

# THIS IS WHO WE ARE

THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN JOURNEY  
TOWARD A CULTURE OF CONSERVATION

The Nature  
Conservancy   
Protecting nature. Preserving life.

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Federal Ministry for the  
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based on a decision of the German Bundestag



## ABOUT THIS BOOK

Without the generosity of the ocean, the Eastern Caribbean would be unrecognizable. Imagine the islands without turquoise water, fresh seafood or children playing on sandy beaches. Out of their love and dependence on the sea, coastal communities from six islands united to protect their resources within a network of marine managed areas (MMAs)\*.

Behind this network of managed areas is a web of people who contributed their talent to build a regional community that collectively cares for the environment. Their mission to protect marine resources is critical in the Eastern Caribbean, where fishing and tourism fuel local economies and over half the population lives less than a mile from the seashore.

The following stories feature a few of these influential persons and the impact they made through the The Nature Conservancy's Climate-Resilient Eastern Caribbean Marine Managed Areas Network (ECMMAN) project. From fishers and business owners, to scientists and artists, this book provides a glimpse into their journey to grow stronger together and forge a new identity in the Eastern Caribbean. Thanks to their actions, 'who we are' and 'how we care for our environment' is changing for the better.

\*A marine managed area (MMA) is a marine or coastal area designated by law with the intention to protect or manage natural resources and their uses. This includes living marine species and their habitats, scenic views, water quality, recreational activities, and cultural or economic resources.

## THIS IS WHO WE ARE

*The ocean like blood,  
Blood coursing through veins,  
of Caribbean people,  
washing our pains.  
Embracing our culture,  
ours to hold.*

*Kissed by the waves, as they calmly unfold.*

*Coral, turtles, fishes and shells,  
living under the ocean's swells.*

*Lashing against these Caribbean shores,  
tropical water seeping into our pores.*

*Cod trapped in fisherman nets,*

*Swaying of hips  
at Fish Friday fetes.*

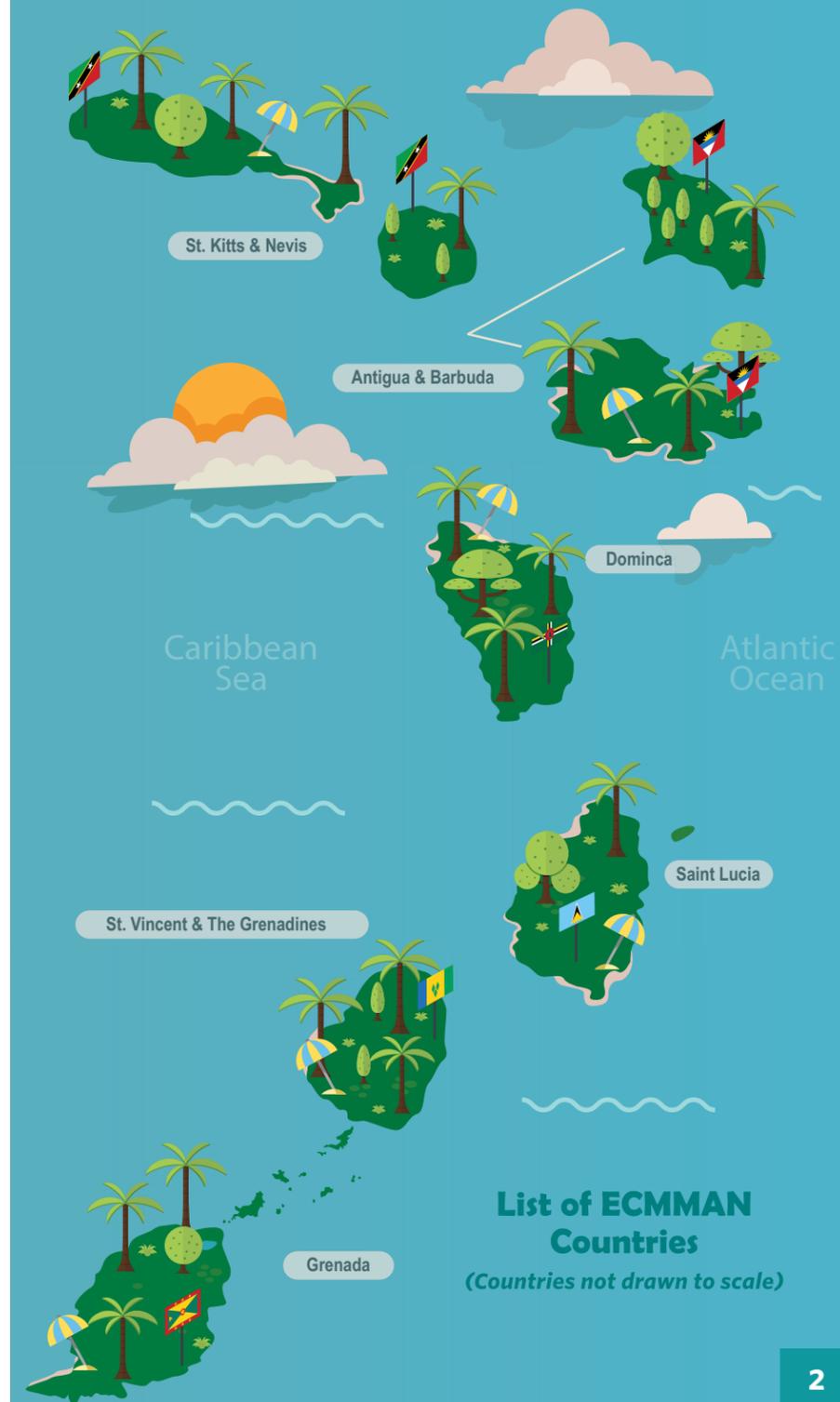
*This is our culture,  
enhanced by the bliss,*

*connecting each island, creature and fish.*

*The sea and its beauty  
extends and flows far,  
like a symbol of our culture*

*This! Is who we are.*

By Melody Fevrier, Age 18  
Saint Lucia





## BACKGROUND ON THE ECMMAN PROJECT

Since 2013, The Climate-Resilient Eastern Caribbean Marine Managed Areas Network (ECMMAN) project has connected coastal communities with the funding, training and tools necessary to manage the marine ecosystems upon which they depend. The project's goal is to build a network of marine managed areas across six Eastern Caribbean islands.

