



Ramsar Information Sheet

Published on 10 November 2023

Netherlands (Kingdom of the) (Aruba) West Point



Designation date	10 November 2023
Site number	2527
Coordinates	12°36'49"N 70°03'06"W
Area	2 185,00 ha

RIS for Site no. 2527, West Point , Netherlands (Kingdom of the) (Aruba)

Created by RSIS V.1.6 on - 10 November 2023

Color codes

Fields back-shaded in light blue relate to data and information required only for RIS updates.

Note that some fields concerning aspects of Part 3, the Ecological Character Description of the RIS (tinted in purple), are not expected to be completed as part of a standard RIS, but are included for completeness so as to provide the requested consistency between the RIS and the format of a 'full' Ecological Character Description, as adopted in Resolution X.15 (2008). If a Contracting Party does have information available that is relevant to these fields (for example from a national format Ecological Character Description) it may, if it wishes to, include information in these additional fields.

1 - Summary

Summary

West Point (2185 ha) is comprised of varying coastal habitats namely beaches, limestone terraces, coral reefs, seagrass beds, sand dunes, seasonal wetlands and shallow and deeper marine waters. The beaches are nesting ground for four species of sea turtles (Leatherback, Hawksbill, Loggerhead and Green Turtles) while the limestone terraces are a breeding ground for the migratory Least Tern. The waters of West Point contain relatively large patches of the critically endangered Elkhorn coral while the Turtlegrass-beds are nursing and feeding grounds for many marine organisms, including the Queen Conch and parrotfish species. A survey in 2017 has revealed that the critically endangered Great Hammerhead Shark frequents the windward parts of the West Point sea.

The leeward side of the West Point sea functions as a foraging, nursing, recovery, birthing, and/or refuge area for ten marine mammal species, five of which can be observed near the coast (up to 2 m depth). The Sasarawichi sand dunes are the main sand dune system in the western half of Aruba and form a unique sight within the rugged coastal landscape. The Tera Cora area has xeric landscapes and mudflats which annually transform into a seasonal wetland. The name Tera Cora translates to Red Sand and refers to the iconic red soil which covers the entire expanse. Both Sasarawichi sand dune and Tera Cora are one of the few remaining natural habitats containing numerous locally endangered and protected species such as the Crested bobwhite, Burrowing Owl, Aruban Rattlesnake, the Aruban cottontail and Vesper Mouse. When Tera Cora turns into a seasonal wetland, it is an important stop-over site for many foraging migratory bird species.

2 - Data & location

2.1 - Formal data

2.1.1 - Name and address of the compiler of this RIS

Responsible compiler

Institution/agency	Wageningen Environmental Research
Postal address	PO Box 47 6700 AA Wageningen The Netherlands

National Ramsar Administrative Authority

Institution/agency	Ministry of Agriculture Nature and Food Quality
Postal address	Bezuidenhoutseweg 73 P.O. Box 20401 2500 EK The Hague The Netherlands

2.1.2 - Period of collection of data and information used to compile the RIS

From year	2023
To year	2023

2.1.3 - Name of the Ramsar Site

Official name (in English, French or Spanish)	West Point
Unofficial name (optional)	Westpunt

2.2 - Site location

2.2.1 - Defining the Site boundaries

b) Digital map/image
<1 file(s) uploaded>

Former maps	0
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Boundaries description

The site curves some 2 kilometers around the western tip of Aruba. On the island the site includes beaches and sand dunes up to the verges of the tarmac road. It borders Salina Druif (part of Western Wetlands Ramsar Site) and the northern part of the Tierra Del Sol golf course.

