

# Outreach and Education Advisory Panel (OEAP)

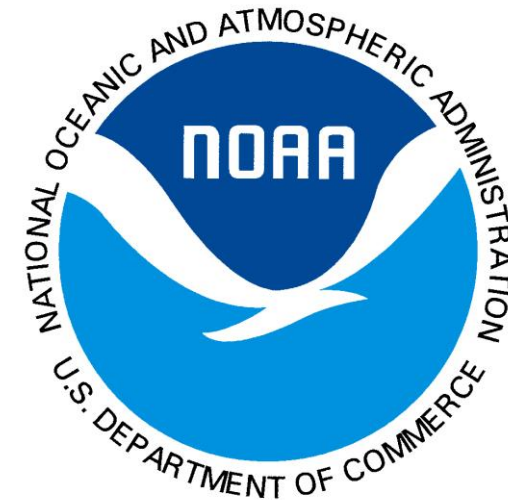
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## REPORT TO THE COUNCIL

178th CFMC Regular Meeting

April 19 – 20, 2022

Marriott Courtyard Hotel Isla Verde, PR



# Specific areas of action for Outreach and Education in the CFMC 5YSP



Goal: Engage, educate, and inform a variety of audiences to improve public understanding and participation in the Council process.

**Objective 20:** Use a variety of communication tools that consider the social, cultural, and economic characteristics of target audiences in coordination with the Outreach and Education Advisory Panel (OEAP).

- Maintain the content and organization of the Council's website to enhance its utility to a variety of users.

Working group to update the CFMC webpage to present information in a more accessible and attractive way to the users.



**Objective 20:** Use a variety of communication tools that consider the social, cultural, and economic characteristics of target audiences in coordination with the Outreach and Education Advisory Panel (OEAP).

- Coordinate with management partners, commercial and recreational fishing organizations and fishers, nongovernmental organizations, and coastal businesses to expand the scope of Council communications across new and existing audiences.

Meeting with Liaisons and DAPs Chairs and with DAPs from each island to receive their ideas for better communication with stakeholders

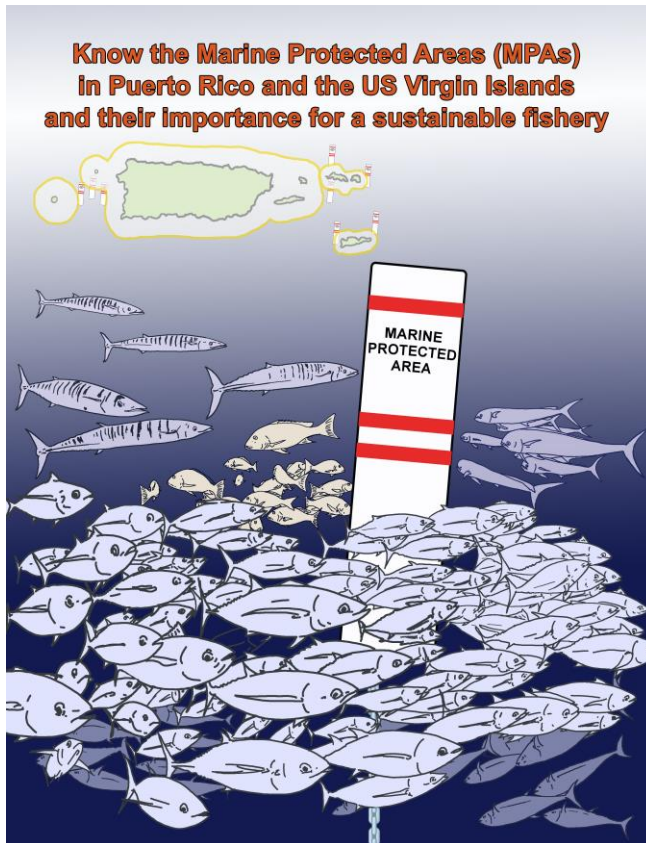
Use local radio and tv to announce CFMC activities in PR and the USVI

- Objective 21: Promote participation of a variety of stakeholders in the Council process.