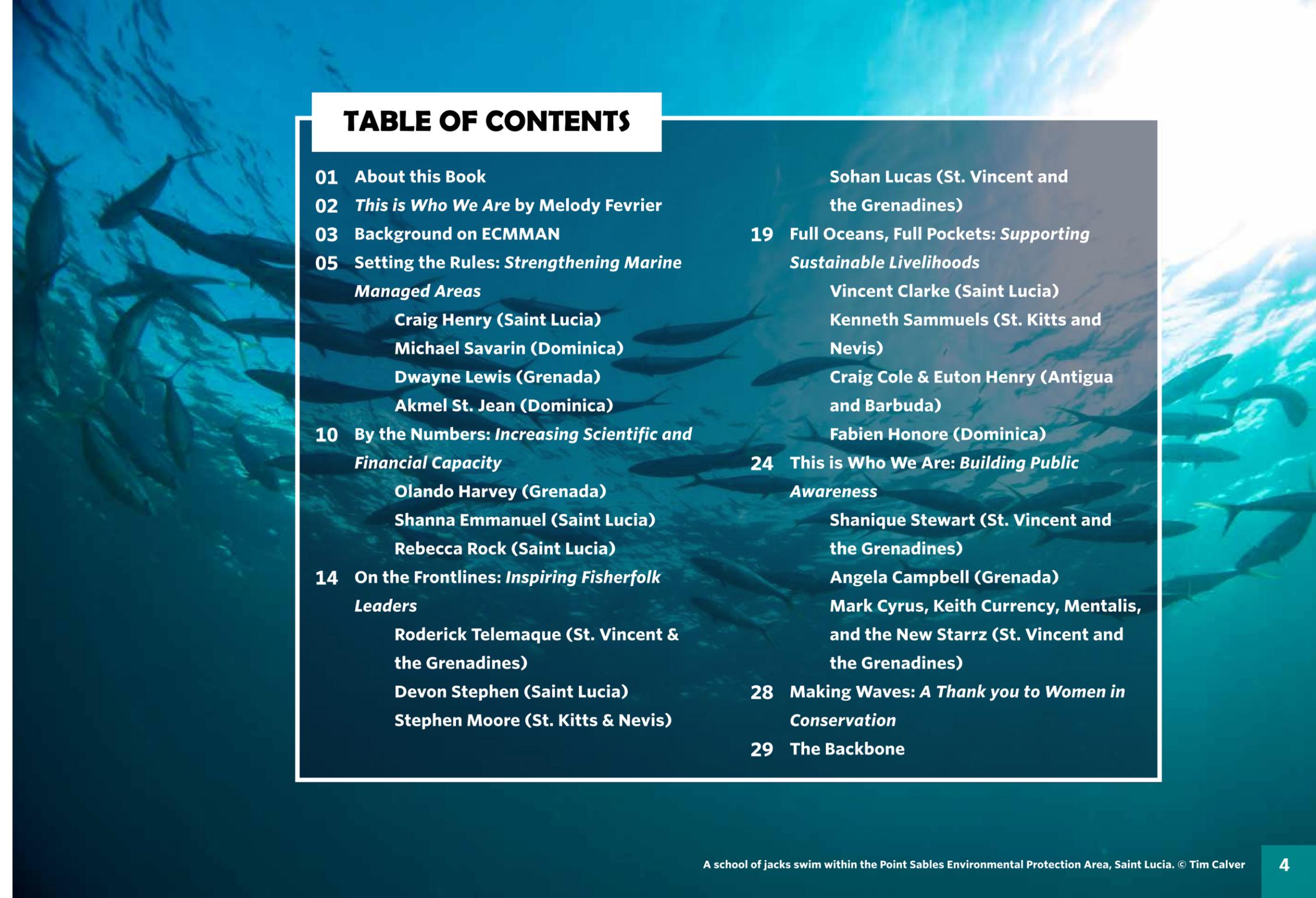
ECMMAN was part of the International Climate Initiative, funded by The German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety, based on a decision adopted by the German Bundestag. The project was implemented by The Nature Conservancy in partnership with the Organisations of Eastern Caribbean States Commission, Caribbean Marine Protected Area Managers Network, the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife, the Caribbean Network of Fisherfolk Organisations acting through the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism, and PCI Media Impact.

Key government partners were the St. Kitts and Nevis Department of Marine Resources, Antigua and Barbuda Department of Environment, Dominica Fisheries Division, Saint Lucia Department of Fisheries, St. Vincent and the Grenadines National Parks, Rivers and Beaches Authority, and the Grenada Fisheries Division, among others.

A heartfelt thanks to all the partners who took up the challenge to improve the status of marine and coastal resources and the lives of persons that depend on them.

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# 1

## Setting The Rules: Strengthening Marine Managed Areas

Marine managed areas (MMAs) can be composed of vast stretches of land and water, encompassing coral reefs, sea grass beds, beaches, mangrove forests and wetlands. They can include homes, businesses, tourist attractions, and ports of commerce alongside untouched natural beauty. The successful protection of such vast ranges requires input from many different people, including fishers, rangers, scientists and government officials. Managing such diverse relationships while ensuring the health of the environment requires talented leaders.

Across the region and on each island, training and networking opportunities helped MMA managers and community leaders gain the skills to lead with confidence. Now, they advocate for the environment, enforce rules and regulations with authority, base their decisions on sound science, and build partnerships that create harmony between thousands of people and the marine resources they rely on each day.



Park ranger in the Tobago Cays Marine Park © Lucienne Cross/TNC; Port Zante harbor in St. Kitts and Nevis © Lucienne Cross/TNC; A pelican nests on Rabbit Island in Antigua © Environmental Awareness Group

# CRAIG HENRY

Program Officer, Saint Lucia National Trust  
*Point Sable Environmental Protection Area*

learn how to manage a marine managed area (MMA) on the fly. "I made a transition from my previous career," he explained. "Although I consider myself an environmentalist, I'm not a marine biologist. Taking on this job forced me to learn."

Craig's newfound confidence was influenced by a training workshop that improved the management skills of MMA managers from across the Caribbean. He has become a thoughtful and experienced manager who regularly shares his experiences with the managers he met during the training.

A school teacher for over a decade, Craig Henry had to

"The workshop created a network of colleagues throughout the region that constantly communicates about the issues we face in our work. No MMA manager can do it alone," he said.

