



Bonaire National Marine Park

RULES AND REGULATIONS

The mission of the Bonaire National Marine Park (BNMP) is to protect and manage the island's natural, cultural and historical resources, while allowing ecologically sustainable use, for the benefit of future generations.

Park regulations are designed to accomplish our mission.

The **regulations that apply to all users of the park:**

1. **The Nature Fee:** All users of the Marine Park must pay an entrance fee. Known as the Nature Fees, these are once yearly charges of U.S. \$25 for SCUBA divers and U.S. \$10 for other users. A \$10 one-day pass for SCUBA divers is also available. The Nature Fee can be paid at dive centers, the activity desks of hotels, through providers of activities in the Bonaire National Marine Park or at the Visitor Center at the entrance to Washington Slagbaai National Park.

2. **Orientation:** All SCUBA divers must attend an orientation with their dive operator (the center from which air tanks are obtained) before diving in the BNMP. The orientation consists of a 'dry' part and a 'wet' part. The 'dry' part is a briefing on the Bonaire National Marine Park rules. The 'wet' part of the orientation is the check out dive, which is always supervised by the dive operation providing air. Repeat divers are required to attend a dive orientation and perform a check out dive every time they are back on island.

3. **Spear fishing:** Spear fishing and the possession of spear fishing equipment is prohibited. If you have a spear gun please leave it with the Customs Office while you are on Bonaire.

4. **Collecting:** It is prohibited to remove anything, alive or dead, from the BNMP. In exception to this prohibition are fish caught using traditional fishing practices.

A special note to our visitors: Do not collect seashells, sea fans, sand, or dead pieces of any type of coral. This includes purchased souvenirs that may include any of the mentioned items. These items will be intercepted by the customs x-

ray machines upon your departure and will be removed from your luggage. This can lead to unnecessary delays of your flight.

5. **Personal control:** Do not make any contact with the corals or other parts of the reef. Avoid silting up the bottom, by swimming too close, or by kicking while in a head-up position over sand. Have the knowledge and the skills to make sure you don't damage any undersea environment: reefs, sand flats, grass beds, etc. - in any manner.

6. **Gloves:** the use of gloves is prohibited in the BNMP. Divers who must wear gloves due to medical conditions will need to bring a doctor's declaration, not older than 30 days, to the headquarters of the Bonaire National Marine Park at Barcadera to get a permit allowing them to use gloves.

7. **Turtles:** turtles, their nests, and their eggs are totally protected in the BNMP. Don't disturb turtles when diving; stay far enough away from them so your presence does not alter their behavior. By respecting their space, you'll be able to watch these ancient creatures forage for sponges and other tasty morsels. Please do report turtle sightings to the [Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire](#). Please do not try to read the tags on turtles; researchers read these at specific times; divers getting that close absolutely disturb the turtle. Respect nesting turtles or turtle nests: please obey signs on Klein Bonaire nesting beaches!

8. **Marine Reserves:** Don't dive in the Marine Reserves. Exceptions to this are made periodically under the auspices of the BNMP for research purposes. If you'd like to help, contact info@stinapa.org to find out how to qualify.

9. You will need to request a **permit** in writing from the government to be able to do the following in the BNMP:

- To collect conch (*Strombus gigas*).
- Non-construction activities
- To construct any structure that will hang over the water, or will touch the water or will go in the water. These can be structures like ladders, balconies, piers or any other type of overhanging structure. Please note that even if you have a building permit from the government department to build the house, you need to request this additional permit for these structures. Also note the permits are in name, so if you buy a house and it

has a pier, ladder, staircase or any type of structure in the BNMP you will have to make a name change for the permit.

- If you intend to renovate or alter the structure you currently have in, on, or under the waters of the BNMP.
- To put/use/dump anything in the BNMP that can harm the marine environment. This can be anything from rocks, to substances (chemical or biological), private mooring places, or to build an artificial reef or sink a boat.
- To remove anything from the bottom or put anything on the bottom of the BNMP.
- To take anything out of the BNMP. This type of permit is primarily given to scientists, but also occasionally if something needs to be removed from the underwater park.
- To have a filling station or have a compressor for filling SCUBA tanks. Please note: If you have a business license for a dive school it will say that you have to adhere to the articles of the Marine Ordinance. This means that you need to have a permit for a filling station or compressor to be able to fill SCUBA tanks.
- To transport SCUBA divers for commercial purposes over the waters of the BNMP. Please note: If you have a business license for a dive school it will say that you have to adhere to the articles of the Marine Ordinance. This means that you need to have a permit to transport SCUBA divers for commercial purposes over the waters of the BNMP.
- To cut or remove mangrove trees in Lac. The species meant here are *Rhizophora mangle* (mangel tan), *Avicennia germinans* (mangel blanku), *Conocarpus erecta* (mangel, mangel blanku) and *Laguncularia racemosa*. Unless it is for traditional use.
- To remove or damage the bottom vegetation of Lac.
- To dig channels, build dams, or extract sand.
- To dump sewage.

If you are going to build on Bonaire and you will be building on or close to the shoreline please adhere to the [construction guidelines](#). They are made to protect the environment and your asset.

10. While full moon in the tropics can be very romantic, lighting **campfires** on the beach at any time is forbidden on Bonaire.

11. **Anchoring** is not allowed. Regulations for use of public buoys (the buoys with the yellow marker):

- First come first serve; the buoy cannot be reserved.
- Boat longer than 45 feet (15 meters) cannot tie on to the buoy.
- Only one boat per buoy or up to three small boats of 12 feet (3 meters).
- Time limit on a buoy is maximum two hours.
- A boat is not allowed to overnight on a buoy.
- Sail boats with tall masts or fishing boats with tall towers are not allowed to tie on to the buoys along the length of the landing strip of the airport (buoys number 36 and 37).
- Use of the buoys is at your own risk.

12. Regulations on **how to tie to a buoy**:

- Always tie from the bow.
- The tie on line should not be shorter than 18 feet (6 meters).

13. Regulations for how to **navigate** in the BNMP:

- Always navigate on the seaside of the mooring buoys in the dark blue water.
- Pass at least 50 meters away from a boat tied to a buoy.
- Jet skis and water skiers are not allowed to take off full speed until they are in the dark blue water.
- The international 'rules of the road' for how to avoid collision should be adhered to in the waters of the BNMP.

14. **Kite surfing** is forbidden on the waters of Lac.

15. The use of **chemical light sticks** is prohibited in the Bonaire National Marine Park

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