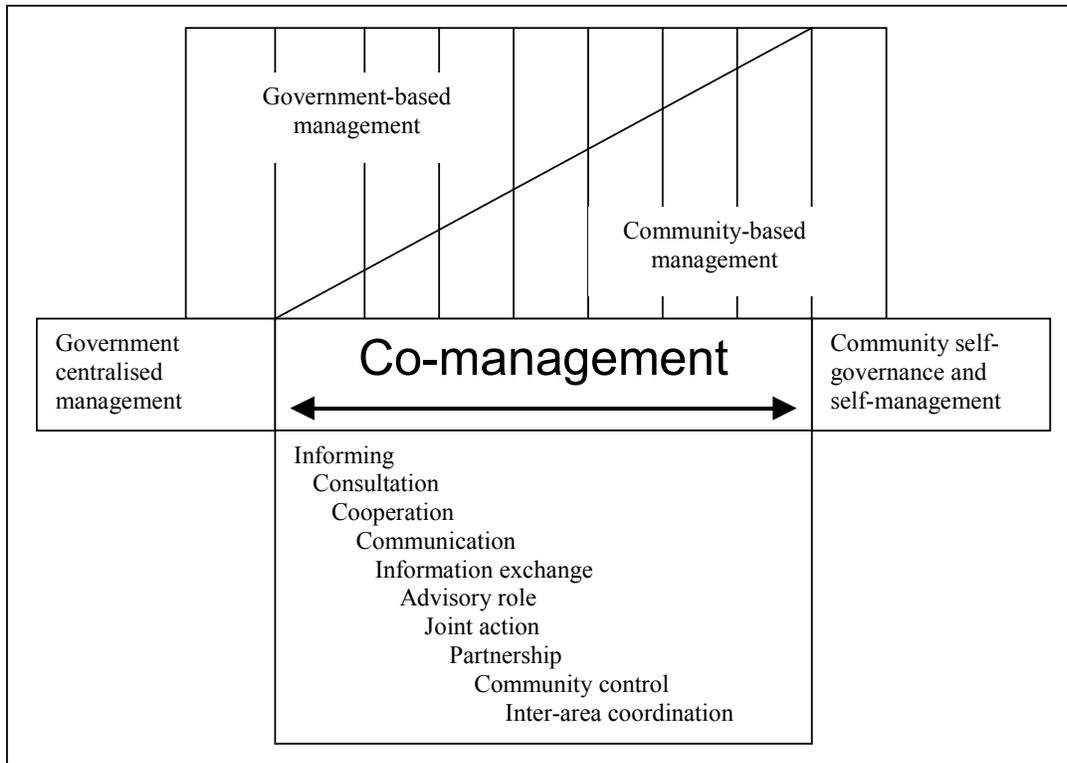


Figure 2.1 Sliding scale showing various degrees of co-management
(Based on Pomeroy and Williams 1994)

Based on international and Caribbean literature it was determined that three degrees and labels would be appropriate (Figure 2.2). The first is “consultative co-management” which represents what is most common in several locations (Brown and Pomeroy 1999). People commonly use and understand the term consultation.

	Consultative co-management	Collaborative co-management	Delegated co-management	
<i>Government has the most control</i>	Government interacts often but makes all the decisions	Government and the stakeholders work closely and share decisions	Government lets formally organised users/stakeholders make decisions	<i>People have most control</i>

Figure 2.2 Degrees and labels of co-management
(Adapted from: ICLARM and IFM 1998)

Next is joint action and decision-making. This is where several countries seem to be headed. The term “collaborative co-management” is preferred to “cooperative co-management” because it connotes stronger partnerships, and the use of “cooperative” may be confused with the formal organisation types of the same name (Kurien 1988; McConney et al. 1998).

Third is “delegated co-management” that includes, but is not limited to, community-based management since national co-management structures are especially common in fisheries management (McConney and Mahon 1998). Few cases in the Caribbean appear to be at this level, but it is not uncommon in other areas of the world (Baird 2000).

Establishing successful co-management is seldom immediate. Like most participatory processes it takes time and careful tending. Pomeroy (1998) recognises three phases of co-management and describes the sequence of steps within these in some detail. A much-simplified version is in Figure 2.3.

Pre-implementation →	Implementation →	Post-implementation
Realise need for change Meet and discuss change Develop new management	Try out new management Educate people in new ways Adjust and decide what is best	Maintain best arrangements Resolve conflicts and enforce Accept as standard practice

Figure 2.3. Phases of co-management

(Based on: Pomeroy 1998)

Similar to cases in Africa (Normann et al. 1998; Sverdrup-Jensen and Nielsen 1999), the Caribbean is generally at the pre-implementation or early implementation phase (McConney and Mahon 1998; McConney 1998). A few situations such as the Soufriere Marine Management Area (Renard 2000) may be mature enough to be labelled post-implementation. A very significant consequence is that neatly comparing “before” and “after” conditions arising from a co-management intervention such as a discrete project will be less feasible in the Caribbean than other locations such as in Asia where much of the literature on methodology originates (e.g. Pomeroy and Carlos. 1997; Pomeroy et al. 2001).

2.2 Institutional analysis

The International Centre for Living Aquatic Resources Management (ICLARM) and Institute for Fisheries Management and Coastal Community Development (IFM) (ICLARM and IFM 1998) developed the methodology referred to above for the African and Asian cases (Figure 2.4). Institutional analyses are of critical importance in researching co-management (Renard 1991; Noble 2000). The main analyses conducted within the framework are in Box 2.1.

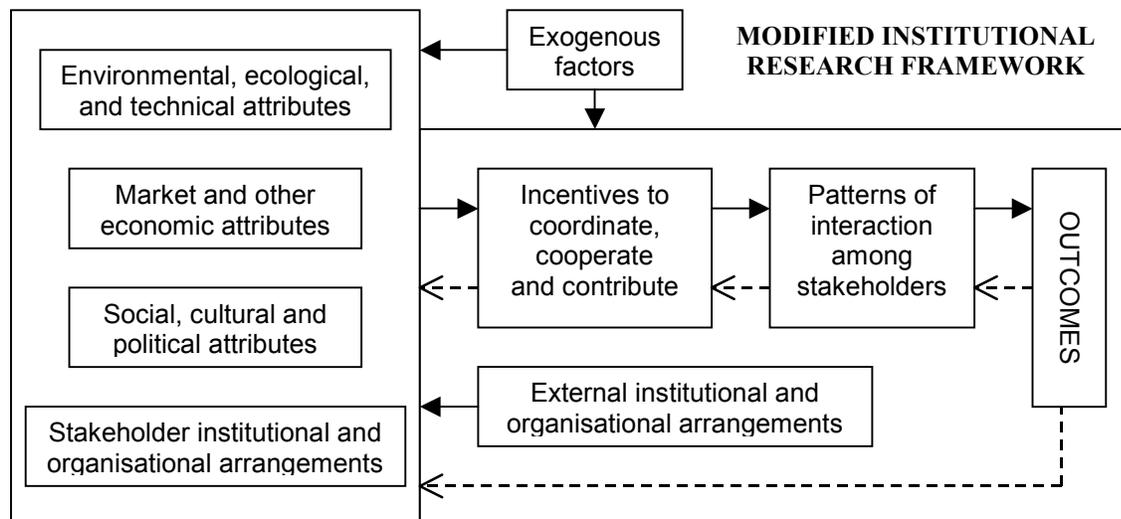


Figure 2.4. Modified ICLARM/IFM Institutional Analysis and Design Research Framework

Box 2.1 Main analyses included in the framework

1. **Institutional Arrangements Analysis:** This component links contextual variables characterizing key attributes of the resource (biological, physical) and the resource users (technology, market, social, cultural, economic, political) with the management institutional arrangements (rights and rules). The contextual variables are each composed of a number of attributes. A causal relationship exists among and between the contextual variables, the institutional arrangements (the focus of the analysis) and the resulting transactional (action) situations. The institutional arrangements and the contextual variables affect the actions of the resource users and authorities responsible for fisheries management by shaping the incentives and disincentives they have to coordinate and cooperate in resource governance, management and use; the incentives, in turn, shape the patterns of interaction and behaviour between the co-management partners, i.e. the types of co-management arrangement established and the way it functions.
2. **Co-management Performance Analysis:** The co-management arrangement results in outcomes. These outcomes will, in turn, affect contextual variables as well as behaviour of resource users, other stakeholders and public authorities. Time is a critical element. All the contextual variables can change through time. This may cause change in institutional arrangements which, in turn, affect incentives, patterns of interaction and outcomes. The outcomes of co-management institutional arrangements can be evaluated in terms of e.g. management efficiency, equity, and sustainability of resource utilisation.
3. **Characteristics of Successful Co-management Institutional Arrangements:** The most important aspect of this analysis is the specification of what conditions and processes bring about successful long-enduring, fisheries co-management arrangements. From the analysis we can identify a list of principles and propositions about conditions and processes.

Source: ICLARM and IFM 1998

2.3 Pro-poor perspectives

The previous studies paid particular attention to integrated and pro-poor coastal management. Poverty concepts are important in livelihoods analyses and other aspects of people-centred planning and management. In the case of the Tobago Cays attention must be paid to poverty given the dependence of coastal communities on an area that has few other comparable natural assets.

DFID-NRSP (2001) emphasises the importance of a systems perspective on what is poverty and pro-poor, and how to address them. The concepts of poverty and the development of pro-poor strategies are complex social, cultural and economic issues (Centre for Development Studies 2000). Eradication or alleviation of poverty is often accompanied by attention to sustainable livelihoods (Carney 1998; Geoghegan and Smith 1998; Dorward et al. 2001).

In the Asia-Pacific region the focus is on alternative livelihoods since coastal resources are severely depleted and habitats are degraded. In the Caribbean, resources are often still adequate for use to be sustainable if supplementary livelihoods are found to ease the pressure without completely changing lifestyles. For example, fishermen displaced by MPAs in Belize are being re-trained to be fly-fishing and nature tour operators to obtain additional income in the tourist season, and facilitate increased compliance with fishing restrictions (Heyman and Hyatt. 1996; Heyman and Graham 2000).

Although the above initiative may be considered a pro-poor strategy it does not necessarily mean that it was specifically intended and designed as such. Poverty and pro-poor orientation by objective and implementation were not prominent in a recent institutional characterisation of Caribbean MPAs (Geoghegan et al. 2001). Statements such as improving welfare and the quality of life, without explicitly mentioning poverty, are more typical of planning documents for small-

scale fisheries in the region (e.g. Government of Barbados 1993). Research must note direct and indirect, positive and negative impacts on poverty by both public and private sector initiatives. The attention of Caribbean governments to poverty has been relatively recent in most places. Poverty assessment studies from the mid-1990s to the present provide fairly current data for most countries (e.g. Kairi Consultants 1996).

Institutional analysis provides insight into how social and economic institutions interact with each other and contribute either to the perpetuation or reduction of poverty. Poverty in the Caribbean is often associated with youth and female-headed households, making age and gender important variables (Brown 2001). There are chronic, structural and seasonal poor in the Caribbean, with fishers as an example of the latter (Brown 2001). Fishers and other coastal resource users in the informal sector may easily slip through the net of employment surveys.

Often critical to the success of co-management is the extent to which community-based organisations can engage in poverty eradication and alleviation (Centre for Development Studies 2000). This encompasses empowerment and the concept of “voice”. Pro-poor strategies must address causes that operate at the micro as well as the macro levels, and ensure that government policy effectively engages these causes either directly or by creation of an environment that facilitates positive action by other entities (Brown 2001).

3 METHODS

The supervisor of this research was principal investigator in the CCA co-management guidelines project and CORECOMP, the CERMES co-management project. He advised on the research design. In keeping with the previous case studies of co-management at the pre-implementation phase, emphasis was placed on understanding the conditions and factors for successful co-management as perceived by stakeholders at the research site. It was not possible to investigate co-management in progress or the results of completed co-management initiatives. However, shared perceptions are indicators of attitudes and likely behaviour. In the case of the TCMP there had been sufficient interactions among stakeholders for perceptions to have formed on how any type of co-management would or would not work.

In a sense the research scoped the topic of TCMP co-management and hence was exploratory. The study was intended to capture the views of a select group of TCMP stakeholders and not the general opinions of the population of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Indeed the latter would present a challenge since the general population lacks the familiarity with the working concepts of co-management shared by the few groups who were covered in this investigation. Tackling the general population would require a much more intricate study with added attention to ensuring that co-management concepts were understood and responses were validated by means of triangulation.

Because an objective of CERMES is uptake of co-management concepts and practices that can lead to success, there was some promotion of co-management in addition to research on it, but the extent was less than in the previous studies (e.g. no skills transfer workshops) mainly due to constraints on time and other resources. The engagement of stakeholders and the element of advocacy cause this approach to be called participatory action research.

Fieldwork was conducted from July to August 2005 in St. Vincent, Mayreau, Tobago Cays, Union Island and Carriacou (a Grenadine island of Grenada). The investigator was based on

Union Island and worked with the staff and other students connected to the CERMES Sustainable Grenadines project. The other two students were researching “green boating” practices and the livelihoods of water taxi operators. Similarities in our study area, research topics and target groups of respondents allowed us to collaborate on many aspects of our research, and to compare findings as we sought and validated information.

The research methods used in this case study included:

- Document analysis
- Semi-structured interviews
- Focus group interviews
- Informal interviews
- Observations

Document analysis went beyond a literature review of the previous case studies and articles on co-management in the Caribbean and internationally. It included analysing the contents of documents on the TCMP which did not have co-management as an explicit theme, but which had information on how the park was conceived, established and managed. Evidence of stakeholder interaction was sought, and the stakeholders involved were identified. Information on ecological, environmental, social, economic and institutional contextual variables was collected.