Craig also helped build a local network of partners that actively participate in enforcement, data collection and outreach. In communities with limited resources, sharing these tasks among government and community groups is not only essential for successful management, it is also critical for building awareness and support for environmental protection.

"There's no one way to manage a protected area," Craig admitted. "Managers have to come up with ingenious ways of adapting their management styles to their particular situation. Being honest and open about the importance of the resources and understanding the culture in which you operate is key."

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**"Being honest and open about the importance of the resources and understanding the culture in which you operate is key."**

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## MICHAEL SAVARIN

President, TanTan Village Development Corporation  
Dominica: Cabrits National Park, Marine Section

Located along the coast of the Cabrits National Park, Michael Savarin's village of TanTan has felt the negative impacts of overfishing and unemployment for years, but they also have a front-row view of the beauty and opportunity in Dominica's natural resources.

Recognizing both the challenges and possibilities, Michael's group, the TanTan Village Development Corporation, decided to get involved in managing the marine resources.

With support from the Fisheries Division, Michael's group mobilized a committee of nine stakeholder organizations to enforce regulations, oversee fundraising, and manage the marine section of the National Park.

"It's about getting partners that are committed to providing a framework for sustainability. It has to be a community-based process," he said.

Michael's organization also developed a community-led ecotourism package,

which includes water sports and a nature trail that was featured on the Discovery Channel's *American Tarzan* series. He believes there are many opportunities for coastal communities to "utilize their resources in a sustainable way to address social issues and preserve the environment."

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**"It's about getting partners that are committed to providing a framework for sustainability. It has to be a community-based process."**

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Michael is confident that the Park management committee will build off of the support they received from the ECMMAN project. "We need to continue to build on what has been provided and include other entities: the hotels, the schools, etc. We want to have an integrated approach. It's integration that allows for the preservation of the environment, as well as providing a means for sustainable livelihoods."

## DWAYNE "CHUBBY" LEWIS

Fisherman & Event Promoter

Grenada: Grand Anse Marine Protected Area

**"I think everybody should be treated equally and fairly. When you're asking people to make a great sacrifice, they need to understand why."**

Dwayne "Chubby" Lewis is known in Grenada as the man who knows where to party. He's a major event promoter but while everyone else has fun, Chubby is behind the scenes working overtime as a young entrepreneur and community leader. As the son of a fisher, who describes fishing as an inseparable part of his life, Chubby also became a key figure in gaining community support for the 2017 declaration of the Grand Anse Marine Protected Area.

As a well-spoken leader, Chubby realized that many fishers did not understand what the declaration would mean for their livelihood. "I think everybody should be treated equally and fairly. When you're asking people to make a sacrifice, they should understand why," he said. "A lot of fisherfolk didn't have the opportunities I had to go to school and develop themselves. I took it upon myself to make sure they understood why they should be involved in the marine

protected area (MPA). The elders started to look up to me and that motivated me to take a more serious role, be more active and read more."

In 2016, Chubby was selected to travel to Belize to learn about fishers' role in successful marine managed areas. "Many benefits and sustainable livelihoods can come from an MPA. The trip gave me the strength and knowledge to encourage my colleagues that this is the way forward."

Chubby's tireless defense of fishers' rights helped stakeholders along Grenada's most densely populated coastline come to a compromise. "Other islands could look to Grenada as an example," he said. "Grand Anse has been a free-zone for so long, and there are people doing different types of fishing, there are hotels, bars, dive shops, yacht - it's complicated. Now, we have come to a common conclusion. This will be a better future for our kids."

Dwayne "Chubby" Lewis receives a certificate for participating in the ECMMAN Fisher Exchange trip in Belize. © Lucienne Cross/TNC

# AKMEL ST. JEAN

Project Officer, Cabrits National Park

*Dominica: Cabrits National Park, Marine Section*

Akmel St. Jean occasionally worked as a fisher and boat builder before he became the ECMMAN project officer for the Cabrits National Park - Marine Section. This new opportunity sparked a major change in his life. Akmel now uses the knowledge he gained through management and conservation workshops to educate the same fishers he used to work alongside.

"I knew about conservation before, but my interest was low," he explained. "Working along with the ECMMAN project and seeing the importance of it, I kind of love conservation. It's my thing. It's the main thing I do."

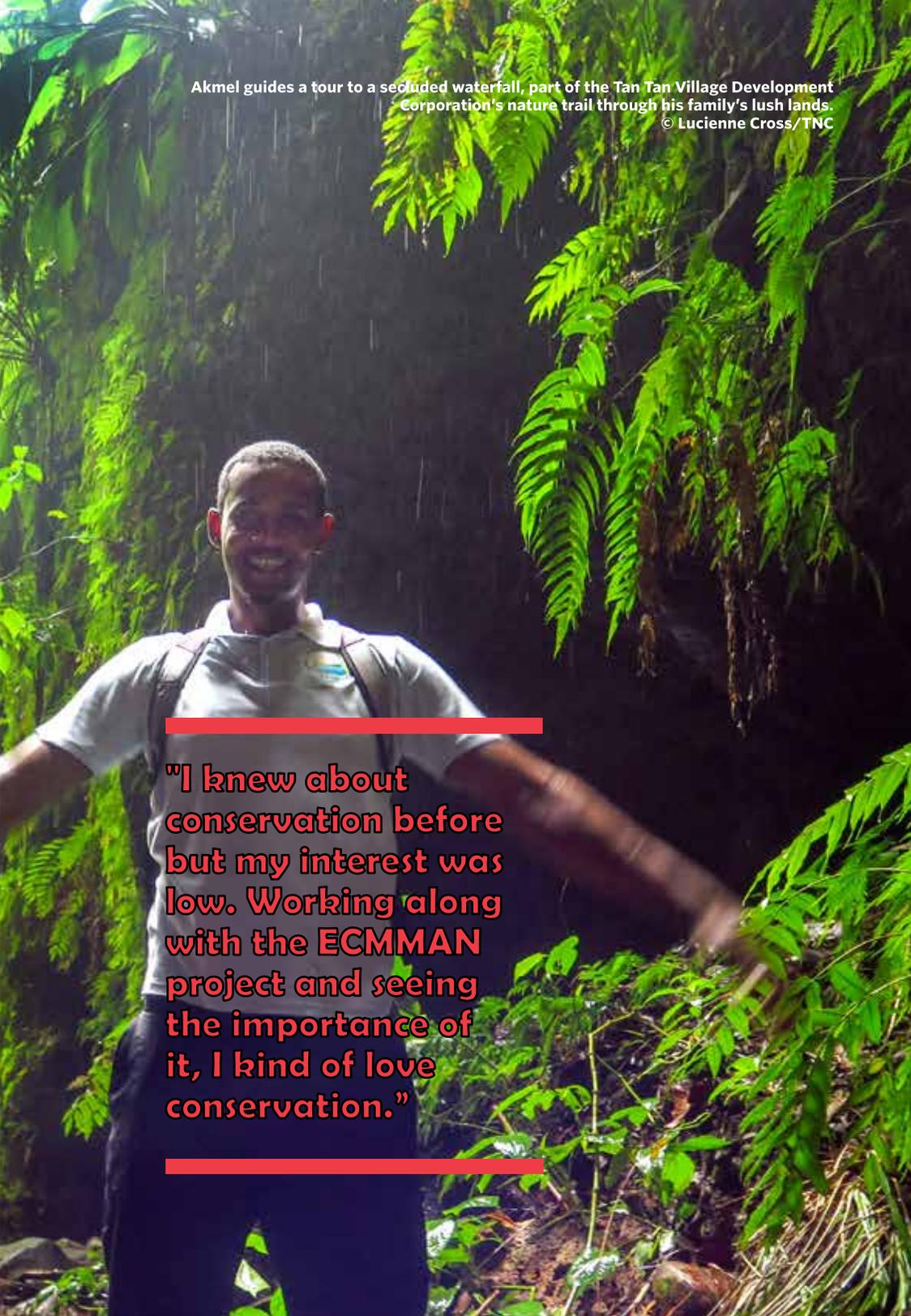
Akmel organized sustainability workshops that have the potential to make a big difference for the area's marine

