

Installation of Mooring Buoys to Support Coral Reef Conservation

Abstract

Charlotteville in North-East Tobago is a very beautiful, well protected, natural harbour that is desirable for anchoring of recreational yachts during the hurricane season. The bay also has important coral reef populations. Visiting yachts traditionally anchor in or very close to vulnerable coral reef ecosystems demonstrably causing damage to the sea floor via anchors, chains and chain sweeps. This has the impact of compromising the integrity of the coral reefs in the area, with potential associated negative impacts on tourism and sustainable livelihoods.

Reef vulnerability is caused by the slow reproduction and growth rate of corals that are already exposed to multiple stress factors including overfishing, climate change and pollution. Their significant value lies in the provision of essential ecosystem services to coastal communities such as providing fish and vertebrate nursery grounds, protecting the shoreline, creating sand for beaches and attracting tourists to support the socio-economic wellbeing of local communities. Accordingly, the protection of fragile coral reefs is an environmental, social and economic imperative.

General Information

REGISTERED AT: Programa de capacitación de la Comisión Nacional de Áreas Naturales Protegidas.

IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD: February 2023—In progress

INSTITUTION IN CHARGE OF THE IMPLEMENTATION:

- Environmental Research Institute Charlotteville - Northside Road, Campbleton, Charlotteville, Tobago, W.I.
- The Department of Marine Resources and Fisheries, Division of Food Security, Natural Resources, the Environment & Sustainable Development

PARTICIPANTS: The Community with a population of 1051 persons benefit directly. The many recreational users of the nearshore coastal area will benefit from and improved coastal environment.

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES OF THE EXPERIENCE:

The Community with a population of 1051 persons benefit directly. The many recreational users of the nearshore coastal area will benefit from and improved coastal environment.

ONLINE INFORMATION:

<https://www.tobago-moorings.com>



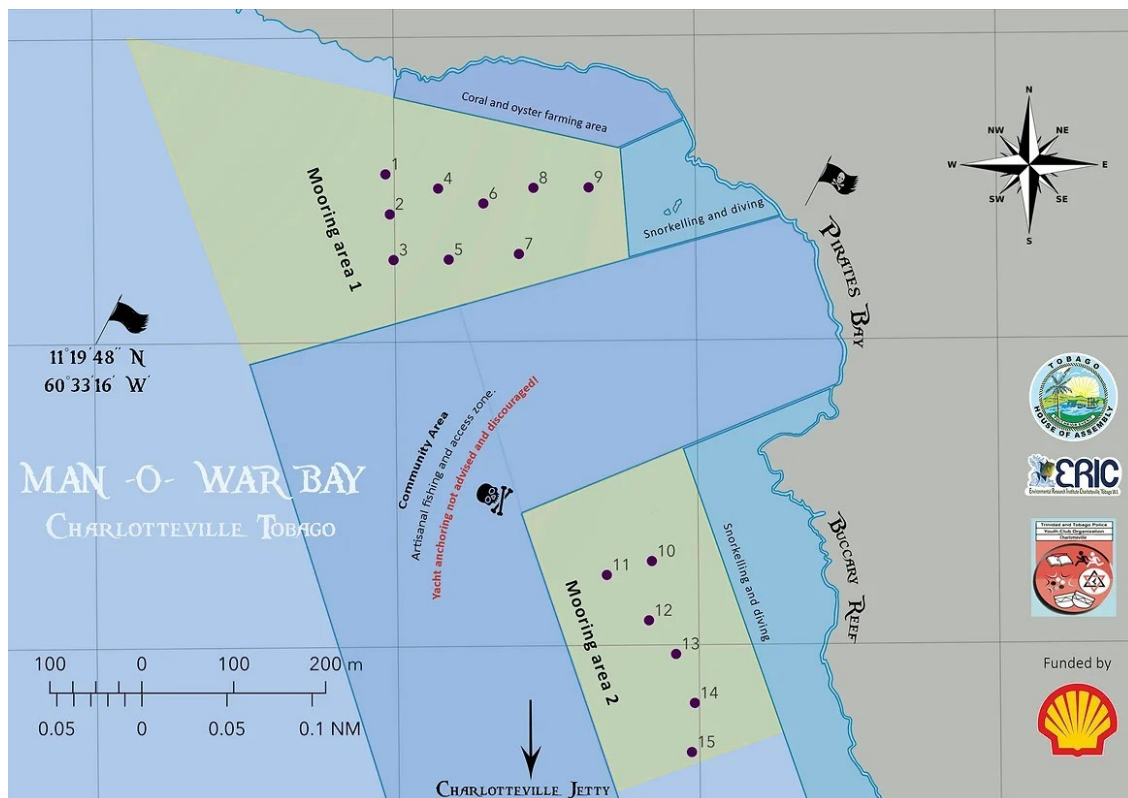
Justification

Charlotteville in North-East Tobago is a very beautiful, well protected, natural harbour that is desirable for anchoring of recreational yachts during the hurricane season. The bay also has important coral reef populations. Visiting yachts traditionally anchor in or very close to vulnerable coral reef ecosystems demonstrably causing damage to the sea floor via anchors, chains and chain sweeps. This has the impact of compromising the integrity of the coral reefs in the area, with potential associated negative impacts on tourism and sustainable livelihoods.

Objetives

Install 15 mooring buoys to reduce physical damage to coral reef ecosystems; generate revenue to support maintenance of the capital investment and support local community projects; support community empowerment; promote community business ethic; promote enviromental stewardship; demonstrate collaboration among NGOs, Government and Private Sector

Experience highlights



Results

NGO, Government and Private sector collaborated to ensure the implementation of the project. Sixty-five percent (65%) of visiting yachts use the mooring buoys for anchoring. This reduces the physical damage of reef ecosystems. Increased funding available to undertake/complete community social projects.

Evaluation

Some recreational yachts refuse to pay to anchor on the mooring buoys. There is a need to strengthen the legislative/policy framework to mandate that recreational yachts use mooring buoys for anchoring.

Spreading

The project is scheduled to be expanded to two other communities in the North-east Tobago BR; Englishman's Bay and Castara.

Follow-up

Aspects that can be replicated in other Biosphere Reserve

The model of Government, NGOs and the private sector working together to solve environmental issues, while generating income which is then used to sustain the initial capital investment and support community projects is admirable and can be replicated elsewhere.

Sustainability

The anchoring fees are sufficient at present to sustain the project. The fees are used to maintain the mooring buoys and support community projects.



**Trinidad and Tobago
Biosphere Reserves**

Contact Information

Environmental Research Institute Charlotteville - Northside Road,
Campbleton, Charlotteville, Tobago, W.I.
info@eric-tobago.org

The Department of Marine Resources and Fisheries
Division of Food Security, Natural Resources, the Environment &
Sustainable Development
Milshirv Administrative Complex; Cor. Milford & Shirvan Road,
Tobago

The Charlotteville Police Youth Club

<https://www.tobago-moorings.com>