Thus, secondary data were acquired from reviewing documentation that covered experiences relevant to co-management in the Grenadines and wider Caribbean. These data were used to identify six key informants from different TCMP stakeholder groups, and to formulate interview guide questions for individual and group interviews. The primary data were collected via four focus group meetings and fifteen in situ semi-structured interviews administered by the investigator to respondents in the islands listed above. A key feature of the focus group and individual interviews was the assurance of anonymity for all participants, since fear of victimization by persons in authority seemed to be a common concern among the interviewees. Formal interviews and focus groups were supplemented by many informal interviews and extensive observation by the researcher. These contributed to the field notes particularly by providing deeper context to the perceptions shared by respondents. People were often more open in the informal interviews, but the same assurance of anonymity was applied to their information.

As with the previous co-management studies on the Barbados Fisheries Advisory Committee (McConney et al. 2003a) and the Belize Fisheries Advisory Board (McConney et al. 2003b), the research included the formal institution for management—the board appointed to manage the TCMP. Most of the initial respondents were members of the (now former) TCMP board and, by snowball sampling; their recommendations for additional contacts were followed up. Checks were made to ensure that perceptions of co-management were obtained from all of the groups suggested by the literature, including vendors, fishers, water taxi operators, non-governmental organisations, community-based organisations, government officials and persons in the corporate private sector.

Compared to the previous case studies, the respondent ratings of the conditions for successful co-management were derived from interviews rather than at a final multi-stakeholder workshop. The latter was not feasible given the geographic spread of respondents. While benefits may have been derived from having the respondents discuss ratings amongst themselves and arrive at group consensus, their preference to express views only in private conversation or amongst their peers may have inhibited dialogue in a larger gathering.

As part of the participatory process, the research findings were communicated to many of the respondents and the general public at information sharing meetings that took place in Union Island and St. Vincent in December 2005. The approved final version of the research paper will be made available as a public document. Plans are also in place for it to be used in project concerning marine protected area (MPA) management effectiveness that is currently in progress.

4 NATURAL RESOURCES

In the research framework, environmental and ecological attributes are shown as key contextual variables for characterising the study site. This analysis of what natural features the Tobago Cays possess provides information on why its resources are heavily used and are worth (co-)managing.

4.1 Geography

The Tobago Cays Marine Park is located in the Caribbean Sea between latitude 12°38' N and longitude 61°21' W. The TCMP is within the Grenadines island chain, situated at the southern end of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, near the boundary with Grenada. The park's islands, reefs and shallows cover a total of almost 15 nautical square miles, mostly within the 10 fathom depth contour. The area contains five uninhabited cays. The Tobago Cays are protected by Horseshoe Reef, which calms the waters, making it a very popular area for novices and experienced divers, snorkellers and yachts.

4.2 MPAs in the Eastern Caribbean

Conservation in marine environments, as a field, has lagged behind conservation efforts in terrestrial environments. The majority of protected areas in the Caribbean were established during the 1950s in response to growing concerns over watershed protection. This was followed in the 1980s by a second wave of protected area declarations, which sought to protect the region's unique biodiversity (CANARI 1998).

Within the Eastern Caribbean over thirty sites have either been declared or formally proposed as MPAs. These sites are being used as part of the tourism product by their respective countries. Their sizes and shapes vary from very small to large areas covering an extensive portion of these SIDS. The MPAs can be placed into different management classifications; Marine Park, National Park (with a marine component), Marine Reserve, National Marine Park, Marine Management Area, Nature Reserve, National Monument, Marine Protected Area and Marine Sanctuary (CANARI 1998). Throughout the Eastern Caribbean examples of these can be found as presented in Table 4.1.

The Caribbean islands, as one of the world biodiversity hot spots, emerge as top priority for the expansion of the global protected areas network. The prospects for biodiversity conservation in the Caribbean have been enhanced by the development of partnerships between major industries, such as tourism, and the governmental and private organizations that are promoting conservation on the ground. MPAs in the region however, confront a common problem which is the stress being experienced by its marine resources, provoked by both natural events e.g. hurricanes, storm surges and from anthropogenic activities e.g. irresponsible boating and diving, snorkeling, over-fishing, land base pollution. MPAs lacking clearly defined management strategies or legislations are most vulnerable to these kinds of pressures.

Table 4.1 Type and location of MPAs in the Eastern Caribbean

Marine Protected Areas	Location
Folkstone Marine Reserve	Barbados
Saba Marine Park	Saba
Carib National Park	Dominica
Tobago Cay National Marine Park	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Soufriere Marine Management Area	St. Lucia
La Caravelle Natural Reserve	Martinique
St. Maarten Marine Natural Reserve	St. Maarten
Buck Island Reef National Monument	St. Croix, US Virgin Islands
Great Bird Island Marine Protected Area	Antigua
Cades Reef Marine Sanctuary	Antigua
Bianca C. Marine Historical Site	Grenada

Source: CANARI 1998

4.3 MPAs in St. Vincent and the Grenadines

The legal basis for marine protected areas in SVG is relatively strong. Annex I of the Fisheries Act (No. 8, 1986) is modelled on the harmonised draft prepared by the FAO and passed by most islands in the region. This Act, amongst other things, gives power to the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries to declare any area of fishery waters and adjacent land as a marine reserve, and it also provides for the duties of the Fisheries Division to protect these areas. Penalties for infringements to articles in the Fisheries Act concerning marine reserves comprise fines of up to the equivalent of US\$1,000. Nine marine conservation areas were established under the Fisheries Act: one on St. Vincent and the remainder throughout its Grenadines islands. Under the Mustique Conservation Act, 1989 the entire island of Mustique, including its marine environment, was designated a conservation area. (CEP 1996; Fisheries Act 1986)

The SVG conservation areas include all of the North East coast and the Devil's Table in Bequia, Isle de Quatre, the entire island of Mustique, the East coast of Canouan, all of Mayreau, the Tobago Cays, the entire Palm Island, Petit St Vincent and the surrounding reefs (Fisheries Act 1986). However, currently the Tobago Cays Marine Park is the only legally declared marine park. The area has strong community support for management, yet it lacks the resources and political support for conservation, especially in regulating tourism development

No other area has been as thoroughly analyzed as the Tobago Cays. Boundaries of the nine marine conservation areas were established on paper, but no action has been taken to enforce prohibitions against fishing, or to regulate other damaging activities in these designated areas. Boundary markers have not been established, and it is considered likely that the majority of locals are unaware of the location of the reserves.

There are other outstanding sites in SVG which are not presently designated as protected areas. These include many marine sites known for their importance to the dive tourism industry, also the proposed Soufrière Volcano National Park and some sites on Canouan and Union Island. The development of these sites can enhance the attractiveness of SVG as a tourism destination, as well as earn more revenue for the government and provide employment in the communities. However there is also the need to protect what is already there before embarking on other ventures that threaten to degrade these natural assets (CEP 1996).

Coastal protected areas are threatened by the unregulated mining of sand and rocks from beaches for use in the construction industry. Virtually all the beaches which are accessible by road have been mined to some extent, and many beaches are thought to be greatly diminished in width as a result (CEP 1996). Severe beach erosion is also caused by hurricanes. Widespread coral deterioration (from disease, yacht damage and pollution) is causing concern, particularly at reef areas surrounding the Tobago Cays reefs as shown in the Reef Check survey carried out in the area (Baldwin 2005).

4.4 Tobago Cays Marine Park

The Tobago Cays are a cluster of five small, uninhabited Grenadine islands surrounded by coral reefs. Petit Rameau features a beach on the south side of the cay, as does Baradal, which lies southeast of Petit Rameau. Petit Bateau provides visitors a shaded beach on the north and another beach on its east side. The smallest and southernmost cay, Jamesby, according to visitors, features one of the best beaches of the group on its eastern side. These four islands are surrounded by a large reef known as Horseshoe Reef. At the northeastern side of these islands lies Petit Tabac which has an expanse of beach on its west side and featured in the movie *Pirates of the Caribbean*. This area (Figure 4.1) is considered to provide some of the best snorkeling and diving in the world.

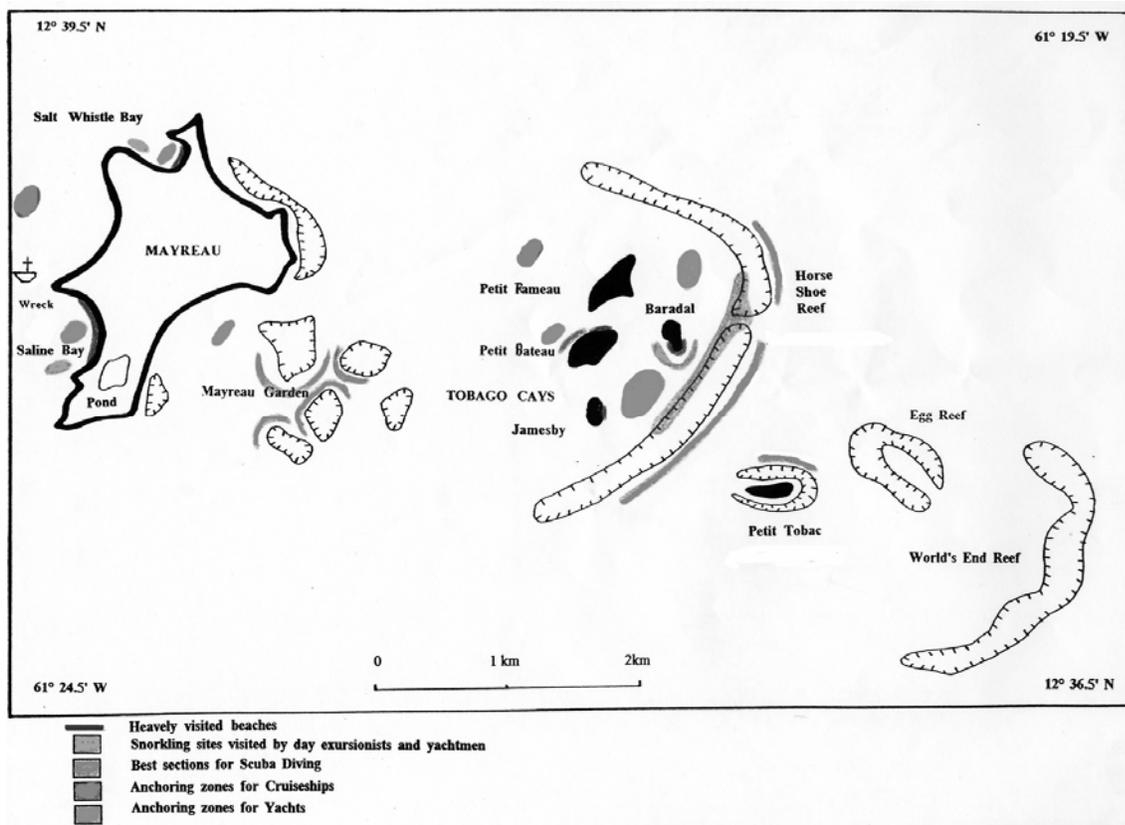


Figure 4.1 Areas of the Tobago Cays Marine Park
(Source: MEDO 2003)

The Tobago Cays are among the most popular sailing destinations in the Caribbean. The area is not only exceptionally beautiful but also rich in natural resources that provide significant economic value in terms of recreation and tourism. The Tobago Cays ecosystem is also fragile. The park's mission is "To protect, conserve and improve the natural beauty of the Tobago Cays," however most of the human activities inside the park have negative impacts on the surrounding marine environment (Simmons 2000). This, along with active hurricane seasons, has contributed to the loss of biodiversity in the area. Overfishing and overuse of the area by tourists are primary threats to the islands and marine areas. In recent years the deterioration has accelerated. Results of a Reef Check survey done in 2005, in selected areas of the TCMP, demonstrate that the corals are now showing the effects of increased contamination in the park as well as anthropogenic coral destruction brought on by unsupervised snorkellers (Baldwin, 2005). This increases their vulnerability to diseases.

Table 4.2 Coral health at selected areas in the TCMP

Site	Coral bleaching	Diseases affecting the area	Coral Damage
Horseshoe Back Reef	Low	Black Band, Aspergiliosis	Medium (wave damage)
Petit Tabac	Low	White Plague	Medium (wave damage)
Petit Bateau	Medium	Black Band	High (snorkelling damage)

Source: Baldwin 2005

The main entrances of the Cays are situated at opposite ends of the park. Boats can either enter through the Northern or Southern passage. Situated at the north of Mayreau between Petit Bateau and Petit Rameau lies the entrance most favoured by big yachts and boats that are mobilizing at night. The reason for this is that this passage is much wider and deeper, presenting minimal risk to vessels. At the South the entrance is Jamesby and Petit Bateau. This entrance is also much utilized, however it lacks the advantage of size, relegating it to be considered mainly a daytime park entrance.

4.5 Fisheries

Fisheries in St. Vincent and the Grenadines are multi-gear and multi-species. The sector is dominated by small fishing enterprises of relatively low efficiency. It is estimated that approximately 600 vessels, primary below 32 ft. in length, operate in the fishery waters of SVG (Fisheries Division 2004). Their main form of propulsion is the two-stroke outboard engine, ranging from 25 to 100 horsepower, with increasingly powerful engines being favoured. There is a small, but growing, number of diesel-powered decked vessels with insulated fish hold, facilitating longer periods of operation. On average, the annual landings generate EC\$7 million, while exports account for foreign exchange of EC\$2 million, mainly from spiny lobsters, large tuna and demersal species. National statistics indicate that imports of fish and fish products are estimated to be approximately \$2.7 million. The sector employs about 5% of the labour force, including some 2500 full and part-time fishermen and 500 vendors and processors and handlers (Fisheries Division 2004).

Mohammed et al. (2003) citing Chakalall (1982), states in her study that the dominant fisheries in St. Vincent are the trolling and longline fisheries targeting large pelagics, the beach seine fishery targeting small coastal pelagics and the taking of humpback whales, which are landed at Barrouallie. Handlining for snappers and groupers, the lobster and conch fisheries and whaling

for short-finned pilot whales, which are landed in Bequia, are more popular in the Grenadines (Mohammed et al. 2003).