resources, which support over a hundred fishers. For example, Akmel organized a seminar about fish traps with biodegradable panels. These panels disintegrate over time if the traps are lost at sea, thereby reducing the amount of fish wasted.

Akmel credits these opportunities and his new love for marine conservation for steering his life in a different direction. "Because of the management training I received, I feel more informed and I feel that when I speak, I speak with authority," he said.

Akmel quickly became a go-to leader for all conservation issues. This opportunity has enabled him to not only earn an income, but make a positive impact. "Now I can draw a salary from something I love doing," he said.

Akmel guides a tour to a secluded waterfall, part of the Tan Tan Village Development Corporation's nature trail through his family's lush lands.  
© Lucienne Cross/TNC

A photograph of Akmel St. Jean, a man with short hair and a beard, wearing a white t-shirt and dark pants with a backpack. He is standing in a lush, green forest with his arms outstretched to the sides, smiling. The background is filled with dense foliage and a waterfall is visible in the distance.

**"I knew about conservation before but my interest was low. Working along with the ECMMAN project and seeing the importance of it, I kind of love conservation."**

## By The Numbers: Increasing Scientific And Financial Capacity

Remarkably, one of the most impactful ways that people in Eastern Caribbean countries protect their shared sea is by coming together to share their data and funding. These islands are strapped for resources, and finding money for scientific research is a continuous challenge. With good data and long-term funding, MMA managers can achieve a better understanding of both the natural landscapes and the communities they are protecting.

Training in data collection and the development of a web tool to share data allowed natural resource managers, like those in this chapter, to use scientific evidence to advocate for necessary policies and attract funding. Now, they can measure their impact, learn from each other's successes, and make a difference that surpasses their own boundaries.



Yellow tube sponge and coral in Saint Lucia © Tim Calver; Data collection training in Nevis © Lucienne Cross/TNC; A drone is used to map mangrove forests © Tim Calver



**“It’s logical that we should share data. We all depend on the same resource, it’s a shared resource.”**

## OLANDO HARVEY

Marine Protected Area Coordinator, Fisheries Division  
Grenada: *Molinere-Beausejour MPA; Woburn-Clarks Court Bay MPA; Grand Anse MPA; Sandy Island Oyster Bed MPA*

Olando Harvey loves the rush from diving into a secret underwater world. “I grew up as the son of a fisherman in St. Vincent and the Grenadines. I’ve always loved the ocean,” he said. When given the chance to go to college, marine biology was an easy choice, and learning to dive enabled him to see the familiar ocean in a thrilling new way.

Though diving to collect data is Olando’s favorite part of his job, he was recently promoted to the position of MPA Coordinator and oversees four protected areas in Grenada. “Now I focus on how communities interact with the resources,” he explained. “I try to ensure they understand why we protect the environment and how they can make a positive impact.”

Olando believes having accurate data is one of the most important aspects of management. “Data is objective, it’s

not my perception or my feeling. With scientific data, you have a better understanding of exactly what the resource is doing, so you can make better decisions about what people should be allowed to do.”

From his work in the Grenadines, Olando also understands the importance of sharing data across borders. The ECMMAN project enabled scientists from throughout the region to access data via online platforms and interactive workshops. “A lot of species don’t stay exclusively within our countries, or within our marine managed areas. They don’t see boundaries and freely move throughout our islands,” he explained. “It’s logical that we should share data. We all depend on the same resource.”



**SHANNA EMMANUEL**  
Biologist, Department of Fisheries  
*Saint Lucia: Pointe Sables Environmental Protection Area*

When 5-year-old Shanna Emmanuel saw the movie *Free Willy*, she set her mind up to become a marine biologist and never faltered. "I'm an island girl," she explained, "I really love the ocean. It defines us as a people, it's who we are."

What she may not have expected is that in order to make the most lasting impact on her beloved Saint Lucia, she would use her Masters degree in marine biology to become an expert in finance. "If we're going to do conservation work, we have to figure out how we're going to pay for it," she said.

Shanna helped establish a groundbreaking national trust fund that will channel public, private and locally raised money to environmental projects. This arrangement promises permanent financing for MMAs every year, into perpetuity. This will help agencies, like the Department of Fisheries, overcome their reliance on short-term project funding. "Continuity is essential," she said. "We collect data, but it might just be for a year and then there might not be money

for it for the next ten years. We need proof of what we're saying – that there have been significant changes to our ecosystems." The trust fund has the potential to make this continuity possible.

Similar trust funds are being established throughout the Eastern Caribbean and will benefit islands long into the future. "This work has to continue in order to attract more funding, but also for us to move to the next level of conservation, where we have conservation engrained in us," said Shanna.