2.2.2 - General location

a) In which large administrative region does the site lie?	Caribbean Island of Aruba, which is a constituent country of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
b) What is the nearest town or population centre?	District Noord (outskirts north of capital Oranjestad)

2.2.3 - For wetlands on national boundaries only

- a) Does the wetland extend onto the territory of one or more other countries? Yes No
- b) Is the site adjacent to another designated Ramsar Site on the territory of another Contracting Party? Yes No

2.2.4 - Area of the Site

Official area, in hectares (ha): 2185

Area, in hectares (ha) as calculated from GIS boundaries 2184.728

2.2.5 - Biogeography

Biogeographic regions

Regionalisation scheme(s)	Biogeographic region
Marine Ecoregions of the World (MEOW)	Realm: Tropical Atlantic, Province: Tropical North-western Atlantic, Ecoregion: Southern Caribbean.

3 - Why is the Site important?

3.1 - Ramsar Criteria and their justification

<no data available>

Criterion 2 : Rare species and threatened ecological communities

Optional text box to provide further information

The site is home to several (critically) endangered species like corals, sea turtles and the Great hammerhead Shark. Several species are rare and/or endemic to Aruba. Future inventories will most probably reveal several more endemic marine and terrestrial species.

Criterion 3 : Biological diversity

Justification

West Point comprises varying coastal habitats namely beaches, limestone terraces, coral reefs, seagrass beds, sand dunes, seasonal wetlands, shallow and deeper marine waters. The beaches are nesting ground for four species of sea turtles, while the limestone terraces are a breeding ground for the migratory Least Tern. The waters of West Point contain relatively large patches of the critically endangered Elkhorn coral while the Turtlegrass-beds are nursing and feeding grounds for many marine organisms, including the Queen Conch and parrotfish species. A survey in 2017 has revealed that the critically endangered Great Hammerhead Shark frequents the windward parts of the West Point sea. The leeward side of the West Point sea functions as a foraging, nursing, recovery, birthing, and/or refuge area for ten marine mammal species, five of which can be observed near the coast (up to 2 m depth). The Sasarawichi sand dunes are the main sand dune system in the western half of Aruba and form a unique sight within the rugged coastal landscape. The Tera Cora area has xeric landscapes and mudflats which annually transform into a seasonal wetland. The name Tera Cora translates to Red Sand and refers to the icon red soil which covers the entire expanse. Both Sasarawichi sand dune and Tera Cora are one of the few remaining natural habitats containing numerous locally endangered and protected species such as the Crested bobwhite, Burrowing Owl, Aruban Rattlesnake, the Aruban cottontail and Vesper Mouse. When Tera Cora turns into a seasonal wetland, it is an important stop-over site for many foraging migratory bird species.

Criterion 4 : Support during critical life cycle stage or in adverse conditions

Optional text box to provide further information

The beaches are nesting ground for four species of sea turtles, while the limestone terraces are a breeding ground for the migratory Least Tern. The waters of West Point contain relatively large patches of the critically endangered Elkhorn coral while the Turtlegrass-beds are nursing and feeding grounds for many marine organisms, including the Queen Conch and parrotfish species. The leeward side of the West Point sea functions as a foraging, nursing, recovery, birthing, and/or refuge area for ten marine mammal species, five of which can be observed near the coast (up to 2 m depth). Both Sasarawichi sand dune and Tera Cora are one of the few remaining natural habitats containing numerous locally endangered and protected species such as the Crested bobwhite, Burrowing Owl, Aruban Rattlesnake, the Aruban cottontail and Vesper Mouse. When Tera Cora turns into a seasonal wetland, it is an important stop-over site for many foraging migratory bird species.

Criterion 8 : Fish spawning grounds, etc.

Justification

The site encompasses some relatively healthy stretches of coral reefs and sea grass beds which are important reproduction site for marine fish species and other species groups.