**Develop a newsletter or summary to highlight Council meeting outcomes and anticipated actions.**

- Produce CFMC Meetings Highlights for the webpage.
- Illustrated Booklet on MPAs in the US Caribbean.



**Objective 22:** Improve public and stakeholder understanding and awareness of fisheries management, current issues, and the Council process.

**Continue support of the Marine Resource Education Program (MREP) workshops throughout the U.S. Caribbean.**

**Develop island-specific (Puerto Rico, St. Thomas/St. John, St. Croix) outreach approaches and materials for recreational and commercial fishers.**

- Collaborate with PR Dept. of Education and the New School Institute to develop Pilot Project on Marine Sciences curriculum integrated to all disciplines for Intermediate grades at the Alejandro Tapia Rivera school at La Parguera, Lajas, PR.



# Objective 22: Continuation...



**Partner with other outreach organizations (e.g., PEPCO, Sea Grant) and federal agencies (e.g., USCG, NPS, etc.) and commercial and recreational fishing, diving, and boating organizations to develop and distribute educational materials to fishers, other marine resource users (e.g., divers), and the general public.**



St. Thomas restaurants

- Placemats for St. Croix restaurants
- Collaborate with UPR-Sea Grant to produce signs for La Parguera Nature Reserve and Tres Palmas Marine Reserve with information on the marine resource in each one



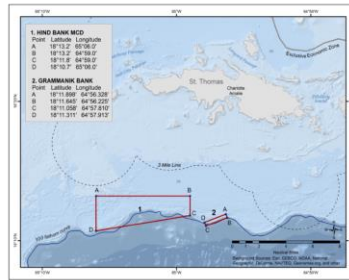


St. Thomas/St. John MPAs outreach strategies requested by the  
fishers to inform tourists.

## Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)

in the U.S. Virgin Islands St. Thomas/ St. John

The fisheries of St. Thomas/St. John constitute an important part of the ecosystems in the U.S. Caribbean. One of the most powerful and effective methods for protecting fisheries resources and ocean life is the Marine Protected Area (MPA). According to the **Executive Order 13155 of May 26, 2000**, **Marine Protected Areas**, "Marine protected areas" means any area of the marine environment that has been reserved, by Federal action, to protect, preserve, or restore, or to regulate the use of, for the purpose of testing protection for, or for the management and conservation of, the natural and cultural resources therein. The MPA provides a refuge for the managed species and at the same time gives animals within its boundaries time to grow larger than those that occur outside of the area.



Hind Bank MCD and Grantmanik Bank CFMC Map

The **Grammanik Bank** is a submerged area located 14 km south, on the south shelf edge of St. Thomas USVI. It runs east-west for 1.5 km and is 500 m wide. The Grammanik Bank benthic habitat is primarily composed of a mesophotic. This is the only location in the U.S. Caribbean where research on Nassau grouper (*Epinephelus striatus*) recovering from over-exploitation of its population restoration in the near future.

In 2005, it was designated by the CFMC as a No Take Zone in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). This means that no fish is allowed during the closure. Fishing with pots, traps, or prohibited year-round. The prohibition does not apply to herring.

**A Marine Conservation District (MCD)** is a discrete geographic area of the marine ecosystem that is to be maintained to conserve and manage representative samples and to maintain marine biodiversity. This is especially important for economically important species, MCDs which are designed to ensure persistence of reef fish stocks.



St. Thomas/St. John MPAs NOAA map

**References**

California Fishery Management Council. 1995. *Amendment Number 1 to the Fishery Management Plan for Check and Reef Assoumed Flats and Associated Areas*. Pp. 1-14. In *14th State Water Resources Control Board Meeting*. Including regulatory impact analysis and risk regulatory flexibility analysis and a Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement.

Hansen, R.S. 2005. Population characteristics of a recovering US Virgin Islands reef fish spawning aggregation following protection. *Mar. Ecol. Prog. Ser.* 306: 81-91.