Spiny lobster (*Panulirus argus*) is harvested in the Grenadines by teams of a dozen or so men, of which five to six are SCUBA divers using stainless steel wire nooses. Each diver will carry several nooses. Each team deploys four to five open boats or quarter-decked speedboats of about 4.6 – 5.5 m long, mainly constructed of wood with a 35-45 hp outboard motor. The spiny lobster fishery is a very valuable fishery for St Vincent and the Grenadines (Mohammed et al. 2003). This fishery is being threatened by the continuous practice of harvesting undersized and berried females, which is extremely destructive, since it does not permit replenishing of the stock. Most lobsters from which eggs are taken become weak and often die before reaching the market. However, Mohammed et al. (2003) state that approximately 25 tons are exported annually to neighbouring islands such as Martinique and St Lucia, with only an estimated 10 – 20% of the lobster catch consumed locally.

The policy framework for the fisheries sector is based on the expansion of fish production on a sustainable basis to provide a key source of protein for the national population at a competitive price (Fisheries Division 2004). In order to support increased production of fish, it is essential that the marine environment is adequately protected. There are several pieces of legislation that are used to manage and conserve marine resources in SVG (Box 4.1).

Box 4.1 SVG legislation for the conservation of marine resources

- (1) The Maritime Areas Act of 1983 legislated to declare the maritime areas of SVG. This Act establishes SVG as an archipelago. It also establishes the territorial sea, the contiguous Zone and Exclusive Economic Zone, and defines internal water and archipelagic waters.
- (2) The Fisheries Act No. 1 of 1986 gives the mandate to the Fisheries Division for the Management and Development of the fisheries sector within the waters of SVG. The Fisheries Act of 1986 makes provisions for the registration and licensing of fishing vessels, the establishment of a fisheries advisory committee, the management and conservation of fisheries resources, the establishment of marine Protected Areas, distribution of fish and fish products, management of aquaculture and enforcement.
- (3) The Fisheries Regulations No. 8 of 1987 established under Section 45 of the Fisheries Act of 1986, make regulations for the registration and licensing of fishing vessels, the establishment of a fisheries advisory committee, the management and conservation of fisheries resources, the establishment of Marine Protected Areas, distribution of fish and fish products, management of aquaculture and enforcement.
- (4) Fish Processing Regulations of 2001 make provision for the control of fish processing and handling destined for export, and gives the mandate to a named competent authority to ensure that fish and fish products meet appropriate export standards through inspections and other mechanisms.
- (5) The High Seas Fishing Act of 2001 makes provisions for the regulations of Vincentian vessels fishing on the high seas. It specifically provides for the licensing of high seas fishing vessels, international cooperation, conservation and management of marine resources and enforcement.

Source: Lystra Culzac-Wilson 2003

5 SOCIOECONOMIC ATTRIBUTES

The research framework highlights the importance of social and economic contextual variables.

This section presents the socioeconomic attributes of stakeholders and communities in the TCMP area.

5.1 The Southern Grenadines

The possession of the Grenadines swung back and forth between the British and the French in the 17th and 18th centuries. With the signing of the 1763 Treaty of Paris, St. Vincent and the Grenadines was relinquished to Great Britain, and in 1979 it became an independent country. The Southern Grenadines are a cluster of several islands, namely Canouan, Mayreau and Union, that are renowned for a near pristine marine environment, excellent dive sites and the Tobago Cays Marine Park. Some features of these islands are described below.

5.1.1 Tobago Cays

The Cays, similar to Mayreau, belonged to the Eustace family. In 1960 the family sold the Cays to a US citizen, Mr. Nicholas Fuller, for US\$18,000. In 1999, after much negotiation the SVG government bought the almost 58 acres for the sum of US\$1,025,000. This price was accepted by the Fuller Company under the condition that "the Tobago Cays will be dedicated to use in perpetuity as a National Park and that the sole purpose of the acquisition was for the declared purpose of the establishment of a National Park within which no buildings, structures, fixtures or construction of any form or any commercial activity whatsoever will be permitted save in pursuance of the objectives of and in furtherance of the maintenance of a National Park." (Compass 2003). In his address to the nation, the then Prime Minister the honourable Sir James Mitchell further underlined this clause stating that "even as we agree that this price is not the commercial value we accept that no commercial activity will ever be allowed on these islands. Today will mark the day when the people of St. Vincent and the Grenadines assume responsibility for the preservation of the most unique group of islands created in our hemisphere" (Compass 2003).

5.1.2 Canouan

Canouan is 5 square miles and it is set in the middle of the Grenadine archipelago. It is said to be located in the heart of the Grenadines. The first settlers were the Ciboney Amerindians. The Arawaks arrived later, and the Caribs displaced them. In 1770 King George III granted Canouan to five families: Brisbane, Decato, De Cazeau, Patrice and Snagg. Eventually the Snagg brothers came to own almost 93% of the island. They initiated the construction of the boats that would become the prototype vessel for the whaling trade that was established in the Grenadines. In 1921 the village was destroyed by a hurricane. In mid 1990's, 800 acres on the northern side, equivalent to two-third of the island, where the original village stood, were sold to an Italian consortium. The developers later proceeded to purchase small pieces of land in the middle of the island and, most recently, the entire southern tip of Canouan which totals approximately three-quarters of the island.

The developers have tried to discourage people (locals and non-paying visitors) from entering their northern area. Over the years they have built fences and gates, and installed state-of-the-art security. Any monument of a public nature within their territory was removed and this included the only Grenadine Amerindian petroglyph and all tombstones from graves. They purchased the

historic Anglican Church. A system of visitor passes was installed. The pass needed to be purchased and an appointment be made beforehand in order to receive it. This allowed the person to access the northern part of the island.

This island has reportedly been singled out by Donald Trump for the development of the Trump Island Villas, which includes an international golf club. It currently has a villa coupled with a large gaming room. Canouan is now considered one of the top destinations in the Caribbean. The island boasts direct international flights from Puerto Rico and Barbados. Since 1996 the developers have established a clinic, commercial jetty, electrical power, water production, early education facilities and a technical training school among other amenities (described at <http://www.svgair.com/canouan.html>). These amenities were perceived as a tool for conflict management so local inhabitants would not be upset for the loss of the northern part of Canouan.

5.1.3 Mayreau

Mayreau is the smallest of the inhabited Grenadines islands. It covers an area of 1½ square miles with a population of just over 250 residents. Mayreau was once also inhabited by a succession of Amerindians beginning with the Ciboney and ending with the Caribs. In the early 1700's Monsieur de L'isle, a Frenchman, claimed the island. In the early 1800's another French family, the Saint-Hilaires, arrived and acquired ownership of the land. The last direct descendant of this family governed the island through a sort of feudal system. Upon her death in 1915, the Eustace family inherited Mayreau through marriage. Actually, ownership of the island is divided: 22 acres, comprising Salt Whistle Bay belong to the Potter family; 21 acres, where the village stands, was acquired by the Government and the rest remains in the hands of the Eustace heirs.

This island is the least developed of the inhabited Grenadines islands. Electricity was provided just two years ago, thanks to actions carried out by the local population, spearheaded by the local Catholic Church. A garbage and collective rain water collection system for the village was promoted by the local NGO, the Mayreau Environmental Development Organization (MEDO). The eastern side of Mayreau is said to have some of the best diving sites in the region. The population is mainly self-employed within the informal sector i.e. water taxi operators, vendors, fishers small shops, etc. The main source of income is provided by tourist arrivals to the island or water taxing/vending either around the island or inside the Tobago Cays.

5.1.4 Union Island

Union Island is located midway between Grenada and St. Vincent. It covers an area of 13.7 square miles. Based on archaeological discoveries it is said to have been a stop-off point for Amerindians tribes. Among the first registered colonists were Frenchmen who arrived with a contingency of slaves, however the first registered owners of Union Island were a British family who also brought with them a number of slaves. The island was used to grow cotton yielding a substantial harvest throughout the 1700 and early 1800's. Slavery was abolished in 1834 and sharecropping replaced this regime. After much protest by the inhabitants due to poor management under the current owner, the British Crown bought the island and set up the Union Island Land Settlement Scheme. The island was then divided into two and four acre parcels and sold at low prices to the local population. A son of Union and pride of the island was Mr. Hugh Mulzac, deemed to have been the first black man to command a ship of the American Navy in 1940.

This island is one of the most developed of the Grenadines. It has an airport that previously received national and international flights; however the current government, citing safety reasons, now permits only local flights. This was a source of conflict since Union Islanders consider this a major set-back in tourist arrivals to the island, therefore affecting the island revenue. Their protest however bore no fruit. The island's main source of income is provided by tourism, the main attraction being the Tobago Cays. The money brought in by the tourism trade is primarily what fuels the island's economy. The industry survives mainly off the "sale" of the Tobago Cays, i.e. boat charters, dive shops, water taxi operators and hotels operating out of Union. Similar to Mayreau, the income generated is then trickled down to another "sphere" of the community, making the "Tobago Cay Dollar" a powerful one within the Grenadines.

5.2 Fishing

Tobago Cays Marine Park regulations prohibit fishing and squatting in the area. The entire Tobago Cays area is defined as a no-take zone. However illegal spearfishing by both locals and visitors is still an issue. Park rangers have also found squatters with fishing gear on the beach albeit not with their gear in the water. The issue of enforcement is brought to the forefront when these incidents occur. During the tourist season, fishers go into the park to sell their produce to the yachts anchored within the park and also to the hotels and restaurants in the surrounding communities.

5.3 Film-making

The Caribbean Sea has been featured in numerous movies and documentaries over the years. This has been free publicity for the region and presumably attracts more tourists to the region. SVG is no stranger to this sort of activity. The recent blockbuster movie "Pirates of the Caribbean I" filmed partly within the TCMP, generated income not only for the government, but also for locals within the area. The filming of the movie is now used to publicise the Marine Park. Underwater documentary films are also made within the park. This type of filming however does not provide much income, if any, to the Government since the TCMP board has no authorized fee for filming in the TCMP, and no fee is usually demanded of documentary filming.

5.4 Commercial activities

The Marine Parks Act of 1997 states that no commercial activities are permitted in a marine area except in areas designated for that purpose. On the other hand, as stated by ECLAC (2002), it does not state what should be understood by "commercial activities". TCMP regulations do not designate any areas within the marine park for commercial activities; government is reluctant to do so in view of the sale agreement between the government and the former owners that included a "no commercial activity" clause. However they do recognize "workers" rights to be in the area. This includes workers such as water taxi operators, T-shirt vendors and boat charters.

The stationary Park vendors have been traditionally located on two of the Cays: Jamesby and Petit Bateau. Most of them live in Union Island and go out to the Cays to trade their goods, be these T-shirt, crafts or barbequed food. Usually six vendors display their goods on Petit Bateau and Jamesby. Barbequing is done mainly on Barradal. Additionally, Palm Island Resort regularly takes its guests to lunch in the Tobago Cays.

5.5 Tourism

In SVG tourism has helped to stabilize the economy as relief to the difficulties faced by the banana sector. Ideally there is spin-off expected in terms of preservation of cultural heritage and environmental preservation. The country has turned towards its eco-tourism potential which includes waterfalls, nature trails and rain forest, and also to marine tourism experiences attracting visitors to the Tobago Cays as well as to stretches of beaches on the Grenadines Islands. Similar to other Caribbean SIDS, SVG has also expanded into the market of festivals and sport tourism as major attractions. Many attractions and events include:

- Well-developed yachting industry – from bareboat charter to fully crewed yachts
- Diving and snorkelling – excellent dive sites and attractive marine life within the Cays
- Eco-tourism and adventure tourism – forest hiking trails, natural waterfalls
- Cultural and heritage tourism – petroglyphs, colonial forts
- Festival tourism – Mustique Blues Festival, regattas, carnival.

In terms of contribution to economic growth, tourism has grown to become a very important part of the economy, and the chief earner of foreign exchange. The greatest tourism increases have occurred at Bequia and Canouan in the Grenadines, where visitation has increased two and three-fold respectively in recent times. Over half of SVG accommodation is located in the Grenadines, including the major resort properties (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1 Tourist accommodation 2000-2002 showing percentage in the Grenadines

Type of establishment	2000	2001	2002
Hotel/Resorts	961	968	957
Apartments	262	288	509
Guest Houses	154	150	167
Cottages and Villas	340	352	56
% of Rooms in the Grenadines	63	64	54
% of Establishments in the Grenadines	75	61	56

Source: Deloitte (undated)

The Grenadines have become a favorite visitation spot for the high-end yachting crowd and are now becoming the focus of new tourism development in the country. Yachting industry is in fact the dominant form of travel into the country, surpassing air and cruise ships arrivals as shown in Table 5.2 below.

Table 5.2 Visitor arrivals 1998-2002 by category

Visitor category	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
By Air	67,228	68,292	72,895	70,686	77,631
Same Day	20,882	17,468	21,135	15,049	13,062
By Yachts	79,096	89,621	75,763	91,862	86,451
By Cruise Ships	34,903	47,743	86,247	76,494	70,314
Total Visitors	202,109	223,124	256,040	254,091	247,458

Source: Deloitte (undated)

The popular sailing season is over the six month period November – April, consistent with winter in North America and Europe. Over 75% of the yacht arrivals occur in these months. Cruise ships follow a similar pattern of arrival. The level of activity during this period is very intense within the Grenadines (Deloitte undated) In the Grenadines islands, however, there is no

surface water; the islands depend on rainfall, water imports and to a lesser extent ground water. Water and other resources can be seriously impacted by increased tourism in the area.

5.6 Marine tourism

Marine protected areas not only serve to protect the biodiversity of the area but can also help the local economy by providing alternative livelihoods for the surrounding communities via tourism. Marine tourism is an added MPA benefit. However, for mutual benefit, it must be done in a sustainable way. Impacts such as from snorkellers or divers' fins brushing against the corals or standing on corals can harm the marine habitat. The TCMP is an area of continuous marine tourism. It receives national and international visitors all year round. There are daily catamaran tours from Union Island and visitors are also transported by other means such as yachts, cruise ships and water taxi in order to dive or snorkel. The dive shop operating out of Union Island takes divers daily to the dive sites in the Park. Charter boats and dive shops create employment for people within the area, but currently these activities have not been regulated within the park.