3.2 - Plant species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

Phylum	Scientific name	Criterion 2	Criterion 3	Criterion 4	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	Other status	Justification
Plantae								
TRACHEOPHYTA / LILIOPSIDA	<i>Syringodium filiforme</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>		Seagrass beds important for fish spawning
TRACHEOPHYTA / LILIOPSIDA	<i>Thalassia testudinum</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	LC	<input type="checkbox"/>		Seagrass beds important for fish spawning

3.3 - Animal species whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

Phylum	Scientific name	Species qualifies under criterion				Species contributes under criterion				Pop. Size	Period of pop. Est.	% occurrence 1)	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	CMS Appendix I	Other Status	Justification
		2	4	6	9	3	5	7	8								
Others																	
CNIDARIA / ANTHOZOA	<i>Acropora cervicornis</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				CR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spaw Annex II	Coral reef important for fish spawning
CNIDARIA / ANTHOZOA	<i>Acropora palmata</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				CR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spaw Annex II	Coral reef important for fish spawning
CHORDATA / MAMMALIA	<i>Calomys hummelincki</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SPA Annex II	resident
CHORDATA / REPTILIA	<i>Caretta caretta</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				VU	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SPA Annex II	nesting
CHORDATA / REPTILIA	<i>Chelonia mydas</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				EN	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SPA Annex II	nesting
CHORDATA / REPTILIA	<i>Crotalus durissus unicolor</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cites app. III	resident
CHORDATA / MAMMALIA	<i>Delphinus delphis</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SPA Annex II	Site used for migration, foraging (source: Aruba Marine Mammal Foundation)
CHORDATA / REPTILIA	<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				VU	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SPA Annex II	nesting
CHORDATA / REPTILIA	<i>Eretmochelys imbricata imbricata</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				CR	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SPA Annex II	nesting
CHORDATA / MAMMALIA	<i>Grampus griseus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SPA Annex II	Site used for migration, foraging (source: Aruba Marine Mammal Foundation)
CHORDATA / MAMMALIA	<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SPA Annex II	Through the years, Aruban fishermen report seeing Humpback whales bubble, but visual documented evidence has not yet confirmed their claim.
CHORDATA / MAMMALIA	<i>Pseudorca crassidens</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				NT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SPA Annex II	Site used for migration, foraging. First observed in 2022 (source: Aruba Marine Mammal Foundation)
CHORDATA / MAMMALIA	<i>Stenella attenuata</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SPA Annex II	Site used for migration, foraging, resting, calving, nursing, recovery. Gets close to shore, 2m depth. (source: Aruba Marine Mammal Foundation)
CHORDATA / MAMMALIA	<i>Stenella coeruleoalba</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SPA Annex II	Site used for migration, foraging, calving, nursing (source: Marine Mammal Foundation)

Phylum	Scientific name	Species qualifies under criterion				Species contributes under criterion				Pop. Size	Period of pop. Est.	% occurrence 1)	IUCN Red List	CITES Appendix I	CMS Appendix I	Other Status	Justification
		2	4	6	9	3	5	7	8								
CHORDATA / MAMMALIA	<i>Stenella frontalis</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SPAW Annex II	Site used for migration, feeding, resting, calving, nursing, recovery. Gets close to shore, 2m depth. (source: Aruba Marine Mammal Foundation)
CHORDATA / MAMMALIA	<i>Stenella longirostris</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SPAW Annex II	Site used for migration, foraging, resting, calving, nursing, recovery. Gets close to shore, 2m depth, particularly at night time. (source: Aruba Marine Mammal Foundation)
CHORDATA / MAMMALIA	<i>Steno bredanensis</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SPAW Annex II	Site used for migration, feeding, resting, calving, nursing, recovery. Gets close to shore, 2m depth. (source: Aruba Marine Mammal Foundation)
CHORDATA / MAMMALIA	<i>Syvilagus floridanus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		resident
CHORDATA / MAMMALIA	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SPAW Annex II	Site used for migration, foraging, resting, calving, nursing, recovery. Gets close to shore, 2m depth. (source: Aruba Marine Mammal Foundation)
Fish, Mollusc and Crustacea																	
MOLLUSCA / GASTROPODA	<i>Lobatus gigas</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Reproduction and foraging in sea grass beds
CHORDATA / ACTINOPTERYGII	<i>Scarus coeruleus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Reproduction and foraging
CHORDATA / ACTINOPTERYGII	<i>Scarus vetula</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Reproduction and foraging
CHORDATA / ELASMOBRANCHII	<i>Sphyrna mokarran</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				CR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Species observed, but function of site is not clear.
Birds																	
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Ardea alba</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		foraging
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Athene cunicularia</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Endemic subspecies Aruba	nesting, foraging
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Colinus cristatus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		nesting, foraging
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Falco columbarius</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		foraging
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	SPAW Annex II	foraging
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Haematopus palliatus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		foraging
CHORDATA / AVES	<i>Sternula antillarum</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				LC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		nesting, foraging