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**"I'm an island girl. I really love the ocean. It defines us as a people, it's who we are."**

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## REBECCA ROCK

Assistant Chief Forestry Officer, Department of Forestry  
*Saint Lucia: Pointe Sable Environmental Protection Area*

With support from The Nature Conservancy, the Saint Lucia Department of Forestry began to analyze why the country's largest mangrove forest was dying rapidly. Rebecca and her staff received training to collect biological and ecological data, which revealed irregular water circulation in Ma' Kôté mangrove. The data was used to create a comprehensive restoration plan that changed the history of Saint Lucia's mangrove forests.

International and regional experts taught the forestry officers to propagate red and white mangrove seedlings

in a nursery, and test reforestation methods. With successful results from this initiative, the team launched the full restoration effort. Alongside students and volunteers from nearby villages, they planted approximately 4,000 mangrove seedlings. In

the face of increasing coastal development, Rebecca believes that by monitoring the status and extent of mangroves, the importance of this often disregarded ecosystem can be demonstrated. Mangroves are critical in the Eastern Caribbean, where they not only provide shelter for juvenile fish but also protect coastlines from erosion caused by higher intensity and more frequent storms.

Rebecca continues to champion and speak about the importance of the species. "We should not destroy mangroves because of the benefits they provide for the island, the coast and the fisheries resources." she explained.

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**"We should not destroy mangroves because of the benefits they provide for the island, the coast and the fisheries industry."**

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# 3

## On The Frontlines: Inspiring Fisherfolk Leaders

Science and data strive to paint an accurate picture of the health of marine resources, but often fishers can read the ocean's pulse by what they pull up in their nets. Within their lifetime, many have witnessed changes in the ocean's bounty and changes in the rules governing how they can access it. Some have been inspired to motivate their communities to take action in order to ensure a brighter future for the fishing industry that is in harmony with conservation.

Exchange trips for fishers and support for alternative livelihoods has strengthened fisherfolk organizations and connected like-minded leaders from across the region.

The following people work to ensure that fishers have a voice and a seat at the table when policies are being drafted. They educate their networks about sustainable practices, transform the industry with their innovation, and ensure that marine managed areas give both people and nature an opportunity to thrive.



Fishermen in Grenada work together to pull in a seine net; Fishers in Saint Lucia haul a fishing boat to shore; a fish vendor in Saint Lucia holds up a fish for sale. © Tim Calver



# RODERICK TELEMAQUE

President, FAD\* Fishers Association

St. Vincent & the Grenadines: South Coast Marine Conservation Area

Fishing has always been Roderick's escape from a difficult life. The sea transformed him. It became a place where he could not only earn an honest living, but also make a positive impact for fishers, youth, and anyone else who has ever felt limited by their circumstances.

"I was born by the water. My mom had nine kids and we got separated," Roderick recalled. "I was stuck between a broken home and an abusive home." Left feeling like he had no choice, Roderick got involved in crime. His only refuge was his older brother, a fisher who took him under his wing. Roderick coveted his brother's wisdom; "He taught me everything, how to cut bait, captain a boat and fix an engine. I fell in love with the sea."

But Roderick began using his knowledge of open waters and foreign coastlines for illegal trafficking. After numerous arrests, he reconsidered where to channel his energy and again his love for the sea called him. Roderick started to attend every workshop the Fisheries Division offered. "I got involved with summer school and that helped me transition. I talked

to kids about what I used to be and who I am now. I motivated them and they motivated me."

Roderick became an advocate for fishers. "If I heard a word fishers wouldn't understand, I'd research and explain it. I helped change the language and mindset of Fisheries Division staff. Not everyone who fishes is a fool. We just might not understand the big words."

Roderick's positivity and resilience make him a natural leader. He became devoted to problem-solving. "You need an organization to have your voice heard," he told fishers. "Develop a cooperative and invest in yourself." When the St. Vincent FAD Fishers Association formed, Roderick was unanimously elected President. The association helps fishers go further offshore, which reduces over-fishing in vulnerable nearshore areas. Roderick tirelessly advocates for fishers and pushes the industry to improve. "My brother is proud of me now. He tells me I am one of his best students."

*\*FAD: Fish Aggregating Device: a man-made object used to attract pelagic fish.*

**"You need an organization to have your voice heard. Develop a cooperative, invest in your self."**



## DEVON STEPHEN

Fisherman, Choiseul Fishermen's Cooperative  
*Saint Lucia: Point Sables Environmental Protection Area*

At 26, Devon is the youngest fisherman in the Choiseul Fishermen's Cooperative. His youthful presence added a sense of adventure to a learning exchange trip that brought fishers from around the Eastern Caribbean to MMAs in Belize. His willingness to learn and explore marks an important shift for fishing communities, and a changing stereotype for the industry.

The exchange enabled participants to learn about the challenges and opportunities fishers experience when MMAs are established. In Belize, Devon saw successful tourism and fish processing businesses. He re-envisioned fishers as innovative entrepreneurs who can benefit from managed areas with the right training, resources and drive. The trip helped Devon put a new