5.7 Other economic activities

Within the area there is also significant illegal trade in goods such as consumer items. Most of these goods can be bought around the communities at low cost. This activity is seen as complementary or alternative income for those people involved in ferrying the goods. During tourist low season it constitutes their main source of income. The TCMP is also allegedly used as a drug trade corridor, especially for cocaine, under the guise of legitimate boating.

5.8 Public services and infrastructure

Developments on the surrounding islands have previously been described. As part of the sale agreement between the government and the former owner a clause was included stating that “no buildings structures fixtures or construction of any form (...) will be permitted” (Tobago Cays Sales agreement 1999) hence no infrastructure or public services have been established on the Cays.

5.9 Poverty profile

Within the OECS, SVG has been identified as having the highest levels of poverty. A National Assessment team from St. Vincent and the Grenadines, in collaboration with the Caribbean Development Bank and Kairi Consultants of Trinidad conducted a Survey of Living Conditions (Household Poverty Survey) and a Community Based Poverty Assessment Survey in 1996. The Kairi (1996) report indicated that 30.6% of households and 37.5% of the population were poor, and 20.4% of households and 25.7% of the population were indigent. This means that almost 26% of the population and 21% of households are unable to satisfy basic nutritional requirements and are at risk of chronic ill health.

Other studies such as the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (I-PRSP), a poverty assessment in 2003 carried out by the SVG government Poverty Reduction Task Force (PRTF) that focused on the social sector and by extension poverty, suggested a worsening of the poverty levels (PRTF 2003). Free market access and SVGs ability to compete adequately on the global

market, loss of preferential treatment in the banana industry and the inability of some segments of the population to adjust to these changes are placing more and more persons at risk of being driven into the poverty range.

Both the Kairi (1996) and the PRTF (2003) studies identified the following items as the main factors that have contributed to poverty in the SVG and are still doing so:

- Economic and social policies that have concentrated primarily on the economic aspects with insufficient attention to the policies necessary to ensure that social development kept pace with economic development.
- Limited livelihood security, low earnings and lack of jobs as a result of the decline of the banana industry, the lack of alternative livelihoods, and the slightly weak or non-developed base from which the tourism industry has emerged.
- Social/human capital in the SVG is unrealised, the human resource base is generally low skilled and not organized. Social exclusion in the SVG also has tremendous impact especially on persons from the rural areas, women and young adult men.
- Inadequate social infrastructure and limited access to social services, that range from a good network of roads to the availability of adequate structures for such activities as education and healthcare and access to low-income housing facilities.

The Kairi report and the PRTF, citing C.Y. Thomas, identify certain characteristics common to SVG households associated with poverty conditions:

- Low levels or lack of education, skills and training,
- Over crowding of household, mainly children,
- Few income earners
- Low quality accommodation
- Single headed households, particularly female
- Lack of employment opportunities, therefore tending to concentrate in informal occupation
- Lack of assets, along with restricted access to credit as a result

Poverty in St. Vincent seems to have mainly a woman's face. The United Nations has recognized the issue of feminisation of poverty and thus created the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). There is a general public recognition that in order to reduce this problem there is need for countries to undergo macroeconomic changes taking into account existing gender disparities (<http://www.unifem.org/>). However governments rarely show the inclination to address strategic gender needs within their main policies.

Women have been the group most affected by the decline of the banana industry coupled with the failure of government to ensure adequate safety nets to compensate for the effect of the setback of the industry upon this sector of the population (Kairi 1996; PRTF 2003). Kairi (1996) reports that, although 56% of all household heads across SVG were male, the poorer households were headed by females. Female hardship was dominant in eight of the thirteen communities surveyed, and particularly so in the poorest communities. An underlying gender segmentation, in which the participation of women is limited to certain sectors, was also observed. At present, there are very few programmes geared towards improving gender equity within the SVG.

Poverty is concentrated in particular communities within the SVG, such as New Sandy Bay. Kairi Consultants (1996) found that 95.8% of households in this area were headed by females. A common problem that can be found throughout SVG – both mainland and the Grenadines – is a

weak community organization. This has generally translated into a lack of capacity to tackle problems on their own. Communities with a certain degree of organization and effective leadership, e.g. Mayreau, have demonstrated a capacity to make transformation happen on their own. In this regard CBOs and NGOs have proven to be remarkable governmental allies in the struggle to empower communities and search for alternatives to escape the poverty trap.

In Latin America and the Caribbean countries, remittances are a major survival strategy to poor households and also a strong input within the countries' economies. Kairi (1996) reports that, within the SVG, overseas remittances represent a 17% contribution to poor households' income. Regular contributions either in cash or kind are being received from persons outside the household. An important coping strategy, therefore, is emigration and 43.8% of households reported recent migrations among members of the household. The United States was the preferred destination.

Another response to poverty conditions in the SVG can be observed in the increase of the country's informal sector and the share of employment (Kairi 1996). The report goes on to state that three out of every ten workers are engaged in activities within the informal sector with irregular working hours attached to this form of under-employment.

The present SVG Government has launched a National Poverty Reduction Strategy centred on an informal contract between the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, civil society and the private sector. Government recognizes the need for multi-stakeholder involvement in order to target the root causes of poverty. The goals and priorities are based on the Government's vision as well as on consultations with civil society, and reflect the Government's commitment to regional and international targets in the area of social policy. The Strategy (Kairi 1996; PRTF 2003) takes on broad global objectives in key areas of development such as children, gender, human rights and security. Six main elements identified through consultation are proposed in order to address poverty reduction:

- Policies to Stimulate Growth, Trade and Investment
- Policy/Programme Development and Execution
- Greater and better investments in Human Capital
- Improving Social and Physical Infrastructure
- Strengthening Civil Society Participation

Both the Kairi (1996) and the PRTF (2003) report conclude that in order for the poverty reduction strategy to be effective there is the need to set up an institutionalised, independent body. This body should be composed of various organizations drawn from the public and private sector, including NGO's and CBO's as well as trade unions. A main function of this body would be poverty monitoring to ensure that the appropriate official and other policies are adjusted in the light of the changing realities.

6 COMMUNITY-LEVEL INSTITUTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

In their definition of who constitutes a stakeholder, McConney et al. (2003) view these as people or groups that either strongly impact or are impacted by management or its absence. They go further to say that primary stakeholder may form part of the government or of civil society. Based on this definition, TCMP stakeholders are easily identifiable and would include several

government institutions such as the management Board, management office, coast guard and TCMP user groups such as divers, water taxi operators and other boat charter operators.

The Tobago Cays have become perhaps the most important tourist destination within SVG. It is promoted not only by the SVG government but also by other countries such as Barbados and St. Lucia, as part as their tourism packages. The park receives yacht visitors who stay over for several days and also visitors who use water taxis or charters to enjoy a one-day trip to the Cays. This creates a set of distant, non-Vincentian, stakeholders for the area that fall outside of the scope of this study.

The area opens opportunities for different user groups to interact positively amidst the Cays as well as for conflict to occur amongst them and with park authorities. This chapter describes the park resource management and the community based organizations active within the southern grenadines with a focus on the TCMP management. The following chapter addresses stakeholders who are further removed from daily use of the park but are still within SVG.

6.1 Southern Grenadines Water Taxi Association

The Southern Grenadines Water Taxi Association (WTA) includes 85% of the water taxi operators working within the area. The association was created in October 2003 partly as an outcome of the issue related to the proposed Palm Island Resort Limited (PIRL) management of the TCMP (discussed later). The water taxi operators recognized the need to organize in order to safeguard their means of livelihood from corporate competition. Vendors feared that if the Cays became privately managed, and restrictions such as the existing ones on Palm Island were imposed, their livelihood would be greatly affected.

Several attempts had been made to organize the water taxi operators before, but these initiatives resulted in failure. The operators showed no interest or saw no reason motivating them to establish themselves as a group. The operators know that group action within the Grenadines is more reactive than proactive. Area inhabitants unite in the face of what is viewed as a threat and form bonds (even if temporary) only against the perceived common enemy.

The person to spearhead the water taxi movement within the context of the community struggle against PIRL embraced the opportunity presented for collective action and managed to establish the Union Island Water Taxi Association. Once the association was formed government offered loans. Most operators perceived this move as a step towards a take over by the government and questioned the instigator's motives for assisting the water taxi operators. The Association moved to become an independent body by establishing its own structure which includes: president, vice president secretary, public relations officer, treasurer, trustees and committee members.

Four months after its inception the association expanded beyond the initial Union Island scope, to include other islands, thus becoming the Southern Grenadines Water Taxi Association. This came out of the realization that the group was composed of operators from different southern Grenadines islands who were demanding a name that would encompass all members. In 2004 the Association was awarded for being the Best New Tourism Transportation Organization.

The Association has been working on its internal rules and regulations; these are yet to be approved by the members. Established rules relate to the timeframe for elections which are to be held every year, executive meetings are supposed to be held once weekly and general discussion meetings every month for all members. However attention to holding meetings has been lax and

has proven a challenging procedural issue.

Several constraints were identified as affecting the organization:

- Absenteeism of members from meetings
- No access to information on park management; that makes it difficult to effectively discuss park management issues.
- Lack of finance for operations and office maintenance
- Members tend to procrastinate when assigned roles and responsibilities

At present the WTA is functioning out of an office space granted by the Sustainable Grenadines, a CERMES-connected NGO based in Union Island. This organization has been assisting them with seminars and workshops in order to help strengthen the association and establish water taxi environmental best practices. Since the establishment of the association there has been a better management of water taxi operators inside the Cays. The vendors are more respectful of the park regulations and minor crimes within park have diminished. The operators are more watchful of park regulation violators, perhaps a signal to support community monitoring and surveillance.

6.2 Park management office

Tobago Cays Marine Reserve established in 1987 still lacks effective management in spite of extensive planning support provided by OAS. Direct park management rest with the TCMP office situated in Union Island. The park management however is currently understaffed and ill-equipped. Problems include lack of trained personnel plus negative environmental impacts from yachts, divers and snorkellers, fishing, sewage and agricultural pollution, and coastal development). Organisational problems include inadequate management structure, staffing and training, and a general lack of governmental support from the capital in St. Vincent (CEP 1996). The budget for park management activities is minimal with respect to the day-to-day management necessities.

The lack of personnel makes it almost impossibility to ensure enforcement of park regulation; currently the personnel comprise a park manager, 3 rangers, 1 warden and an administrative assistant. Responsibilities assigned to park management and enforcement are shown in Boxes 6.1 and 6.2 respectively, however the government is presently unable to provide the institutional framework within which these functions could be successfully executed.

Box 6.1 Responsibilities of the TCMP Park Manager

- | | |
|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| i | Preparation of quarterly and annual reports on the state of the Marine Park to be submitted to the Board |
| ii | Efficient implementation of the work programme and policy decisions of the Board |
| iii | Manage all finances consistent with the policies of the Board |
| iv | Work with relevant agencies using the media to promote the Marine Park as a tourist resort and attraction |
| v | Ensure that the Marine Park is managed along commercial lines |
| vi | Enforcement of decisions taken by the board |
| vii | Ensure that the Ecology of the Park is sustained |
| viii | Design and develop on a monthly basis information for the education of all users of the Marine Park |
| ix | Coordinate the design and development of brochures, pamphlets, leaflets, maps and other information that may be necessary with respect to the marine Park for distribution to the public. on a monthly basis information for the education of all users of the Marine Park |
| x | Supervise all other officers appointed by the Board |

Source: SRO No 26 1998

Box 6.2 Responsibilities of the TCMP enforcement

- | | |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| i | Patrol the waters which form part of the marine Park |
| ii | Responsible for distribution of brochures and information booklets about the marine Park visitors |
| iii | Responsible for the collection of fees and the control of the number and size of the vessels |
| iv | Responsible for collection of garbage and the cleaning of the beaches |
| v | Assist in reef monitoring and educational programmes |
| vi | Regulate the use of parking and refreshment facilities |

Source: Job application form for warden

The TCMP falls under the following legislative and regulatory mechanism of the SVG:

- **Fisheries Act.** (Act. No. 8) (1986)
The area of the current Marine Park was declared a Marine Reserve under schedule 11 of this Act. The protection, therefore of the area is the responsibility of the Fisheries Division within the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries.
- **Wild Life Protection Act.** (Act No. 16) (1987)
This Act declares various terrestrial areas of SVG wild life protection areas, and includes the Tobago Cays. It falls under the responsibility of the Forestry Department under the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries.
- **Marine Park Act** (Act No. 9) (1997)
This document defines the framework for the development of Marine Parks in SVG, and establishes the Marine Park Board of SVG for the responsibility of the implementation and enforcement of the directives of the Marine Parks Act.
- **Declaration of the Tobago Cays as a Marine Park.** (Statutory Rules and Orders No. 40) (1997)
Here the Government declared the 5 islands that comprise the Tobago Cays a Marine Park under the Marine Parks Act. It gives the Marine Park Board direct responsibility for the management of the islands and surrounding waters.
- **Tobago Cays Marine Park Regulations.** (Statutory Rules and Orders No. 26) (1998)
These regulations establish the TCMP and the powers of the management towards the implementation of the directives of the Marine Parks Legislation and the Marine Parks Board in the area of the Tobago Cays and surrounding waters.

6.3 Mayreau Environmental Development Organization

The Mayreau Environmental Development Organization (MEDO) is a grass-roots community-based organization (CBO). It has been engaged in environmental and general community work for the past eight years. MEDO is a legally established as an NGO whose present executive committee comprises seven members with diverse backgrounds. The CBO meets regularly to plan and execute its work. MEDO is concerned both with the protection of resources and the livelihoods community members who are affected by whatever decisions are taken regarding the park. There sensitivity on both of these issues, born from their personal ties to the area.