1) Percentage of the total biogeographic population at the site

3.4 - Ecological communities whose presence relates to the international importance of the site

RIS for Site no. 2527, West Point , Netherlands (Kingdom of the) (Aruba)

Name of ecological community	Community qualifies under Criterion 2?	Description	Justification
Coral reefs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Spawning and nursery function for fish among others	
Sea grass beds	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Spawning and nursery function for fish among others	

4 - What is the Site like? (Ecological character description)

4.1 - Ecological character

West Point (2185 ha) is comprised of varying coastal habitats namely beaches, limestone terraces, coral reefs, seagrass beds, sand dunes, seasonal wetlands and shallow and deeper marine waters. The beaches are nesting ground for four species of sea turtles (Leatherback, Hawksbill, Loggerhead and Green Turtles) while the limestone terraces are a breeding ground for the migratory Least Tern. The waters of West Point contain relatively large patches of the critically endangered Elkhorn coral while the Turtlegrass-beds are nursing and feeding grounds for many marine organisms, including the Queen Conch and parrotfish species. A survey in 2017 has revealed that the critically endangered Great Hammerhead Shark frequents the windward parts of the West Point sea.

The leeward side of the West Point sea functions as a foraging, nursing, recovery, birthing, and/or refuge area for ten marine mammal species, five of which can be observed near the coast (up to 2 m depth). The Sasarawichi sand dunes are the main sand dune system in the western half of Aruba and form a unique sight within the rugged coastal landscape. The Tera Cora area has xeric landscapes and mudflats which annually transform into a seasonal wetland. The name Tera Cora translates to Red Sand and refers to the icon red soil which covers the entire expanse. Both Sasarawichi sand dune and Tera Cora are one of the few remaining natural habitats containing numerous locally endangered and protected species such as the Crested bobwhite, Burrowing Owl, Aruban Rattlesnake, the Aruban cottontail and Vesper Mouse. When Tera Cora turns into a seasonal wetland, it is an important stop-over site for many foraging migratory bird species.

4.2 - What wetland type(s) are in the site?

Marine or coastal wetlands

Wetland types (code and name)	Local name	Ranking of extent (1: greatest - 4: least)	Area (ha) of wetland type	Justification of Criterion 1
A: Permanent shallow marine waters		1		
B: Marine subtidal aquatic beds (Underwater vegetation)		4		
D: Rocky marine shores		3		
E: Sand, shingle or pebble shores		2		

Inland wetlands

Wetland types (code and name)	Local name	Ranking of extent (1: greatest - 4: least)	Area (ha) of wetland type	Justification of Criterion 1
Saline, brackish or alkaline water > Marshes & pools >> Ss: Seasonal/ intermittent saline/ brackish/ alkaline marshes/ pools	Tera Cora	0		

Other non-wetland habitat

Other non-wetland habitats within the site	Area (ha) if known
Dunes	
Deeper marine waters	

4.3 - Biological components

4.3.1 - Plant species

Invasive alien plant species

Phylum	Scientific name	Impacts
TRACHEOPHYTA/LILIOPSIDA	<i>Halophila stipulacea</i>	Actual (major impacts)