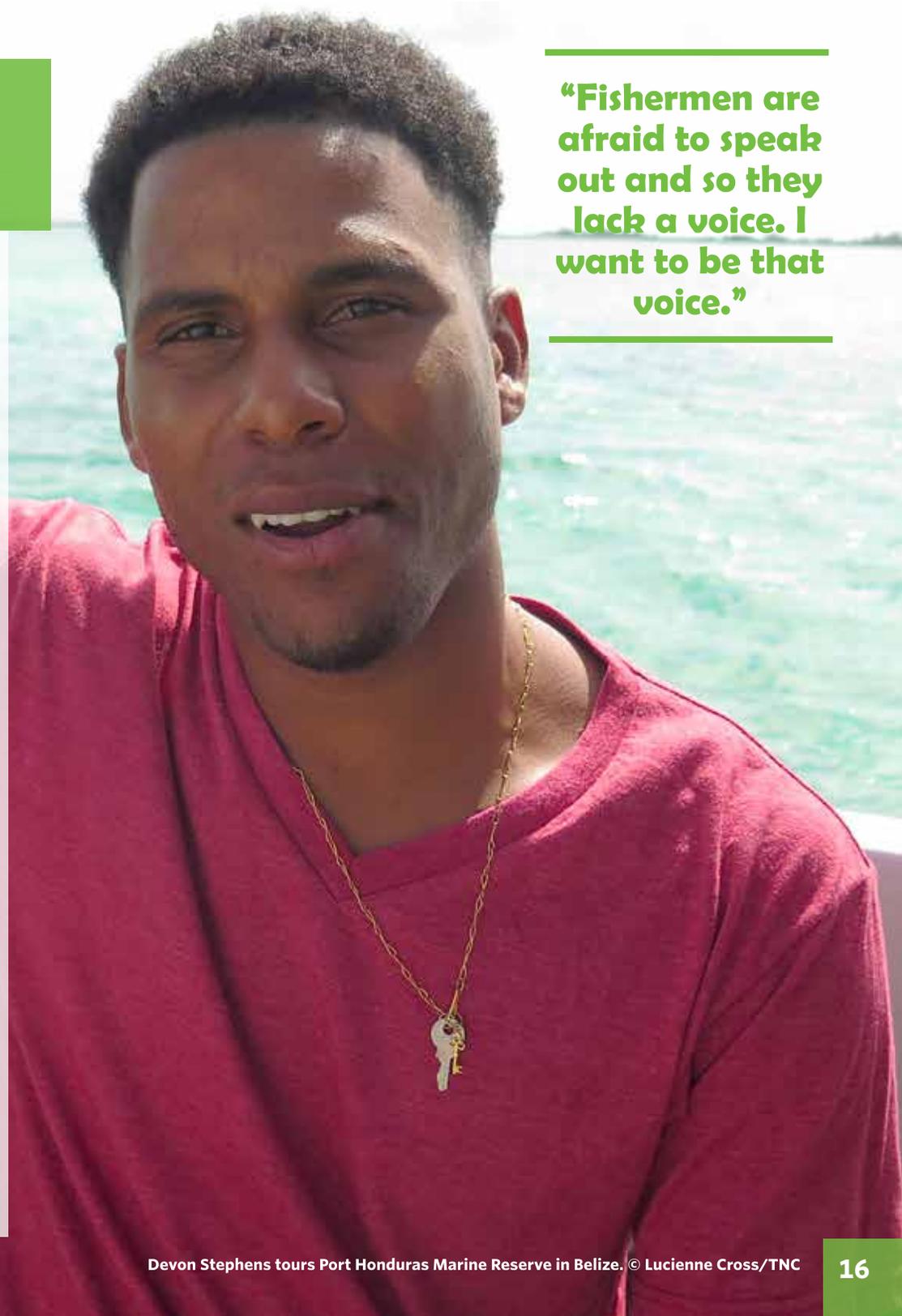
perspective on one of the oldest professions. "I'm going to take what I've learned and share with fishermen in my community and teach them the things they should be doing to preserve our marine life," said Devon.

With expanding MMAs across the Eastern Caribbean, the role of fishers is shifting. Devon is excited about appealing to younger fishers, who are often more environmentally aware and quick to pick up new sustainable methods. Devon wants to encourage fishers of all ages to be more business-oriented and willing to step-up and get involved in decisions that will impact their livelihood. "Fishermen are afraid to speak out and so they lack a voice," he said. "I want to be that voice."

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**"Fishermen are afraid to speak out and so they lack a voice. I want to be that voice."**

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“The more we are aware,  
the more we believe in  
conservation.”

## STEPHEN “MACKEY” MOORE

President, Indian Castle Fishers Association  
*St. Kitts and Nevis Marine Management Area*

Establishing St. Kitts and Nevis’s first marine managed area (MMA) took many years of compromise. In the spirit of collaboration, Stephen “Mackey” Moore designed a livelihood project that has become a model for fishers throughout the country.

With ECMMAN funding, Mackey lowered the price of wire mesh for fishers who complete training in sustainable practices. The mesh is sized to hold large commercial fish while allowing young fish to escape, which helps the population regrow. Not only do the fishers benefit economically, but the trainings teach them new skills and about the importance of conservation. His program was a success for fishers, fish and for marine resource managers.

Mackey’s idea received praise

from the Department of Marine Resources for being inline with their new vision for the Fisheries sector. Fishers in St. Kitts and Nevis are required to complete basic training before they can fish within national waters. With the completion of training and certification, fishers in Mackey’s association now gain the additional benefit of sustainable gear at marked-down prices.

Mackey’s innovative leadership is an example of compromise in the name of conservation and has helped guide how fishers can benefit from MMAs. “Prior to the project, I had heard of MMAs, but never really took notice. There are pros and cons, but the more we are aware, the more we believe in conservation. The more we study, the more we see the benefits,” explained Mackey.



Stephen “Mackey” Moore stands by fishing boats at Indian Castle landing site in Nevis. © Ayinde Tafari



## SOHAN LUCAS

**Fisherman, Calliqua Fishers Cooperative (CALFICO)**  
*St. Vincent and the Grenadines: South Coast Marine Conservation Area*

Sohan Lucas's father wanted an easier life for his son. "He was a fisherman but he did not want me to be a fisher. He said it was hard work," Sohan explained. When his father passed away, Sohan became an electrician, but he also inherited his father's boat. It wasn't long before he took up his father's profession and has enjoyed fishing for over 20 years since.

Sohan does not shy away from hard work and he is expanding the definition of what it means to be a modern fisher. Through ECMMAN, Sohan was invited to join an initiative that teaches fishers to SCUBA dive for invasive lion fish. This sustainable livelihood initiative not only provided fishers like Sohan with a new skill, but also a new product, as lion fish has become a popular menu item.

Sohan completed the diving course and was eager for more. He started volunteering at Serenity Dive shop and soon he was asked to join the staff, providing him with an environmentally-friendly income that reduces his reliance on fishing.

Sohan also helped his fishing cooperative use grant money to start a tackle shop and he travelled to Belize on an ECMMAN exchange trip for fishers across the region. Sohan is diversifying his skills and finding new ways to stay involved, adapt and improve the industry.

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**"Thanks to the ECMMAN project for this new start in my life and thanks to Serenity Dive for this new life experience."**

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With an unwavering smile and sense of humor, Sohan is eagerly turning the limitations that his father faced into endless possibilities.

# 4

## Full Oceans, Full Pockets: Supporting Sustainable Livelihoods

The future of marine resources is inseparably tied to the livelihoods of the people and communities that call the coast home. From fishers, boat captains, chefs, tour guides, and hoteliers, thousands of people in the Caribbean rely on the ocean for their income.