MEDO has been lobbying government for several years for co-management of the TCMP. In 2003, in response to the statement from government that it would give over the Park to foreign-connected private management, MEDO developed an alternative proposal for the protection and

management of the TCMP (MEDO 2003). In the proposal cover letter addressed to the Prime Minister MEDO stated: “We have been preparing (...) for many years in the hope (...) of sharing in the protection and management of (...) the Tobago Cays.”

Based on an analysis done with the help of CERMES on revenue generation, MEDO is positive of the park’s self-sustainability potential as a major revenue generator for the country. In order to be better equipped for park management issues MEDO has entered into alliance with the Friends of the Tobago Cays (FOTC), a more recently formed interest group. This alliance brings skills that are expected to enhance overall park management if MEDO becomes a co-management partner. Currently they are still lobbying to enter into a management partnership with government.

6.4 Palm Island Resort Limited

Palm Island Resort Limited (PIRL) is an all-inclusive resort constructed in 1968 and located on its own private 100-acre island in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The resort is 1 mile away from Union Island and accessible via the hotel's launch from Union. Almost every day guests are taken out to the Tobago Cays to engage in swimming, snorkelling or diving, and presented with a barbeque on one of the cays.

In 2004 PIRL presented a proposal entitled "Strategic Alliance Agreement for the Protection and Preservation of the Tobago Cays Marine Park between Palm Island Resorts Limited and the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines". In it PIRL offered to take over the complete management of the Tobago Cays with the added responsibility to develop operational procedures with the approval of the Marine Park Board. They would employ a park manager; marine biologist and park rangers in order to effectively manage the park. These park employees would be accountable to PIRL and could also be fired at any time by the company (PIRL 2004). The proposal outlined how the country would benefit from a percentage of the income generated by the park’s development once expenses had been paid off. The questions this brought to mind in the local population were: what will be considered expenses, and who will control this and determine the level of profit? The proposal also presented sketches of infrastructure to be established within the TCMP, contravening the TCMP sales agreement.

The issues of private foreign management of the TCMP and the devolution of income generation by the government, as well as the notion of a national park profiting a foreign investor lead to a great degree of controversy and protest from all sectors of society from all around the SVG. Given this controversy the PIRL management agreed to withdraw their proposal, stating however that if conditions were right they would be willing to aid the government in the management of the park. It was the issues surrounding privatisation of the TCMP management through PIRL that galvanised responses such as the formation of the water taxi association, the management proposal by MEDO and the public outreach of Friends of the Tobago Cays in protest. Although PIRL was cast as the villain, it was useful in re-vitalising interest in TCMP management options.

6.5 Friends of the Tobago Cays

In 2003 the SVG government said that it was considering a proposal from a private foreign investor (PIRL) to manage the TCMP as described above. This prompted concerned citizens to form the Friends of the Tobago Cays (FOTC). FOTC aimed to stop this process and raise public

awareness of the value of the park as an asset to be managed by Vincentians for the benefit of all Vincentians. FOTC wanted to ensure that those who made their livelihoods from the park had a voice and could not be displaced.

As part of FOTC strategy to give people a voice they hosted the Tobago Cays Educational, open to all public. The purpose of this Forum was to provide expert information to the general public regarding the purposes and best management practices of marine protected areas; and to provide an opportunity for open public dialogue regarding the fate of the Tobago Cays Marine Park. The Forum was done in alliance with Grenadines base environmental groups and had experts from St. Lucia Soufriere Marine Management Area and UWI Barbados among others sharing their expertise on MPA management.

FOTC have also engaged in press conferences, press release and have coordinate efforts with MEDO and other institutions in order address concerns regarding the sustainable management of the TCMP.

7 EXTERNAL TO THE COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

7.1 Tobago Cays Marine Park Board

Although essential to the management of the TCMP, the Board is an external institution in the sense that it is not involved in day-to-day management and it is largely an instrument of the authorities located on mainland St. Vincent. The SVG government under the Marine Parks Act (No. 9 1997) legally created the TCMP Management Board with the intention of establishing an advisory body for effective management of the Park. The Marine Parks Act states the number of members to be appointed by the minister in writing, and the government divisions to be part of the board's composition. It goes on to say that four members are to be ex officio. The TCMP is currently the responsibility of the Prime Minister's Office, and at the time of research the Chief Fisheries Officer was chairman. The board's composition is in Box 7.1.

Box 7.1 Composition of TCMP Board

- | | |
|------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| i | Chief Fisheries Officer or his nominee - ex officio |
| ii | Director of Finance or his nominee - ex officio |
| iii | Solicitor General or his nominee - ex officio |
| iv | Commander of the Coast Guard or his nominee – ex officio |
| v | A person nominated by the Minister; |
| vi | A person nominated by the Minister of Tourism; |
| vii | A person nominated by the St. Vincent National Trust; |
| viii | A person nominated by the Hotel Association; |
| ix | Two persons nominated by Non-Governmental Organizations functional in the district where the park is declared. |

Source: SVG Marine Parks Act No. 9 of 1997

The board members, other than ex-officio members, are appointed for a three years period, but they are eligible for re-appointment for a second term. However they cannot hold office for more than two successive terms. The minister has the obligation to publish in the Gazette the names of the members of the board at its constitution and after each subsequent change in membership. The Act also states reasons that may cause a member to be loose his membership on the board,

this may happen if she or he is:

- a) Unable to perform his functions due to infirmity of mind or body; or
- b) Absent from three consecutive meetings without an excuse acceptable to the Board.

The Act does not state the functions of board members, however from interviews with the members it was stated that the main function of the board lies in:

- Advising the government on all issues pertaining to the Park's management.
- Making recommendations to the Government on matters relating to marketing the park
- Appointing and firing staff such as the park manager and wardens

Between 2003 and 2005 there have been three recurrent agenda items. These are:

- Fee structure
- Park boundaries
- Management systems

The board has discussed these issues extensively and submitted its opinions and suggestions to Cabinet. However there has been no response to date and it is expected that a new board will continue to deal with such topics.

There is not a system in place for scheduling board meetings. The TCMP Board meetings are expected to be held once a month, however these have been infrequent due in part to absence of the chairman who is busy or travelling complying with his multiple engagements as Chief Fishery Officer. At the time of this research it had been 4 months since the last board meeting. There is no pre-arranged day of the month for board meetings, members get invitations via e-mail or phone call just days before a meeting is to be held. Meetings seem to be called at the discretion of the chairman. Added to this is the fact that the minutes of previous meetings are handed out at the following meeting, therefore absentees have little time to familiarize themselves with what went on, and be updated on board discussions.

The TCMP operates under the Prime Ministry office as part of the Grenadines portfolio, which he controls. At the time of this research the chairman of the TCMP board was the Chief Fishery Officer. Currently a Union Island catholic priest is the interim chairman of the board. The selected NGO members of the board were MEDO and Union Island Association for Ecological Preservation. The board meetings have had speakers presenting on specific issues e.g. representatives from TNC, OECS and different government agencies.

7.2 Fisheries Division of the Ministry of Agriculture

The Fisheries Division is under the Ministry of Agriculture and Labour, and is responsible for the overall management of the fisheries sector. The Division has a public education programme with emphasis on presentations on fisheries-related matters in primary and secondary schools, and training sessions directed to police recruits in the area of fisheries legislation. The Division has also produced a handbook on management and conservation measures aimed at sensitizing law enforcement officers and prosecutors.

The structure of the Fisheries Division is as follows:

- A Chief Fisheries Officer, who has overall responsibility for the Division
- Four Senior Fisheries Assistants
- Five Fisheries Assistants

- Data Collectors who are paid daily
- Clerical support staff
- A vessel Captain

The Division is divided into a number of units with responsibilities for specific areas, namely:

- Administration
- Extension
- Public Education
- Quality Assurance and Product Development
- Biology/Research
- Data
- Conservation

This overall structure is designed to allow the Division to address the diverse nature and needs of the sector in a meaningful and effective way (Fisheries Division 2004). The Division has several pieces of legislation to assist them in this task. The Fisheries Act (1986) and Regulations (1987), which form part of the OECS harmonized legislation, cover fisheries access agreements, local and foreign fishing licensing, fish processing establishments, fisheries research, fisheries enforcement and the registration of fishing vessels. The legislation also specifies conservation measures such as prohibiting the use of any explosive, poison or other noxious substance for the purpose of killing, stunning, disabling or catching fish; close seasons; gear restrictions; and creation of marine reserves. The legislation gives the minister responsible for fisheries the authority to create new regulations for the management of fisheries when necessary. The Division has acted upon its mandate and created marine reserves, such as the TCMP. However, it has also encountered constraints in executing effective management and enforcing regulations (Box 7.2).

Box 7.2 Constraints in the areas of coastal and marine resource management

- Inadequate financial and human resources
- Inadequate enforcement capability. For example, police presence in some geographical areas is weak or non-existent, particularly so in the Tobago Cays
- Uncontrolled pollution of coastal marine habitats, via for example, poor farming practices leading to sedimentation; dumping of garbage near shore; and sewage discharge along the coast line or within the Tobago Cays Marine Park
- Limited capability for controlling poaching including illegal exploitation of marine resources in conservation areas and the Tobago Cays Marine Park
- Inadequate information on the ecosystems being managed
- A measure of distrust for government-sponsored activities

Source: Fishery Division, 2004 and Lystra Culzac-Wilson, 2003

7.3 Cabinet

Within the English-speaking Commonwealth Caribbean policy control of the government rests with the Prime Minister (PM) and the Cabinet of ministers. In 2001, when the United Labor Party won an absolute parliamentary majority its leader, Dr. Ralph Gonsalves, became the new Prime Minister and head of Cabinet which currently includes twelve representatives of his

ministries. Changes within cabinet, such as the ones experienced during May of this year, are viewed as being done at the pleasure of the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister has a ministerial portfolio that includes Finance, Planning, Economic Development, Information, Labour, Grenadines and Legal Affairs. The TCMP is a responsibility of the Prime Minister's Office, and Cabinet is considered to have the ultimate responsibility for decisions regarding the TCMP. In few other Caribbean countries, if any, is a marine park the responsibility of the Prime Minister.

7.4 Ministry of Tourism and Culture

The mission of the Department of Tourism, as stated on their official web page, is “to position SVG as a diverse, globally competitive tourism destination through effective planning, management and sustainable use of the natural and cultural resources of the country; while facilitating the preservation of cultural heritage as a vehicle for instilling national pride and forging national identity”. To achieve this mission SVG has established overseas offices in the USA, Canada and United Kingdom. The vision attached to this is “to establish St. Vincent and the Grenadines as a destination where development is in harmony with the preservation of the social values, the natural environment and the cultural patrimony of the country.” To achieve these goals they have targeted a selective audience which includes a number of institutions, organizations and businesses including the general public (<http://www.gov.vc/govt/index.asp>).

The organizational structure of this ministry includes the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Board of Tourism. This board was established by Cabinet as an advisory body to provide support to the Ministry of Tourism and Culture in matters relating to the following:

- Marketing and promotion of St. Vincent and the Grenadines internationally;
- Development of the tourism product;
- Human resource development as it relates to the tourism sector;
- Ongoing and new tourism public awareness programme;
- Any other tourism matters sent to the Board by the Minister for advice.

The Administrative and Finance Section of the Ministry of Tourism and Culture performs the following functions:

- Staff Development
- Florida Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) Membership
- Department of Tourism (DoT) Annual Report
- Budget Preparation & Management
- Personnel Matters
- Administrative Matters
- Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO) Membership
- International Organisation Membership

The Ministry of Tourism and Culture General Administrative Staff Structure is as follows:

- Permanent Secretary
- Assistant Secretary
- Clerk Typist
- Office Attendant
- Driver

7.5 Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies

The Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES) of the University for the West Indies (UWI) Cave Hill Campus has developed a project to evaluate the management effectiveness in the TCMP along with two other areas in the Caribbean. The project proposed that both the formulation and evaluation be carried out jointly with people and organisations from the Grenadines. This project entitled “Enhancing management effectiveness at three marine protected areas (...)” is expected to contribute towards building regional capacity in MPA management effectiveness evaluation methods in the Caribbean. The project is aimed mainly at MPA managers and stakeholders and outreach aimed at audiences ranging from other coastal managers to scientists to students to policy-makers and sectors of the general public. CERMES will be working with complementary projects at the three sites. Participatory and community-based approaches will facilitate stakeholder involvement and adaptive management that will ensure that best practices are institutionalized based upon the lessons learned and skills acquired during the project and after.

7.6 The Nature Conservancy

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) focuses on building the capacity of partners on the ground. After years of experience they have concluded that the best way is to work hand in hand with partners and provide training opportunities. TNC’s idea is to build teams with local stakeholders where each party learns from each other. The TNC Parks in Peril Program focuses strengthening local capacity in order to revive MPA’s that may have been designated on paper but lack the means to function.

As part of this programme TNC is currently working with local partners to survey all of the Grenadines, identify threats and conservation strategies, and map priority sites in need of protection. Part of the plan includes developing and managing a system of marine protected areas. This programme relies heavily on a relationship of trust between everyone involved in pursuing the best interest of the park. As part of the assistance with implementation of the park, TNC undertook rapid evaluation of the TCMP in collaboration with TCMP board and management personnel. This resulted in a general work plan with specific activities identified for support by TNC from October 2005 to September 2007 by their Parks in Peril Program (TNC 2005).

7.7 OECS Protected Area and Alternative Livelihood Project

The OECS Protected Area and Alternative Livelihood project (OPAAL) executed by the Secretariat of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) through its Environment and Sustainable Development Unit (ESDU). The general objective of the project to contribute to the conservation of biodiversity of global importance in the OECS region by removing barriers to the effective management of protected areas, and to increase the involvement of civil society and the private sector in the planning, management and sustainable use of these areas. The end-goal of the programme is to create an integrated system of protected areas among the OECS Member States which will protect and conserve ecologically-sustainable, representative samples of the region’s rich biodiversity endowment, while creating sustainable livelihoods for communities in and around these protected areas (OECS 2003).