4.3.2 - Animal species

Invasive alien animal species

Phylum	Scientific name	Impacts
CHORDATA/REPTILIA	<i>Boa constrictor</i>	Actual (minor impacts)
CHORDATA/ACTINOPTERYGII	<i>Pterois volitans</i>	Actual (minor impacts)

4.4 - Physical components

4.4.1 - Climate

Climatic region	Subregion
B: Dry climate	BWh: Subtropical desert (Low-latitude desert)

4.4.2 - Geomorphic setting

a) Minimum elevation above sea level (in metres)

a) Maximum elevation above sea level (in metres)

- Entire river basin
- Upper part of river basin
- Middle part of river basin
- Lower part of river basin
- More than one river basin
- Not in river basin
- Coastal

Please name the river basin or basins. If the site lies in a sub-basin, please also name the larger river basin. For a coastal/marine site, please name the sea or ocean.

Southern Caribbean Sea

4.4.3 - Soil

- Mineral
- Organic
- No available information

Are soil types subject to change as a result of changing hydrological conditions (e.g., increased salinity or acidification)? Yes No

4.4.4 - Water regime

Water permanence

Presence?	
Usually permanent water present	No change

Source of water that maintains character of the site

Presence?	Predominant water source	
Water inputs from precipitation	<input type="checkbox"/>	No change
Marine water	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No change

Water destination

Presence?	
Marine	No change

Stability of water regime

Presence?	
Water levels fluctuating (including tidal)	No change

(ECD) Connectivity of surface waters and of groundwater

The permeability of the limestone substrate suggests that there is some connectivity between surface water and groundwater.

4.4.5 - Sediment regime

- Significant erosion of sediments occurs on the site
- Significant accretion or deposition of sediments occurs on the site
- Significant transportation of sediments occurs on or through the site
- Sediment regime is highly variable, either seasonally or inter-annually
- Sediment regime unknown

Please provide further information on sediment (optional):

Erosion due to recreational use by ATV and UTV.

4.4.6 - Water pH

- Acid (pH<5.5)
- Circumneutral (pH: 5.5-7.4)
- Alkaline (pH>7.4)

Unknown

4.4.7 - Water salinity

Fresh (<0.5 g/l)

Mixohaline (brackish)/Mixosaline (0.5-30 g/l)

Euhaline/Eusaline (30-40 g/l)

Hyperhaline/Hypersaline (>40 g/l)

Unknown

Please provide further information on salinity (optional):

Tera Cora is considered brackish due to rain water and spray from the sea.

4.4.8 - Dissolved or suspended nutrients in water

Eutrophic

Mesotrophic

Oligotrophic

Dystrophic

Unknown

Please provide further information on dissolved or suspended nutrients (optional):

The touristic west coast of Aruba is considered most eutrophic.

4.4.9 - Features of the surrounding area which may affect the Site

Please describe whether, and if so how, the landscape and ecological characteristics in the area surrounding the Ramsar Site differ from the site itself: i) broadly similar ii) significantly different

Surrounding area has greater urbanisation or development

Surrounding area has higher human population density

Surrounding area has more intensive agricultural use

Surrounding area has significantly different land cover or habitat types

Please describe other ways in which the surrounding area is different:

The site curves around the western tip of the (terrestrial) island of Aruba. Further offshore, the surrounding area is the Caribbean sea.

4.5 - Ecosystem services

4.5.1 - Ecosystem services/benefits

Regulating Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Erosion protection	Soil, sediment and nutrient retention	Low

Cultural Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Recreation and tourism	Nature observation and nature-based tourism	Low
Recreation and tourism	Water sports and activities	High

Supporting Services

Ecosystem service	Examples	Importance/Extent/Significance
Biodiversity	Supports a variety of all life forms including plants, animals and microorganisms, the genes they contain, and the ecosystems of which they form a part	Medium

Within the site: 1000s

Outside the site: 1000s

Have studies or assessments been made of the economic valuation of ecosystem services provided by this Ramsar Site? Yes No Unknown