Access to financial resources and mentorship helped visionaries on Eastern Caribbean islands launch eco-tours, tackle shops, boat engine repair centers and more. These entrepreneurs created small businesses that make a big impact for conservation. Their ventures use natural resources sustainably, generate jobs and change the way coastal residents respect the resources in their "backyard".



Demonstration of sustainable charcoal production during a mangrove tour in Saint Lucia ©Tim Calver; Mooring buoys used for a dive tour in Nevis © Lucienne Cross/TNC; Snorkel tour in Grenada's Moliniere-Beasajour MPA © Grenada Marine Protected Area Network



## VINCENT 'JEG' CLARKE

Vice President, Aupicon Charcoal & Agricultural Producers & President, EcoSouth Tours

*Saint Lucia: Point Sables Environmental Protection Area*

Vincent “Jeg” Clarke is a walking encyclopedia of the plants and animals in Saint Lucia’s Point Sables Environmental Protection Area, and he has his hand in nearly all the conservation projects that have sprung up along the island’s southern coast. Jeg is a hard-working community leader and environmentalist who’s own resume proves the vast variety of ways coastal residents can sustainably earn a living.

Jeg is the Vice President of Aupicon Charcoal and Agricultural Producers, a cooperative of artisan charcoal makers who sustainably harvest mangroves. He is the also the President of EcoSouth Tours, a micro-enterprise that received ECMMAN funding to run kayak, horseback, walking, biking and turtle watching tours. “We have nowhere else to

do this livelihood,” he explained, “so we strive to conserve the area that is so important to us and we incorporate that into our tours.”

Jeg is the person to call whenever there is work to be done on an environmental project. He can summon not only his own tireless commitment, but always assembles a crew of

reliable community members and friends.

Through the ECMMAN project, his team has helped improve horse stables,

started beekeeping, set up a mangrove nursery, completed an enormous reforestation effort and introduced a variety of nature tours.

Jeg hopes that he will one day see the area “booming with flora and fauna, and with people respecting the resources.”

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**“We strive to conserve the area that is so important to us and we incorporate that into our tours.”**

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# CRAIG COLE & EUTON HENRY

Education Officer, Agricultural Science & Student, Princess Margaret School  
Antigua and Barbuda: North East Marine Management Area

Craig Cole is an ambitious educator who pushes Antigua's most important business leaders to be more independent – ever mindful that as secondary school students, they still have to focus on their school work.

Balance is key to Craig's approach to conservation, which promotes school-based sustainable agriculture as a profitable alternative to harmful practices such as overfishing. "We have quite a bit of marine resources," said Craig, "however the management of those resources is an issue. To balance what we have and how we use it, we need to look for alternative measures to ensure sustainability."

Craig taught agricultural science for over 20 years and launched a program that

**"Some of our previous students are running farms now. That is what we want to see, people who are proactive and productive."**

gives students hands-on experience with a sustainable enterprise – raising chickens.

With ECMMAN project funds, the school built a new slaughtering facility and students like 16-year-old Euton Henry have quickly become experts. "Agriculture is important in Antigua, especially for the youth," Euton said. "If we become more self-sufficient, we will not have to depend on foreign states."

"We should be self-sufficient and help others start businesses. Some of our previous students are running farms now. That is what we want to see, people who are proactive and productive," said Craig.

Princess Margaret's farm business trains over 50 students every term, and produced sixty egg cartons weekly during peak season. The program not only provides an enriching leadership experience for students, but the profits also provide children with supplies, scholarships and a better education.





## KENNETH SAMUELS

Owner, Kenneth's Dive Center  
St. Kitts and Nevis Marine Management Area

Born in 1947, Kenneth is a pioneer of dive tourism and a visionary of conservation. By age two, Kenneth could swim; by 14, unable to afford instructions, he taught himself to SCUBA dive.

To his mother's dismay, Kenneth started skipping school to explore the ocean. As a fish vendor, however, she was relieved when his fishing adventures started to bring income for the family. But Kenneth started to notice the environment changing, "I started telling myself 'there will be nothing left for future generations.' I stopped fishing and got involved in tourism." At 23, Kenneth led his first dive tour and gained notoriety among visiting divers. "At the time, I was the only one taking people diving. I loved it, but as an advocate, I am trying to get people to think more wisely."

Kenneth developed his own system of tagging sea turtles. When a fisher caught a turtle with his signature tag, Kenneth would pay them to release the turtle out of his own pocket.

Kenneth had been advocating for a marine reserve longer than many of his conservation peers have been alive. In 2017, at age 71, Kenneth finally witnessed the declaration of St. Kitts and Nevis's first marine managed area, which includes the strait between the islands of St. Kitts and Nevis, known as The Narrows.

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**"When I leave this world, I'd like to leave something that people know 'Kenneth was part of this.' I don't need a medal, just protect the reef."**

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## FABIEN HONORE

Member, Portsmouth Association of Yacht Services  
*Dominica: Cabrits National Park - Marine Section*

As a small dive business operator, Fabien has a vision for how conservation will boost not only marine life, but local income too. “Dominica carries the name the Nature Isle, so we should be advertising our nature, and promoting its preservation. There’s a niche tourism industry out there waiting, and they’ll be looking forward to coming to our island,” he explained.

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**“Dominica carries the name ‘the Nature Isle’, so we should be selling our nature, and its preservation.”**

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Fabien helped launch the Portsmouth Association of Yacht Services (PAYS), which has increased the number of yachts in the Prince Rupert Bay from just a few to nearly 1,000 boats annually. He helped PAYS set up a more sustainable anchoring system by using permanent

moorings. “Fish use the turtle grass to do their laying. If we avoid anchors ripping the turtle grass away, it will help in having more fish, and then the divers get to enjoy them,” he explained.

Through the ECMMAN project, Fabien received training to become a dive instructor, which will further his passion for conservation and ability to turn that knowledge into income.

Dominica is quickly become a leading divers’ destination in the Caribbean, and Fabien is working tirelessly to make sure visitors and locals alike recognize and preserve the value of the Nature Isle’s northern coast.

# 5

## This Is Who We Are: Building Public Awareness

In the Caribbean, everyone is a potential ally for marine conservation. By reducing litter, minimizing fertilizer use, or eating sustainably-caught seafood, ordinary people can help protect marine resources every day. Across the six ECMMAN countries, diverse teams assembled to launch the 'This is Who We Are' campaign, which celebrated the unbreakable connection between Caribbean life, culture and the sea. Through music videos, art, beach clean-ups and fishing tournaments, campaign activities on each island inspired national pride around marine managed areas and built support for their improved management.

