



## Best of Bats!

**Targeted territories:** Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten

**Total project budget:** 100,000 Euros

**BEST 2.0 grant awarded:** 100,000 Euros

**Duration:** April 2017 – September 2018 (18 months)

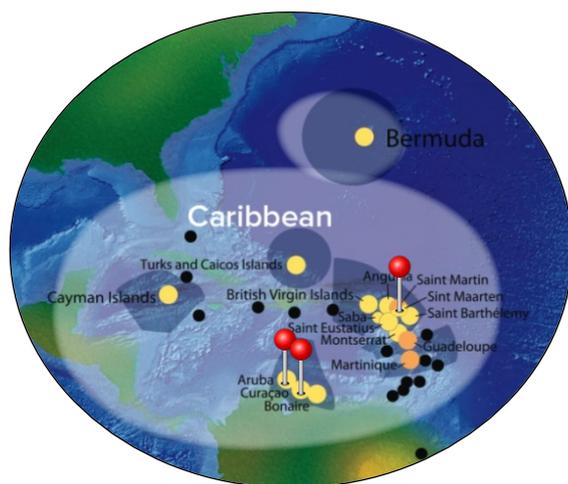
**Lead organisation:** Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance  
Foundation (DCNA)



### Background:

There are over 1,000 species of bats worldwide, of which almost a quarter are globally threatened. Aruba, Curacao and Sint Maarten are home to at least 11 bat species, of which one is listed as vulnerable on the IUCN Red List and 3 are endemic to the islands.

The rapid economic development on Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten over the past decades has seriously impacted on the amount of suitable natural habitat available to bats and is believed to be the principle reason for the decline in their populations on the islands. Bats are important pollinators but they frequently have a negative public image and there is a lack of information and knowledge on bat biology and ecology, distribution, and local status.



## Description of the Project:

The project aims to increase bat numbers by increasing the availability of roosting and nesting sites in the target territories. A desk study undertaken at the start of the project will establish the current status of bat populations in the Dutch Caribbean and will be supplemented by field studies in Aruba, Curacao and Sint Maarten. The results will determine the type and distribution of bat houses to be built and installed by the project.

The bat houses will be made of local building materials and built by students of local technical schools, with the first ones being installed on public buildings (government buildings, public libraries, schools etc.). An extensive outreach programme will be implemented in each territory to raise awareness of the role of bats and will include the opportunity for local residents to have a bat house installed on their home.

A field study at the end of the project will determine the effect of these activities on the status of bats in the project areas.



## Intended results:

- Increased number of potential bat houses on the islands (approximately 100 bat houses will be built and installed on each island).
- Increased number of bats in the project areas relative to a baseline established at the start of the project.
- Increased awareness among the general public of the targeted territories of the ecological function of bats.

## CONTACT

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