



# Promoting and Enhancing the Ecological and Economic Value of Anguilla's Marine Parks: Piloting the Little Bay Marine Park Restoration Project

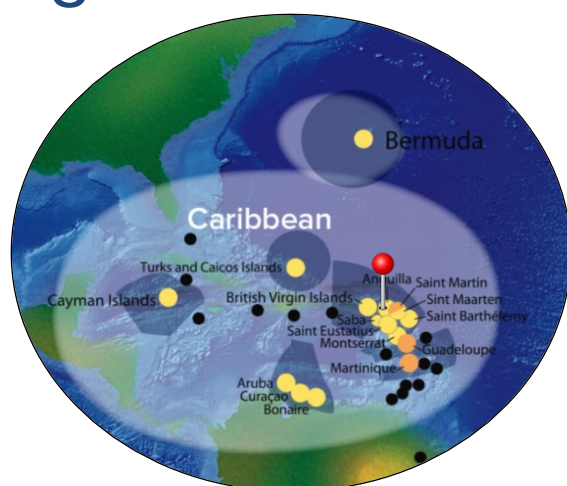
**Targeted territory:** Anguilla

**Total project budget:** 106,845 Euros

**BEST 2.0 grant awarded:** 99,855 Euros

**Duration:** February 2018 – January 2019 (12 months)

**Lead organisation:** Anguilla National Trust (ANT)



## Background:

Little Bay Marine Park (LBMP) is a Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) and one of Anguilla's most popular tourist destinations, with thousands of visitors snorkelling, swimming, and kayaking within its waters annually. Despite being a marine park and KBA, LBMP has been intensively fished. New legislative amendments and a national marine park systems management plan mean that natural resource managers are now positioned to address the LBMP's "paper park" status. In addition to limiting fishing within the marine park, measures to restore biodiversity and improve ecosystem resiliency need to be implemented.

## Description of the Project:

A sanctuary for the Caribbean spiny lobster (*Panulirus argus*) will be established by creating artificial habitat through the construction and deployment of lobster casitas within the LBMP. The sanctuary will also provide critical habitat for other reef fish, sea turtles, and coral reef species. Spill-over benefits are expected with fish and invertebrate species and fertilised eggs moving outside of the protected marine park boundaries into harvestable waters. The creation of a snorkel trail and development of alternative livelihood opportunities (eco-tourism) for fishers as they transition away from unsustainable fishing practices will diversify the value of the marine park.



Awareness raising activities will inform ecosystem resource users and stakeholders (including tourists) and the general public of the importance of Anguilla's nearshore ecosystems.

The project will demonstrate how increased and strengthened partnerships amongst natural resource managers and users can result in a healthier, more resilient nearshore environment that can provide sustainable alternative livelihood opportunities. The

lessons learnt can be used to inform the management of Anguilla's other marine parks.

## Intended results:

The project will initiate the restoration of the LBMP and promote its sustainable management by:



- Increasing the number of Caribbean spiny lobster within the marine park through the creation of artificial habitat using lobster casitas.
- Training and certifying at least 5 fishers and/or dive operators (and other stakeholders) as snorkel trail eco-tour guides.
- Increasing national technical expertise in nearshore benthic habitat and species conservation by training at least 15 individuals in lobster casita design, construction, and deployment and at least 10 individuals in lobster casita and snorkel trail maintenance and benthic monitoring.
- Increasing national awareness and support for benthic habitat protection and sustainable use.

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