Where economic studies or assessments of economic valuation have been undertaken at the site, it would be helpful to provide information on where the results of such studies may be located (e.g. website links, citation of published literature):

Aruba's government has set itself a goal to move towards Sustainable Development, which in its essence means balancing out three interconnected spheres; social welfare, economic responsibility and ecological resilience. In order to make sound decisions about the management of ecosystems, it is necessary to estimate the socio-economic value that these ecosystems provide to Aruba and incorporate Natural Capital in policy-making. In February 2016, the Aruban Government therefore commissioned a TEEB study (The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity) to research the importance of nature for economic and social prosperity of Aruba. This is an important step towards the development of a Sustainable Island Economy on Aruba. It was found that for ecosystem services related to tourism, culture, fishing and carbon, the value of Aruba's natural capital exceeded US\$ 287 million per year (Polaszek et al., 2018).

4.5.2 - Social and cultural values

- i) the site provides a model of wetland wise use, demonstrating the application of traditional knowledge and methods of management and use that maintain the ecological character of the wetland
- ii) the site has exceptional cultural traditions or records of former civilizations that have influenced the ecological character of the wetland
- iii) the ecological character of the wetland depends on its interaction with local communities or indigenous peoples
- iv) relevant non-material values such as sacred sites are present and their existence is strongly linked with the maintenance of the ecological character of the wetland

<no data available>

4.6 - Ecological processes

<no data available>

5 - How is the Site managed? (Conservation and management)

5.1 - Land tenure and responsibilities (Managers)

5.1.1 - Land tenure/ownership

Public ownership

Category	Within the Ramsar Site	In the surrounding area
Local authority, municipality, (sub)district, etc.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Private ownership

Category	Within the Ramsar Site	In the surrounding area
Other types of private/individual owner(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Provide further information on the land tenure / ownership regime (optional):

Public Entity of Aruba.
The Tera Cora area is partially private property but with a nature destination.

5.1.2 - Management authority

Please list the local office / offices of any agency or organization responsible for managing the site:

FPNA - Fundacion Parke Nacional Aruba (Aruba National Park Foundation)

Provide the name and/or title of the person or people with responsibility for the wetland:

Tyson Lopez (CEO) and Natasha Silva Chief Conservation Officer

Postal address:

San Fuego 70
Aruba

E-mail address:

info@arubanationalpark.org

5.2 - Ecological character threats and responses (Management)

5.2.1 - Factors (actual or likely) adversely affecting the Site's ecological character

Human settlements (non agricultural)

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	In the surrounding area
Tourism and recreation areas	High impact	High impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Human intrusions and disturbance

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	In the surrounding area
Recreational and tourism activities	High impact	High impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Invasive and other problematic species and genes

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	In the surrounding area
Invasive non-native/ alien species	Medium impact	High impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Pollution

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	In the surrounding area
Household sewage, urban waste water	High impact	High impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Garbage and solid waste	Low impact	Low impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Excess heat, sound, light	Medium impact	High impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Climate change and severe weather

Factors adversely affecting site	Actual threat	Potential threat	Within the site	In the surrounding area
Droughts	Low impact	Low impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Temperature extremes	Medium impact	High impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Storms and flooding	Low impact	Low impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

5.2.2 - Legal conservation status

National legal designations

Designation type	Name of area	Online information url	Overlap with Ramsar Site
Protected nature area	Sasarawichi		partly

5.2.3 - IUCN protected areas categories (2008)

- Ia Strict Nature Reserve
- Ib Wilderness Area: protected area managed mainly for wilderness protection
- II National Park: protected area managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation
- III Natural Monument: protected area managed mainly for conservation of specific natural features
- IV Habitat/Species Management Area: protected area managed mainly for conservation through management intervention
- V Protected Landscape/Seascape: protected area managed mainly for landscape/seascape conservation and recreation
- VI Managed Resource Protected Area: protected area managed mainly for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems

