Soufriere Marine Management Area

**Short Name**
Soufriere

**Country**
Saint Lucia

**Description**
Soufriere is a picturesque rural town, located on the southwest coast of the island of St. Lucia. This area is remarkable for the richness and diversity of its landscapes and natural resources, including mountains, rainforest, rivers, active volcanism and coral reefs. The area of coastline hereinafter described extends over 12 kilometers and presents a succession of beaches and cliffs, with the Soufriere bay at the center. The town of Soufriere lies within that bay. Because of its topography and relative isolation, the Soufriere region has not been part of the main transformations which have affected the rural economy of St. Lucia over the past few decades. Its agriculture therefore remains characterized by mixed crops produced on small to medium size estates. In the more recent past, Soufriere has witnessed radical changes provoked by the growth of tourism in the coastal zone.

**Ecoregion location**
EasternCaribbean

**Boundaries**

The boundaries for the site are clearly defined in the "Agreement to Manage" document including various zones that have specific regulations. All of the zones are clearly marked by both on-shore signage and marker buoys in the water. The seaward boundaries for the SMMA is at 75m however. There is no bathymetry data for this site however so the extent of this seaward area is unknown and not marked. Site managers expressed an interest in obtaining this information to help with site management.

**Map URL**
http://www.smma.org.lc/finder/files/Smma.jpg

**Sea Surface area**
300

**Shoreline area**
1218

**Site national category**
Marine Management Area

**Site international designation**
RAMSAR Site 856 (since 1996)

**IUCN category**
none

**Designation**
none

**Date established**
1994-06-11

**Legal citation**
The Fisheries Act No. 10, 1984 provides for the establishment of Fishing Priority Areas and Marine Reserves, and the Parks and Beaches Commission Act No. 4 of 1983 guide aspects of SMMA management.

**Citation reference URL**

**Primary responsible institution**
Ultimate authority d Ministry of Agriculture, Land and Fisheries.

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**Web site**
Geological features
cliffs, beaches

Marine habitats
The marine ecosystem of the SMMA consists of narrow fringing reefs, volcanic boulder fields and sand sheets bordering on deep, oligotrophic waters of the Eastern Caribbean Sea. Predominantly steeply-sloping rock substrate with coral veneer.

Primary management institution
Soufriere Marine Management Association â€“ an NGO with the legal authority to manage the site

Other institutions that participate in management
Port Authority, Department of Fisheries

Personnel
park manager; park rangers (4); accountant. Additionally there is a Board that oversees the management of the SMMA and is made up of representatives from various stakeholder groups

Management objectives
ecosystem protection, fisheries management, user conflict resolution, recreational tourism use

Other management objectives
As stated in the mission statement, â€œto contribute to local and national development, particularly in the fisheries and tourism sectors, through management of the Soufriere coastal zone based on the principles of sustainable use, cooperation among resource users, institutional collaboration, active and enlightened participation, and equitable sharing of benefits and responsibilities among stakeholders"

Management framework
Yes

Date of establishment of management framework
2003/07/06

Last update of management framework
2003/07/06

Management programmes
co management with private sector, education outreach program, entrance user fees, fisheries regulations, monitoring program, mooring bouys, navigational restrictions, on site staff, water quality management program, zoning scheme

Zoning
anchoring, cultural resources, diving, no-take, public use, recreational fisheries, other

Other zone types
Marine Reserves Fishing Priority Areas Recreational Areas Multiple Users Areas Yatch Mooring Areas

Funding sources
Diving and mooring fees; grants

Cultural resources
Local ecotourism businesses. Tourism, fishing, agriculture, small businesses, copra manufacturing. Note that fishing is the most socially important activity, but small businesses would be more important economically - particularly those supplying the tourism industry
Fisheries regulations
The Department of Fisheries has a fisheries management plan and the SMMA was established under the Fisheries Act. The zoning for the site was designed according to fisheries assessments of the area and included regulations such as the banning gill nets which could be harmful to site resources. Within the SMMA the main fishing that occurs in the fishing zones are seine fishing, pot fishing, and trolling.

Coastal development
The SMMA has done a few small projects to begin to address land-based sources of pollution from areas adjacent to the site. Specifically, it was determined that pig farmers contributed significantly to nutrients entering the area. The Association has begun working with the Department of Agriculture to develop a composting project to help reduce this threat. Informal threat assessments have also occurred in the area and there is coordination with agencies that address land based pollution issues. Specifically the Soufriere watershed has been assessed extensively for the designation process of a World Heritage Site of the Pitons Management Area whose terrestrial portion is adjacent to the SMMA.

Beach management
- beach nourishment, beach sand cleaning regulations

Monitoring programmes
- coral reef health, fish surveys, other socioeconomic monitoring program, user patterns

Other monitoring programmes
- Beach erosion and sand movement (G. Chambers)
- Water quality in the watershed and receiving waters (CEHI)
- Coral reef community structure, live coral and algal cover (J. Nowlis & CANARI)
- Sedimentation rates on the reef. (CANARI, C. Roberts)
- Reef Fish censuses (C. Roberts)
- Fisheries catch and effort (DOF)
- Fishery profile of Soufriere Fishery (Helen Bigot, IFREMER)
- Socioeconomic study of the Soufriere Community (CANARI)
- SERFS - Soufriere Experiment in Reef Fisheries Sustainbility (B. Hatcher - CFRAMP)
- Marine Park recreational use study (T. van't Hoff, CANARI)

Issues or threats for accomplishing management objectives
- Conflicts between yachting and fishing, diving and fishing

Areas of special expertise for knowledge transfer