The TCMP has been selected as one of the primary sites for the project implementation. A social assessment was undertaken in order to ensure that the prospective communities in and around the targeted sites benefit meaningfully from this project intervention. OPAAL project Annex 13 states that “The barriers to the effective management of the Tobago Cays over the past 15 years were created by... insufficient involvement of all stakeholders in the decision-making and implementation process... new endeavours should build upon previous initiatives, yet should be more effective, particularly in terms of building stakeholder ownership, accountability and conflict resolution processes... to ensure success, this project will incorporate (...) the importance of a proper management system with broad stakeholder support, involvement and accountability...”(OECS 2003). OPAAL will coordinate efforts with the TCMP Board, CERMES and TNC as well as local stakeholders in order to maximize resources and contribute to the overall development of the site.

7.8 Coast Guard

SVG Coast Guard maintains a Unit on Union Island that patrols the Tobago Cays. The patrols are scheduled on a daily basis, however due to absence of suitable assets i.e. boats, the Union Island Unit has been unable to carry out this daily patrol, but has undertaken periodic patrols with the park rangers. The main Coast Guard patrol base in St. Vincent – the Calliagua Unit – also patrols the area whenever they are scheduled to reach the TCMP. The main objectives of patrols are:

- 1) To ensure that no illegal activities are taking place in the cays, which includes:
 - a. No fishing
 - b. No removal of coral by snorkellers or divers.
 - c. No dumping of garbage
- 2) To minimize incidence of harassment, theft of visitors, property
- 3) To ensure that all visitors (yachtsmen) pay the relevant customs and immigration charges.
- 4) To maintain law and order within the TCMP

8 EXOGENOUS EVENTS

Exogenous events are those that are beyond the control of the system under study. There are several exogenous events, which affect or have the potential to affect the Tobago Cays Marine Park. These include natural disasters such as hurricanes and storms (physical damage), global warming (coral bleaching), sea level rise (coral drowning and loss of land mass) and global economic or security events (decrease of tourist arrivals).

8.1 Hurricanes and storms

Due to the small size and low relief of the land masses, hurricanes and tropical storms pose a serious threat to the Tobago Cays. The marine park is located within the Caribbean hurricane belt and has recently been affected by the winds, waves and storm surge of hurricane Ivan (2004) and Tropical Storm Emily (2005). These phenomena did considerable damage to both the Cays’ terrestrial and aquatic resources. Coconut trees were destroyed and beach width has diminished. The reefs suffered considerable damage, specifically in the area of World’s End reef where corals were destroyed due to wave action caused by both events.

8.2 Diseases

The Reef Check site survey of areas within the marine park indicated that although the reefs are generally healthy the park is currently being afflicted by disease (Baldwin 2005). Hard corals within the park are being affected by black band disease and white plague; meanwhile soft corals are under severe stress from Aspergiliosis. Black band is the most common disease in the surrounding area and serves as an indicator of intense sewage pollution and sedimentation caused by boats visiting the Cays.

8.3 Other vulnerabilities

Another vulnerability that has the potential of affecting the park comes from “Kick’em Jenny”. This active submarine volcano is located about 150m below sea level and is 7 km north of Grenada. It poses a tsunami threat not only to the park but also to its neighbouring islands.

Global warming is viewed as a threat to the park’s aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems. Increasing average global temperature can cause a rise in sea level and change weather patterns. These phenomena can seriously damage critical ecosystems such as the coral reefs, causing them to drown or become vulnerable to diseases. The threat is also extended to the landmasses within the park since increased sea level rise results in shoreline retreat. The Cays’ land is limited and flat; therefore loss of beach endangers the existence of the cays per se.

Global dynamics can also impact heavily on the tourism industry. The incidents of September 11, in the United States temporarily reduced tourism in the Grenadines. The communities are only now seemingly recovering from the after-effects of this event. Also, increases in the price of petrol, remaining fear of terrorism and increasing use of domestic cruise ports in the United States are also feared to affect the influx of tourists to the Caribbean.

9 INTERACTIONS AND OUTCOMES

This case study is seeking to determine if there are conditions for successful co-management of the Tobago Cays Marine Park in the Southern Grenadines. At present there is no co-management arrangement for the park. However, the communities surrounding the park have stated their desire to be part of an overall arrangement that will permit them to have a strong and direct voice within the park management. This stated desire is the result of interactions amongst stakeholders that have produced observed or experienced outcomes (see Table 9.1).

9.1 Perceptions of government institutions

Among the communities the general perception regarding the management of the TCMP is that the government is starving or undermining the entire park management system. This is seen as a strategy being implemented by the government in order to set up the park to fail, and then to hand it over to foreign private investors. This perception is due to what is viewed, as a lack of governmental will to access grants or to lose access to grants in hand, such as the funds presented by the French cooperation to help support the park and also to establish self-financing mechanisms or support structures. This perception was further intensified by the recent late disbursement of funds for the park management office, which was seen as yet another governmental step in undermining effective park management.

Table 9.1 Chronology of the Tobago Cays management initiatives

Year	Initiative or event
1987	Fisheries Regulations outlining the Marine Conservation Area.
1988	Development of the Tobago Cays National Park Project Proposal (OAS & SVG Government).
1991	Cays Marine Park Project Action Plan
1993	Tobago Cays Marine Park Project signed & launched by the French
1995	Survey of Yachting Activity in the Tobago Cay & the Grenadines (French Mission for cooperation & Ministry of Foreign Affaires & Tourism)
1995	Proposal to establish a Tobago Cay Marine Park approved by the SVG
1997	Marine Parks Act enacted
1997	SR&O No. 40 establish and declared that the five islands or the Tobago Cays now formed the Tobago Cays Marine Park
1998	SR&O No. 26 Marine Parks (Tobago Cays) Regulation enacted
1998	First Marine Park Board appointed
1998	Draft copy of a Management Plan for the Tobago Cays submitted by newly appointed Park Manager
1999	Tobago Cays acquired by SVG Government for US\$1,025,000
2000	Management Plan revised by Park Manager
2000	TCMP work plan by Park Management
2002	TCMP Benthic Habitat Mapping Project (Coral Cay Conservation Ltd.)
2003	Palm Island Resorts, Ltd. proposal submitted to Government
2003	MEDO proposal submitted to Government
2004	Strategic Alliance Agreement between SVG and PIRL submitted to Government
2004	Trust Fund draft for the Tobago Cay
2004	Board request to Cabinet to Geo referenced TCMP boundaries
2004	Request of Southern Grenadines Water Taxi Organization to the Board to take active part in the management of the park
2005	Draft Marine Park Legislation
2005	Board request for Park Manager to organize meeting with relevant stakeholder for consultation on park fees
2005	Project propose by CERMES within the TCMP that involves management authorities and other stakeholders
2005	Signing of the OPAAL-TNC-CERMES memorandum with the SVG government
2005	Discussion of User Fees with Grenadines Islands

This chapter examines perceptions of some interactions and outcomes investigated primarily through interviews with TCMP stakeholders. Together with other interactions mentioned briefly in previous chapters on institutional arrangements, they provide an indication of if and how co-management would succeed, should there be such an initiative in the TCMP.

The TCMP Board is perceived as a tool to disguise governmental control over the cays. It has been noted that most of the members are public servants whose main interest is to retain their jobs, and therefore they fear opposing Cabinet's decisions on the Tobago Cays or at times they make only token opposition to Cabinet's proposals. In aiming to please they do not provide the best impartial advice. The following constraints, perceived as drawbacks to the Board functionality were derived from interviews with key informants:

- Majority of members are civil servants, therefore their response to TCMP issues may be biased towards government decision independently of park conservation needs
- Members are selected based on political party policy and not on technical qualification
- Members lack experience in dealing with an MPA and often lack knowledge of the area

- There is no system for calling regular meetings; therefore members cannot programme them on their agenda or calendar of commitments.
- Absenteeism is a continuous malady affecting board members, including the chairman of the board.
- There is little or no interaction between board members outside of board meetings regarding the TCMP.

On the basis of the above, user groups have stated that the majority of members do not truly represent their interests and they do not trust this entity. The communities therefore fear that should this government-dominated management model continue they might eventually lose their rights to conduct activities within the park, even if management is not privatised as previously proposed.

9.2 Livelihoods, collective action and empowerment

User groups, CBOs and NGOs in the area are aware of the economic potential of the TCMP as a revenue generator, both to the nation as a whole and specifically to the surrounding communities. They are acutely aware of the key role it plays in their livelihoods, and the dependence on it of the communities of Mayreau and Union as a whole, and therefore the need to protect such a valuable resource. They are of the opinion that the government's neglect of the park is translated into the lack of sufficient assigned resources, or effective legislation and enforcement provided for an effective park management. In order to protect and conserve the TCMP, including their livelihoods, local NGOs and CBOs have offered to collaborate with the government in the management of the area; however such an offer has not yet been accepted. This is interpreted as a fear of delegating power and decision-making authority to stakeholders. Stakeholders perceive that government fears their empowerment could thwart whatever hidden agenda it seems to have regarding the cays. There is little trust anywhere.

A main concern of user groups is the possibility of losing their livelihoods without having a compensation scheme in place, or alternative livelihoods established for user groups, should the Cays be handed over to foreign private management. Their insistence in establishing a partnership with the government in the management of the Cays is partly a response to this concern and also because it has been observed that the government seems more income-oriented with regards to the management of the Cays. It has failed to emphasize the environmental protection and conservation aspects of the Cay.

9.3 Differing stakeholder definitions

TCMP actors have different perspectives as to who constitutes a park stakeholder. Government officials, in concordance with the McConney et al. (2003) definition, consider a stakeholder to be any entity that benefits from the park and can have an impact on the natural resources. Government has divided these stakeholders into two categories: service providers such as water taxi operators, vendors, tour operators, or diver operators; and direct users of the park's natural resources for recreational purposes. Within the latter category are all recreation seekers, be these local or foreign visitors. However, for the longest time, the stakeholders are perceived to have been assigned a passive role by government. Such a role is to accept and respect park regulations drafted by the Board with no opportunity given to have their input included in the regulations.

Local communities seem to have redefined the concept as to who constitutes a stakeholder. From their point of view they are the users of the park's resources. Their activities impact on the park and they are also in turn impacted upon by park policies. However they refrain from considering themselves stakeholders. From their standpoint stakeholders are considered to be any entity that has a voice in the decision-making process of the park. By this limited definition they have relegated themselves to park users making a livelihood with aspirations to become part of that exclusive stakeholder circle which now only comprises the TCMP board and the SVG Cabinet.

Their perception however has not blinded them to the fact that they have a certain degree of responsibility toward the park's conservation. Most users are respectful of the park regulations, (e.g. respect the fishing prohibition), help clean and maintain the aesthetics of the area (e.g. beach cleaning and tree planting), and are willing to cooperate with park management (e.g. letting management know when visitors or locals break the rules). They think that this spirit of cooperation needs to be capitalized on by a government that lacks the necessary resources to invest in the park. Hence they should become stakeholders.

9.4 Local initiatives

There have been initiatives within the communities of Mayreau and Union Island to be part of the decision-making process regarding the Tobago Cays and to contribute to the protection and conservation of the area. The water taxi association's *raison d'être* continues to be the protection of their livelihood, namely defending their right to continue to work within the park. Their offer to government stands to aid in the voluntary patrol of the beaches and be part of the Board.

MEDO has gone a step further by developing a management plan for the area although, recognizing their inability to implement the plan alone, they have formed an alliance with FOTC. This alliance has been seen as a positive initiative from a community standpoint, however some government officials perceive this as a destabilizing process, not leading toward effective TCMP management.

Within the Grenadines, governmental presence is hardly felt, both in terms of providing employment opportunities as well as law enforcement regulators. This is felt more acutely within the park. As community livelihoods are being threatened, members tend to look for alternatives to fill the vacuum, so important to protecting the resources, which they depend on and create sources of income for the surrounding communities.

The communities see management of the park by foreign investors as an extension of institutional control already existing in the area, an initiative that will continue to exclude and impede the community in their struggle for survival. This struggle to eke out a living seems to have awakened a patriotic sense of protecting what is perceived as a national birthright.

Community management of the park through the FOTC/MEDO alliance is seen as the solution to allaying fears, and raising hopes that the park will remain in Vincentian hands. By contrast, they remain reluctant about a management solely by the government, doubting the government's ability to compromise and co-operate, to co-ordinate efforts and to play a more belligerent role in management of the TCMP. In order for co-manage an area, however, there are a number of issues that need urgently to be addressed, as shown by some of the MPA characteristics in Table 9.4.