5.2.4 - Key conservation measures

Legal protection

Measures	Status
Legal protection	Partially implemented

Habitat

Measures	Status
Habitat manipulation/enhancement	Proposed

Species

Measures	Status
Control of invasive alien plants	Partially implemented
Control of invasive alien animals	Proposed

Human Activities

Measures	Status
Regulation/management of recreational activities	Partially implemented
Research	Partially implemented

5.2.5 - Management planning

Is there a site-specific management plan for the site? In preparation

Has a management effectiveness assessment been undertaken for the site? Yes No

If the site is a formal transboundary site as indicated in section Data and location > Site location, are there shared management planning processes with another Contracting Party? Yes No

Please indicate if a Ramsar centre, other educational or visitor facility, or an educational or visitor programme is associated with the site:

The management authority FPNA has a visitor centre at the entrance of the Aruba National Park (also known as Arikok National Park).

5.2.6 - Planning for restoration

Is there a site-specific restoration plan? No, but restoration is needed

5.2.7 - Monitoring implemented or proposed

Monitoring	Status
Birds	Proposed
Animal community	Implemented

A scientific assessment of the shallow water reefs has been carried out in 2019 (Vermeij 2019)

6 - Additional material

6.1 - Additional reports and documents

6.1.1 - Bibliographical references

The Dutch Caribbean Biodiversity Database (www.dcbd.nl) provides the most complete overview of data, maps and documents on the Dutch Caribbean Islands.

References used for this RIS:

Breugel van, 2019 (unpublished). Aruba Shark Survey. Southern coast of Aruba survey for presence of Shark species up to a depth of 35 meters.
Eckert, Karen L. and Adam E. Eckert. 2019. An Atlas of Sea Turtle Nesting Habitat for the Wider Caribbean Region. Revised Edition. WIDECASST Technical Report No. 19. Godfrey, Illinois. 232 pages, plus electronic Appendices.
Lue, Naviel, Geerman, Yahaira, Boekhoudt, Gisbert & Robert Kock, 2018. Natuur en Milieu in het ROP. Natuurwaarden en milieubeheer aandachtsgebieden voor het vernieuwde Ruimtelijke Ontwikkelingsplan. Directie Natuur en Milieu, Aruba. 40p.
Nagelkerken, W.P., 1974. On the occurrence of fishes in relation to corals in Curaçao. Stud. Fauna Curaçao Caribb. Isl., 45: 118-141.
Polaszek, Timothy, Lacle, Francielle, Beukering, Pieter van, and Esther Wolfs, 2018. The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity, Aruba January 2018 Updated version. 129p.
Vermeij, Mark, Marhaver, Kristen, Estep, Andrew and Stuart Sandin, 2020. Coral Reefs Baseline Study for Aruba, 2019. Carmabi Foundation Curaçao. 48p.

6.1.2 - Additional reports and documents

i. taxonomic lists of plant and animal species occurring in the site (see section 4.3)

<no file available>

ii. a detailed Ecological Character Description (ECD) (in a national format)

<no file available>

iii. a description of the site in a national or regional wetland inventory

<no file available>

iv. relevant Article 3.2 reports

<no file available>

v. site management plan

<no file available>

vi. other published literature

<no file available>

<no data available>

6.1.3 - Photograph(s) of the Site

Please provide at least one photograph of the site:



West Point and Arashi beach (*FPNA*, 13-07-2023)



The Tera Cora area has xeric landscapes and mudflats which transform yearly into a seasonal wetland. The name Tera Cora translates to Red Sand and refers to the icon red soil which covers the entire expanse. (*FPNA*, 29-06-2023)



Sasarawichi sand dunes (*FPNA*, 13-07-2021)



The roughed northwestern tip of Aruba. (*FPNA*, 29-06-2023)

6.1.4 - Designation letter and related data

Designation letter

<1 file(s) uploaded>

Date of Designation