The stories in this final chapter highlight people who used their creativity to educate coastal community members about their power and responsibility to protect the environment.



People enjoy the beach in Grenada's fishing village of Gouyave © Marjo Aho; Dominican children paint trash bins at Cabrits National Park © CAPMA; Antiguan children participate in a presentation © Environmental Awareness Group

She's not a marine biologist or even a diver, but Shanique Stewart is an expert in the colorful intricacies of countless Caribbean fish. As a young muralist on the small island of St. Vincent, she has put in hours of research – studying photos of marine species to bring their beauty and vibrant colors to life along the streets of Kingstown.

“Art is about introducing ideas in different ways,” said Shanique. At a campaign launch, she painted vibrant marine animals onto the bodies of models. The use of her breathtaking body art helped raise awareness about the ocean's beauty. “When you see

**“When you see something beautiful, you want to preserve it.”**

something beautiful, you want to preserve it,” she explained.

In 2015, Shanique painted a life-size mural in Kingstown, where Vincentians of all ages walk by and are transported into a gorgeous underwater world, full of spectacular visual reminders of what people can do to protect nature.

It's not easy for young artists on small islands to pursue their passion, but Shanique is an ambitious entrepreneur who has used this opportunity to make a name for herself as a socially-conscious artist. She now collaborates with artists around the Caribbean, using public art to reach across generations and build awareness.

## Shanique Stewart

**Muralist**

*St. Vincent and the Grenadines:  
South Coast Marine Conservation Area*



In 2015, the six ECMMAN countries competed to be crowned the island with the most imaginative, impactful and inspiring awareness campaign. The competition was devised to motivate the countries to host spectacular events, reach audiences of all ages, and ignite widespread support for marine conservation.

At the launch, all six campaign teams united to develop a joint brand – This is Who We Are. The concept originated from Saint Lucian artists who wrote a campaign song featuring that tagline. “We loved it because it represented what we’re trying to say: the environment is part of our countries, our culture, everything. It’s who we are,” explained Grenada’s team leader, Angela “Ezra” Campbell. “The song was helpful to kick off the campaign. It was the match to light the candle.”

With expert direction from Communication & Education Officer and artist, Christabelle Andrews, Grenada’s campaign quickly rose to the top of the contest and won. Their campaign set an example by forming unlikely partnerships that prove marine conservation is as much about culture, art and the spirit of young people as it is about science and fish.

Ezra and her team used popular figures to deliver their messages, such as the island’s favorite musician, Mr. Killa, and fashion models. They hosted a youth art contest, brought students out on boat tours, and partnered with an annual Fisherman’s celebration. They infiltrated environmental messages into fun cultural events, inspiring all Grenadians to make conservation a familiar part of their island’s most popular activities and a fundamental part of who they are.

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**“The main thing that made the campaign successful was collaboration. We have to find interesting and unique ways to get people to pay attention. The mediums we chose were ones that Caribbean people particularly love.”**

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## EZRA CAMPBELL

**In-Country Project Coordinator, ECMMAN**  
*Grenada: Grand Anse Marine Protected Area*



Ezra poses with a young participant at a campaign event © Grenada Marine Protected Area Network

## Mark Cyrus (Producer) Keith Currency, Bernard “Mentalis” John and The New Starrz (Artists)

*St. Vincent and the Grenadines: South Coast Marine Conservation Area*



The most successful campaigns aim for the heart, and in the Caribbean, music is the shared heartbeat. “Music is the number one way to get a message across to people in the Caribbean,” said Keith Currency, a popular artist on the island of St. Vincent.

During the ‘This is Who We Are’ campaign, the six ECOMM countries produced songs and music videos with environmental messages. Mark Cyrus was the mastermind behind St. Vincent and the Grenadine’s track. Mark is a creative producer with a vision for how Caribbean artists can bring positive messages to wider audiences without sacrificing their signature party-vibe. “The kids are the ones you need to get the message to, and who will they listen to? A scientist? No, they’re listening to the stars,” said Mark.

Mark selected Keith Currency, Mentalis and the New Starrz to create a song with an infectious rhythm and captivating music video, which earned an international Indiefest award. “Keeping my homeland clean is close to my heart,” said Mark. “The idea is to spur a sense of patriotism, to feel proud to be a person who takes care of the environment. You *are* the environment, you *are* St. Vincent, so keep it clean.”

Artist Mentalis believes initiatives like the ‘This is Who We Are’ campaigns encourage artists to put positive messages into their songs. “We need to continuously do initiatives like this,” said Mentalis. “We all want a clean environment for our future and for our children.”

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**“The kids are the ones you need to get the message to, and who will they listen to? A scientist? No, they’re listening to the stars.”**

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# MAKING WAVES: A THANK YOU TO WOMEN IN CONSERVATION



The ECMMAN project's tremendous success relied on the hard work of a diverse group of individuals, from different ages, genders, nationalities and backgrounds - most of whom could not be

highlighted in the limited space of this book. However, the tireless contributions from the women in ECMMAN's network deserve special recognition for making the project's success possible at a regional, local and even individual scale.

The team of six In-Country Project Coordinators was comprised of six innovative and remarkable women who galvanized action in their countries. The staff from government and partner agencies was predominantly female too, and the remarkable achievements would not have been possible without their creativity, hard work and willingness to go above and beyond.

These women understood that true and lasting conservation is diverse and all encompassing, especially on small islands, and they pushed the limits of their own expertise and grew in ways that will positively impact their countries and careers into the future.

From defining key policies to coordinating meeting logistics, these women were, in many cases, the leaders, planners, doers, teachers, trouble-shooters, advocates, and champions that permanently changed the Eastern Caribbean's culture of conservation.



## THE BACKBONE: RECOGNIZING THE CORE TEAM

The team behind the ECMMAN project is like mangrove roots: an intricate and interconnected system that protects the coastline, creates safe natural habitats, and strengthens each island.

The project reached across six island-nations and throughout many coastal communities, but it relied on the leadership and vision of a core team. The stories in this booklet represent only a few of the many talented and passionate people that form the backbone of the project and enabled its consistent and lasting success.

Thanks to the efforts and partnerships of this strong and diverse network, the marine life will continue to adapt, thrive, provide for and protect us, as well as define who we are in the Eastern Caribbean.