Table 9.2 Characteristics of the Tobago Cays Marine Park

Characteristic or type of information	Information available on the marine park
Basic Information	
Management Status:	National Marine Park
Size (marine and terrestrial):	Approximately 58 acres
Biogeographic description:	Cluster of small Cays and shallow reef lagoons protected by a large reef system in the Southern Grenadines
Legal Information	
Legal establishment date of the MPA:	1997
Legislative instruments that created the MPA and govern its management:	Statutory Rules and Order No. 40 establish and declared the five islands of the Tobago Cays now formed the Tobago Cays Marine Park Statutory Rules and Order No. 26 Marine Parks (Tobago Cays) Regulation enacted
Do these legislative instruments include management regulations	Yes
Information on Institutional Arrangements	
Agency or organization responsible for day-to-day management of the MPA:	TCMP Board that is directly under the Prime Minister office.
Other agencies or organizations with active roles in management:	Tobago Park Marine Park Management Board Tobago Cay Marine Park Management Office SVG Cabinet
Ministry or branch of Government with overall authority management:	
Delegation of management responsibility to a nongovernmental entity:	None so far
Mechanisms for regular stakeholder consultation and input:	They are no existing mechanism. Currently, however the government has engage in a community consultation process (Sept, 2005) to discuss user fees to be implemented for the Park.
Efficiency of existing management Arrangements:	Management arrangements are constrain by lack of available human, technical and economic resources as well as lack of effective stakeholder participation.
Information on Management	
Stated management objectives:	No
Existing management plan:	Plan developed in 1995 is now under revision
Major activities carried out within the MPA:	Watercrafts, snorkelling, diving, vending
Conflicts exist between these activities:	No conflict
Active MPA management:	Little management at present
MPA funding:	Part of regular SVG government budget
Existing management programmes:	None
staff positions currently in existence:	Park manager, secretary, 3 rangers and 1 warden.
Enforcement of regulations:	Rangers are responsible for enforcement, however enforcement in the area is practically nil
Major types of regulation:	Prohibition of any type of fishing No squatting in the area
Used of zoning as a tool for management:	No zoning
Management programmes addressing livelihood issues of local communities:	Not presently
Socio-economic information	
Communities within or adjacent to the MPAs boundaries:	Mayreau, Canouan and Union Island

Characteristic or type of information	Information available on the marine park
Dependency for livelihood of persons from these communities or elsewhere on resources in the MPA	Substantial portion of the communities dependent on tourism
Major socio-economic activities of the areas surrounding the MPA:	Tourism and water taxi operation
Importance of activities dependent on MPA resources relative to other activities, e.g. farming	Very important
Portion of the population of adjacent communities that can roughly be considered to be living in poverty or at risk	On average the communities are low income, a small proportion are middle income but are not considered to be living in poverty

10 CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL CO-MANAGEMENT

The goal of the research is to determine if there are conditions already in place for successful co-management of the Tobago Cays Marine Park, or if they are likely to be created. Specifically the research is intended to identify major obstacles and determine what can contribute to successful co-management of the TCMP. In this chapter conclusions are presented based on the research framework that guided the study.

10.1 Type of co-management

The research framework summarises the main types of co-management as consultative, collaborative or cooperative and delegated. The management of the TCMP does not fit any of these types. The Government has engaged in a top-down approach where Cabinet makes decisions affecting the park and user groups. The management board could have established itself as a partner within a co-management context, however it is composed mainly of civil servants responding to government, and at best it appears to be a figurehead lacking any real power. The government has not made any real effort to enter into a co-management process with community-based organizations for the protection of the TCMP; however these organizations continue with their lobbying efforts to assume a more active role in the park's management. If they succeed, there may be the start of a more consultative approach, but it may fall short of true co-management unless accompanied by a policy decision to share responsibility and authority.

10.2 Phase of co-management

The establishment of co-management can be seen as having three phases: pre-implementation, implementation, and post-implementation. The pre-implementation phase includes problem recognition, discussion, consensus building, seeking assistance, and project planning. The implementation phase includes a variety of activities such as community entry, research, organizing, education, plan and strategy, and plan implementation. Post-implementation includes evaluation, phase-out, and operation of interventions (Berkes et al 2001).

Across the Caribbean it has been noted that pre-implementation is the most common phase to be encountered, with few cases having reached the final phase. The TCMP, as stated above, is not engaged in a co-management arrangement, therefore these phases do not currently relate to the study area. However, it can be argued that the TCMP has a pre-implementation phase under consideration. Both government and communities have realised a need for change, have discuss changes to some extent and have developed new management ideas, however separately. What

then is the problem? It lies in the fact that the communities have done this among themselves with the objective of protecting the environment while ensuring self-sustainability, whereas the government has done it with a private investor seeking the increase of government revenue as its main goal.

The TCMP needs this two-pronged “pre-implementation phase” to converge and the parties pool their resources to benefit the park. Communities are daring to hope that the joint agreement signed between the SVG government and several NGO’s, which includes more community involvement in protecting their livelihood plus the user fee consultation promised by the government, is paving the way for, or is a first step towards a real pre-implementation stage.

10.3 Conditions for co-management

Over the last decade, research on co-management around the world has identified a number of conditions that favours the successful implementation and performance of co-management. This final section is based on outcomes from focus groups, interviews with key informants in both mainland St. Vincent and the Grenadine islands and document analysis relevant to the case study conditions in the context of the TCMP management activities. The variables were discussed and rated by respondents according to the extent of how each was perceived. The findings of these activities are presented in Table 10.1.

Table 10.1 Stakeholders’ perceptions of critical conditions for co-management success

0 = absent; 1 = present but weak; 2 = present to a fair extent; 3 = strong feature of the park		
CO-MANAGEMENT CONDITION	REMARKS	#
1. Clearly defined boundaries: of the resources; of the management area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boundaries position may be geo referenced Boundaries points are awaiting Cabinet approval Park has never been zoned 	0
2. Membership is clearly defined as to who really has a stake in the park (is a stakeholder)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local user groups does not see themselves as stakeholders i.e. water taxi operators, divers Government is viewed as main if not sole stakeholder 	1
3. There is a shared recognition of a resource use problem that needs to be addressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> User groups recognize problem and usually tell the Park manager what is going on, User groups are willing to contribute to solve the problems Groups are aware of source of problems 	2
4. Clear objectives for management can be defined based on the problems and interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently there is no state objectives to guide the management plan Objectives may be now stated in the new draft management plan Draft is not universally known 	0
5. Good fit between the scale of the resources and feasible management arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not sure as TCMP boundaries are yet to be recognized by Cabinet 	0
6. Management approaches and measures are flexible to suit changing circumstance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management plan does not call for regular review Management plan has been revised previously suggesting flexibility in practice Degree of flexibility may be at the discretion of the Board Management response have proven to be excruciatingly slow 	1

CO-MANAGEMENT CONDITION	REMARKS	#
7. Cooperation exist, and is adequate, at the resource user level and in government, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No cooperation between user groups and board Limited cooperation between manager and user groups On going cooperation between resource users 	1
8. Leadership exists, and is adequate, at the resource user level and in government etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership weak among management board Leaders arise within a given context Leaders seem not to have successors 	1
9. Group cohesion where fishers, managers and others can act collectively within	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group cohesion is weak; expect leaders to be the active ones. 	1
10. There are mechanism for managing conflicts within and among stakeholders groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conflicts are not really dealt with Enforcing agencies are usually called into play when conflicts are present Park office personnel lack training in conflict management 	1
11. Communication amongst the stakeholders is effective and there is adequate networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information is manage /withheld by government User groups communicate among themselves User group communicate park related board representative NGO's however do not observe any response. 	1
12. Coordination between government and local community ad stakeholder is effective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of coordination between government and user groups Existing coordination among user groups Low degree of coordination between user groups and park manager 	1
13. Trust and mutual respect characterise the relationships among the key stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of trust and respect from government to user groups Lack of trust towards the government Respect among user groups Lack of trust within specific sectoral groups i.e. between vendors No perceived true respect from government 	1
14. Organizational capacity exist for all stakeholders to participate effectively in management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alliance formed by local NGO's (MEDO-FOTC) has the capacity to organize for management and can also provide basic human resources, however they lack the necessary financial resources to initiate management implementation Water taxi association lack management skill and access to information set them at a disadvantage for active park management. Government so far, has not demonstrate capacity to organize for management and also lack logistic to execute 	1
15. Adequate financial, and hence physical, resources are available for management tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All involved entities seems to lack resources necessary for management implementation Funding appears to be scarce or inaccessible 	1
16. External agents provide support for management but do not encourage dependency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support committed by a joint TNC, CERMES and OPAAL alliance encourage and provide training for effective local management, this project implementation however is in an initial phase. No other current supporting agency 	1
17. Benefits of participation must exceed costs from the levels of individuals up to larger groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of participation does not make it possible to assess cost or benefits Benefits of participation are foreseen by communities as positive, cost is unclear 	0/1
18. Individuals, groups affected by management arrangements are included in decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision making process follows a top-bottom approach User groups are not encourage to participate 	0

CO-MANAGEMENT CONDITION	REMARKS	#
19. Management rules are enforceable by resource users and the management authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of personnel to enforce rules Lack of enforcement structures to expedite the process Fishers sometimes aid in rule enforcement by informing anonymously on irregularities that affect the park. This is done to protect their livelihood source. Voluntary compliance is high among park users 	0/1
20. Legislation gives users some meaningful level of ownership or control over the resource use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft legislation does not contemplate power sharing. There is a lack of control over resource use. 	0
21. Legislation gives users authority to make management decisions, perhaps shared	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft legislation does not contemplate an active role for user groups 	0
22. Decentralization and delegation of authority is part of the policy of resource management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Top down approach governing the Cay does not permit power sharing All power in the hands of Cabinet 	0
23. Co-management has a good social and cultural fit to the circumstances of the situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local NGO's and user groups desire to participate in the management of the resource Local NGO's and user groups does not expect the government to assume things on its own, they are wishing to be part of the solution Lack of governmental will to include user groups into park management Governmental presence in the Grenadine is limited and human resources are scarce, therefore co-management appears to be a likely alternative. 	1

10.3.1 Boundaries

The physical boundaries for the Marine Park have not been clearly established, there is a very vague definition as to where those boundaries are. What exist, as stated in the ECLAC study (ECLAC, 2002) is a physical boundary for a Tobago Cay conservation area. The Board's plan is to propose specific coordinate that will outline the corners of the boundaries. The TCMP board submitted a proposal to Cabinet, almost two years ago, to geo-reference four points that would enclose the Tobago Cay Marine Park, Cabinet has not responded to this suggestion as yet.

10.3.2 Membership and stakeholders

The management of the TCMP favours a top-down approach. The communities have no impact on the decisions being made on management of the resources and less so on the selection of members sitting on the park board. There has been no real effort on the part of the government to empower locals to assume more participatory roles in the park management. The communities regard the government as the main stakeholder with the sole power to define who are to be board members, regardless of their interest or knowledge in the TCMP. The Southern Grenadines Water Taxi Association has lobbied for membership, since they perceive this as the step to take in order to go from user group, as they consider themselves, to the stakeholder inner circle with power to impact the decision making process. They are still awaiting Cabinet response.

10.3.3 Resource use problem

There is a high recognition of a number of potential threats to livelihood security, and in fact this is one of the main factors motivating the Southern Grenadines water taxi operators to form an association and seek a seat on the board. As it is, the park's fish population is dwindling due to over-fishing in the past. Locals agree with the fishing restriction imposed on the park, however there is still illegal fishing by locals and visitors. There seems to be a general consensus that issues such as reef destruction due to sewage disposal from visiting yachts and indiscriminate anchoring within the park need to be addressed. The terrestrial resource is also viewed as in need of protection. The local population has made efforts to re-plant trees as well as carry on beach cleanup (debris and solid waste) within the Tobago Cays.

10.3.4 Management objectives

The previous management plan had no stated objective. There is a draft management plan awaiting Cabinet's approval. This plan has comprehensible stated goals and objectives; however the board of directors are the ones that manage this information, user groups are expected to follow whatever is stated in the plan once it is made known.

10.3.5 Scale of management

Scale of management cannot be definitely assessed until the park borders have been clearly established. However there is a clear need for equipment and additional staff such as a marine biologist and rangers in order to manage the park. There is also the need to train existing staff to aid in the implementation of the TCMP management. In selecting members of the board, criteria for selection should take into consideration adequate skills and knowledge of the management area among others.

10.3.6 Management adaptation

Active management of the park is incipient. Clear management guidelines do not exist at present. The board assumes that once park legislation is written and a management plan for the park is approved and implemented there will be flexibility in management i.e. openness to adaptations in response to relevant in situ necessities or changes that may arise in the area. An expected drawback is the lack of autonomy the board will have in terms of making relevant decisions couple with the extent to which their suggestions will be heeded by Cabinet, when response mechanism may urgently need to put in place. This relationship will curtail the efficiency of such flexibility. There is also a need to increase and train staff in order to monitor and improve the TCMP management.

10.3.7 Cooperation

There is a lack of real buy-in by the user groups into the TCMP management process. This can be attributed to the fact that the government i.e. Cabinet, is the ultimate decision-making entity regarding the Tobago Cays. There is also a lack of knowledge or understanding of co-management among the majority of users. There is therefore a need to teach locals what this process entails and to promote environmental education activities. The Water Taxi Association

as well as MEDO and FOTC make known their willingness to share managerial activities with the government for the park, with the protection of the area resources at the forefront of cooperation; this idea however has not taken root within the governmental structure. On the other hand PIRL has stated its interest in aiding with the management of the resource once conditions were satisfactory. People in the area are at a loss and preoccupied as to what exactly this statement means.

10.3.8 Leadership

Leadership and motivation of the stakeholders is critical. Within Mayreau, Union Island and St. Vincent they are recognized leaders that are willing to contribute time and knowledge to assist with the management of the Cays. There is also the observed phenomenon within the communities of persons who have been key players in several organizations or been re-elected over the years to direct an organization. This situation can be symptomatic of a leadership void among the up-coming population or an unwillingness of old leaders to concede space to other members. A workshop on leadership is necessary for community members and resource users as well as fostering community empowerment.

10.3.9 Collective action

Marine resource management in the Grenadines does not have a strong tradition of collective action. Often collective action is triggered by what is perceived to be a threat to livelihoods; once such an event is noted the community tends to organize and get into action. There is a need for strengthened local governance through the establishment of a cooperation network between the existing environmental NGO's and organizations in the area in order to be able to assume a proactive attitude with respect to preserving the Cays and getting their voice heard, as well as the establishment of awareness programs for the community.

10.3.10 Conflict management

Conflicts between user groups with regard to the use of the resources do not appear to be a major issue. There is also no formal or informal conflict mechanisms set in place. If disputes arise between a specific sector they are dealt with by group members. The park manager or organized groups in the communities do not seem well prepared to manage conflicts should these emerge. There is a subdued form of conflict between user groups and government in which the latter's actions are distrusted and questioned such as the handing over of the Cays to PIRL or establishing park regulations without consultations. There is a need to train resource managers and users on conflict management.

10.3.11 Effective communication

There is a lack of transparency and accountability between the Board and the user groups. User groups are aware of park decisions and activities when they encounter park rangers who inform them of prohibited activities. Lines of communication need urgently to be improved.

10.3.12 Effective coordination

TCMP management reflects a top-down approach, leaving little space for coordination efforts between government and local user groups. The main existing coordination is given between the TCMP Board and Cabinet. Small-scale coordination effort between local communities and the park manager happens on specific items of mutual interest. User groups are open to establishing coordination links with the board; however this offer has not been accepted so far.

10.3.13 Trust and respect

Local NGO's and communities see the board as an extension of government rather than a true care-taker of the resources within the marine park. The board is accountable to Cabinet and lacks real decision-making power affecting the resources and resource users. There is no real respect or trust for the board by the resource users. Nor is there a perceived trust or respect from that organization towards resource users. There is however a level of trust and respect between the user groups and the park manager and rangers, based on daily interaction, community ties and perceived mutual interest in protecting the Tobago Cays.

10.3.14 Organizational capacity

The water taxi operators association and three local NGO's are the existing organized groups relating directly to the Tobago Cays. Of these three of them have at their core the expectation of shared management of the Tobago Cays. The dive shops in the Grenadines are in the process of forming an association, and it is their hope that their group will permit them to have a voice within the decision making process regarding the Tobago Cays, since these decisions directly affect their livelihood. Two of the organizations were established within the period of what is locally described as the Tobago crisis – the PIRL–government partnership – in order to protect the resource and resource users, and it is also one of the main reasons that prompted the divers to get organized. The community has proven its capacity to get organized, what is needed now is to build-up organizational and leadership skills *inter alia* in order to strengthen and expand such organizations so that, given the opportunity, they will be capable of effective participation in MPA management.

10.3.15 Financial resources

The TCMP does not have adequate financial sustainability. Park management is inadequate, and hindered by insufficient human resources and lack of necessary equipment. The assigned governmental budget – EC\$200,000 – does not, by far cover the needs of the park. And in spite of all this there is still no self-financing mechanism or strategy in place to complement the assigned budget. Cabinet is yet to respond to suggestions from the Board that will enable the park to become self-sustainable. According to the ECLAC report, MEDO management proposal and other expert appraisals, given the number of visitors to the Tobago Cays, the park has the potential to become self-sustaining once the government puts in place the necessary mechanisms.

10.3.16 External agents

At present there are no external agents acting within or financing the management of the park.

Previously several agencies have been involved, such as the French cooperation that financed the park management building in Union Island. Currently an alliance of several projects with interest in the development and sustainability of the TCMP, facilitated by different parties i.e. OECS, TNC and CERMES, has an agreement with the SVG government to assume different items of the marine park. At present park authorities and communities have high expectations for these investments and depend heavily on them for an initial park management implementation. It is also hoped that external agents can influence the TCMP legislation for stakeholders to have an active participation in TCMP's management. However user groups, local NGO's as well as park management do not envision long term dependency once all necessary structures are in place.

10.3.17 Net benefit

The absence of a co-management process within the MPA management makes it practically impossible to determine net benefit that can be accrued by stakeholders. Direct positive economic benefit is currently observed for all stakeholders involved as well as for the community as a whole due to spin off effect of income generated by activities within the area. The absence of economical benefit for stakeholders will be a serious constraint in accepting a co-management approach since the park is a source of direct and indirect livelihood for the surrounding communities.

10.3.18 Representation in decision-making

There is concern within the nearby communities that their interest – water taxis operators, businesses and general public among others– are not adequately represented within the decision making realm. The growing concern is that the people selected to represent certain sectors on the acting board – mainly public service people – do not really respond to the needs of the people they are representing but rather are concern more with responding to Cabinets demands. The perception is that communication occurs at board level, without the public's knowledge, unless the outcomes of those discussions are made public; or there is leakage of the decision, as in the case of the PIRL Cay management. In general, there is a lack of confidence in most of the stakeholders' representatives or in their ability to make accurate decisions entailing the protection of the Cays and the livelihood of the people.

10.3.19 Enforcement

This is a very weak aspect within the park management. Illegal fishing from both foreign visitors and locals is still on going in the park, albeit on a small scale. Although prohibited, campers are sometime found on the cays with fishing equipment. The Park Manager does not possess sufficient personnel or equipment to patrol the area. Coast guard patrols are few and far between. There is a need for enforcement of existing mechanisms. There is a need to educate both locals and visitors about the MPA's existing regulations. Water taxi operators have informally collaborated with the park manager in order to minimize illegal activities. They have also expressed their desire to formalize this collaboration and have put forth suggestion as to how to execute this arrangement; these proposals however, have not been accepted.

10.3.20 Property rights

Only some aspects TCMP property rights are clear and well-defined. In terms of space allocation and use rights, within the Cays vendors have selected areas where they display their goods and these spaces are respected by others. The persistence of illegal fishing shows that fishers do not accept their State-mandated exclusion and that there remains an open access fishery. Challenges to the State's decision to privatise management through lease suggest that interested parties see other options for property regimes, perhaps including communal rights.

10.3.21 Sharing decision-making

The current TCMP management approach makes no allowances for direct user groups intervention for users group in the decision making process. Main decisions regarding the park are taken by Cabinet. The Board offer suggestions to Cabinet and can make decision such as hiring and firing park personnel, but basically that is the extent of their autonomy. The actual board has submitted suggestions on user fees, mooring, boundaries and demarcation almost a year ago but have received no response from Cabinet. The incoming board will, in all probability, be discussing similar issues as their predecessor.

10.3.22 Decentralization and delegation

There is no real delegation or decentralization of responsibility or authority by the state towards the resource users or management entities. The government needs to promote collaboration between all stakeholder/user groups, strengthen local governance, and to realize the benefits and challenges that it can accrue from such activities. Community empowerment has proven to be an asset for other MPAs in the Caribbean i.e. Saba Marine Park in the Netherlands Antilles or Gladden Spit Marine Reserve in Belize, and given the opportunity, may prove to be so for the TCMP, seen that community base organizations and local NGO's have publicly stated their willingness to actively participate in the management of the area. User groups and local organizations are willing and waiting to enter into a management partnership with the government in order to share responsibility and assume an active role in the management of the park. Given this community attitude co-management of the area has a strong possibility of succeeding once the government is willing to enter into such a partnership.

10.3.23 Social and cultural fit

The government seems averse to a co-management process for the TCMP. Decision making power is in the hands of Cabinet, which has not proven to be open to the idea of sharing park management with any grass root entity. Community members and organized groups have demanded via call-in radio programmes, newspaper articles, town meetings and other popular participatory interventions to have a voice in the management of the park. A local NGO presented the government with a management plan proposal, given that they may not in themselves have the necessary personnel they have therefore agreed to form alliances with another local NGO whose members are extremely skilled in a diversity of areas and collaborate in the management of the park. Their focus was less on income generating and more on resource protection as oppose to the general perception of the government, which leans more toward income generation. There is a climate of community expectation that government should finally

be entering into a co-management partnership which grass roots organizations and their hope that external agents help accomplish this goal.

10.4 Priority action

The TCMP has been undergoing severe marine and land degradation. As intensity and frequency of natural disasters increase there is also the need to revamp the park management system by establishing environmentally and user-friendly mechanism that will improve services provided for visitors as well as for the management of resources in the area.

Priority action items that need to be addressed in order to protect the TCMP and improve park management as reported by respondents include:

- Include community involvement
- Increase stakeholders representation on the TCMP management board
- Promote empowerment and organization of stakeholders,
- Improve environmental and participatory education programming,
- Improve transparency and accountability of TCMP management Board and Cabinet,
- Establish an autonomous Board
- Create a TCMP revenue account independent from the consolidated fund
- Establish self-financing mechanisms,
- Improve trust and respect between the Board and stakeholders,
- Increase and train park management personnel
- Strengthen support mechanism for TCMP monitoring, control and surveillance.

There is a perceived lack of governmental will to establish a co-management arrangement for the TCMP. The selected board is the primary entity establish to deal with issues pertaining to the park; however there are not permitted to make substantial decisions affecting the Cays, as these have to be made by Cabinet. The drawback is that the Board suggestions submitted to Cabinet usually take anywhere from six months to almost two years before a response is obtained for any given item. The park management is starved yet there seem to be no hurry to respond to this situation. NGO's such as MEDO and FOTC that are willing to cooperate with the government are not given any real opportunity. In the meantime, the TCMP will continue to deteriorate. The government needs to capitalize on the spirit of cooperation demonstrated by local NGO's and nearby communities in order to ensure that the park management is effective, equitable and sustainable.

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12 APPENDIX: FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW GUIDE

Objectives of the Session.

General Objective:

Determine what conditions are favourable, or not favourable, for the successful co-management of the Tobago Cays Marine Park

Specific Objectives:

- To determine perceptions and attitudes related to co-management, including what type of co-management people want, if any at all
- To evaluate the level of knowledge of the groups on various co-management processes.
- To define perceptions of conditions favourable for successful co-management and how they may be strengthened, if necessary To define perceptions of possible obstacles that may inhibit the co-management process, and how they may be overcome.
- To define the expected roles and interests of identified stakeholders within processes of co-managing the TCMP.

METHODOLOGICAL INSTRUMENT:

First Stage

Introduction: Explain the objectives of this work session, the focus group technique and the usefulness of the information. Create an environment of trust, respect and common purpose and common purpose among the participants.

Time: 2 hours

Second Stage.

Establish the commitments and basic agreements, “the rules of the game”

Time: 5 min

Procedure:

Present the proposal as to what will be the rules of the game for the work session, emphasize that the commitments are fundamental to achieve the objectives of the work.

Third Stage.

Application of the guide for the focus group

Time: 2 hours

Open the discussion around the concept of comanagement its types and phases and the need to establish certain conditions for its success outlining the identified conditions.

Boundaries

- What are the boundaries of the entire TCMP
- How were these set up/defined

Membership and stakeholders

- Who are the actual stakeholders in the management of the Tobago Cays
- How are they defined/selected
- Other persons considered by the group to be included as a stakeholder why and their proposed role
- Actual stakeholders that should be excluded and why

Resource User problem

- Have you experience any problem with other users of the TCMP
- What are the main sources/causes of the problems, if any?
- What type of threats these problems pose to the TCMP users?

Management objectives

- What are the objectives of the TCMP
- Are objectives comprehensible and achievable, why/why not?

Scale of management

- Is the size of the marine park manageable, why?
- Is there need of additional staff? Why? What sort of professionals?
- Is zonation of the park an issue?

Management adaptation

- Is there a system in place to monitor and evaluate TCMP management plan?
- Is the board open to changes regarding TCMP management?
- How often is the management plan review?

Cooperation

- What sort of cooperation exists between the different resource users or stakeholders?
- what sort of cooperation exist between the government and NGO's
- What motivates or constrains cooperation?

Leadership

- How important is leadership in the management of TCMP?
- What level/type of leadership exist in the management of the park?
- Who is actually leading the management of the Tobago Park, why?

Collective action

- How are decisions taken regarding management of the TCMP?
- Are there any rules or regulations defining how decisions should be reached?
- Can organized group motivate decisions regarding TCMP management

Conflict management

- Are there any specific way to deal with conflicts when/if these should arise
- Who do you think should try to solve the problems within the TCMP?
- What sorts of conflict management experience exist in the area/How have conflicts being solve in the past?

Effective communication

- What would you consider to be an effective communication between stakeholders involved in the TCMP?
- Basing on the above how would you consider the existing communication
- What can you suggest to better the communication/a better communication method
- Are stakeholders opinion considered? (This may or may not come out in the above questions)
- Is information shared by all involved? (same as above)

Effective Coordination

- What type of coordination exist between organizations/institutions located in SVG and Grenada
- What type of coordination exists between government and other stakeholders?
- When or on what occasion is coordination more effective

Trust and respect

- Is there a climate of mutual respect between stakeholders?
- Between GO's, NGO'S and other user groups?

Organizational capacity

- What are the existing capacity to organized in order to protect the TCMP
- How are stakeholders or users organized?
- Who or how are they represented if they are not organized?

Financial resources/External agents

- Is there adequate resources/ finance to invest in the protection of the TCMP
- Who is actually financing
- What agency administrate the management of TCMP
- What Specific budget is assign to the TCMP management,
- How is the budget distributed?
- What strategy is there to access financing

Net Benefit

- What benefits does the stakeholders get off/from the TCMP
- Does benefit exceed the cost of maintaining the park? Describe
- What are the expected outcome of the TCMP
- Positive vs. negative impact

Representation in decision-making

- How are stakeholders represented in the management of the park

- Does the stakeholders/user groups feel represented, describe
- What are the mechanism to include stakeholders within this process
- Are stakeholders part of the overall decision making process of is there specific area where they feel excluded

Enforcement

- What are the main rules and regulation governing the TCMP
- Are these enforced? Describe
- Are the existing enforcement mechanism sufficient, describe?
- Who are the enforcing agencies – voluntary/employed?

Property rights

- Are there any use rights
- Is there any specific rights for any specific user group be these in law or customary

Sharing decision-making

- How are decisions affecting the park and users group taken
- Are there provision/mechanism to include all stakeholders
- At what level are decision making share

Decentralization and delegation

- What are the governmental agencies involved in the management of the park/role
- What is the role of the NGO's and other stakeholders in this process
- How can neighbouring communities get involve in this process
- How does collaboration for management of the park work

Social and cultural fit

- How would you describe the civil society in the area
- What forms of participation does user groups and inhabitants choose to demonstrate their feeling/perception/view regarding the management of the Tobago Cays
- With regard to the TCMP are people more resource management or income oriented, describe.
- How can or have the group contribute to the management of the TCMP
- What do you see as the role of the group and the role of the government in the management of the TCMP

Fourth Stage: Closing

Time: 10 min.

Procedure.

Thank participants and ask if they have any remarks they would like to add, or questions to ask. Make sure list of participants and their individual profiles are collected.