Itelson, S.L. et al. 2014. Marine protected areas of the US Virgin Islands. *Journal of Environmental Protection, NOAA Technical Memorandum NOS NCCOS 316*. 38 pp.

Schärer-Lengua, M.Z. et al. 2014. Marine Mangrove Areas and Associated Fisheries in the US Caribbean. *Advances in Marine Biology*, Vol 69 pp 139-152. Elsevier Press.

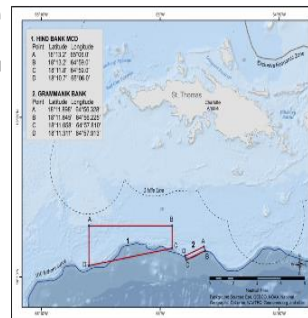


## Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the U.S. Virgin Islands St. Thomas/ St. John

The fisheries of St. Thomas/St. John constitute an important part of the ecosystems in the U.S. Caribbean. One of the most powerful and effective methods for protecting fisheries resources and ocean life is the Marine Protected Area (MPA). According to the **Executive Order 13158 of May 26, 2000 Marine Protected Areas**, "*Marine protected area*" means any area of the marine environment that has been reserved by Federal, State, territorial, tribal, or local laws or regulations to provide lasting protection for part or all of the natural and cultural resources therein. The MPA provides a refuge for the managed species and at the same time gives animals within its boundaries time to grow larger than those that occur outside of the area.

There are two MPAs in St.Thomas/St. John in the U.S. Caribbean Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ): the **Grammanik Bank** and the **Hind Bank Marine Conservation District (MCD)**. These are very valuable for the protection of spawning aggregations of important fishery species such as the red hind (*Epinephelus guttatus*) and the nassau grouper (*Epinephelus striatus*). There are other important and valuable fish species in these MPAs including: midnight parrotfish (*Scarus coelestis*), blue parrotfish (*Scarus coeruleus*), rainbow parrotfish (*Scarus guacamaia*), and goliah grouper (*Epinephelus itajara*) (Pittman, S.J., L. et al.). Seasonal species closures exist for specific large-bodied grouper and snapper species. Trammel nets are prohibited throughout the USVI and surface gill nets are restricted to baitfish only. Catch limits and size restrictions on specific species also exist. These

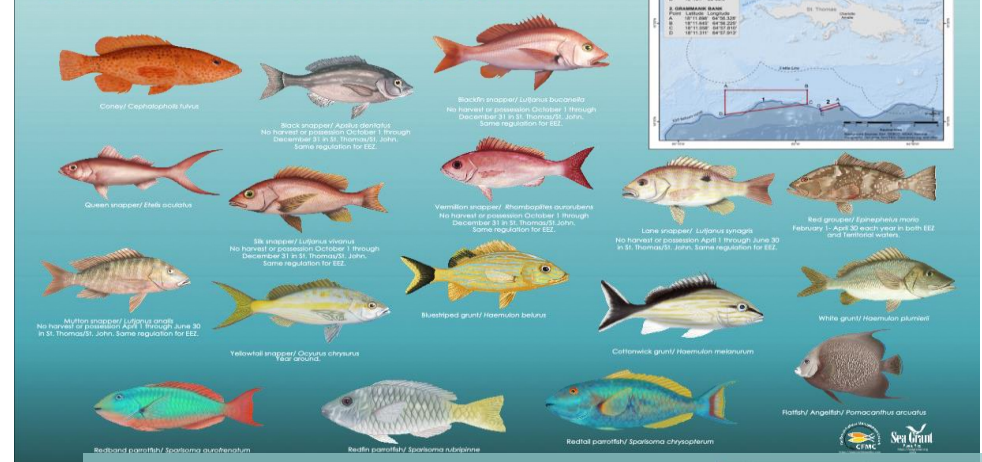
MPAs have also been designated by the Caribbean Fishery Management Council (CFMC) as Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPC).



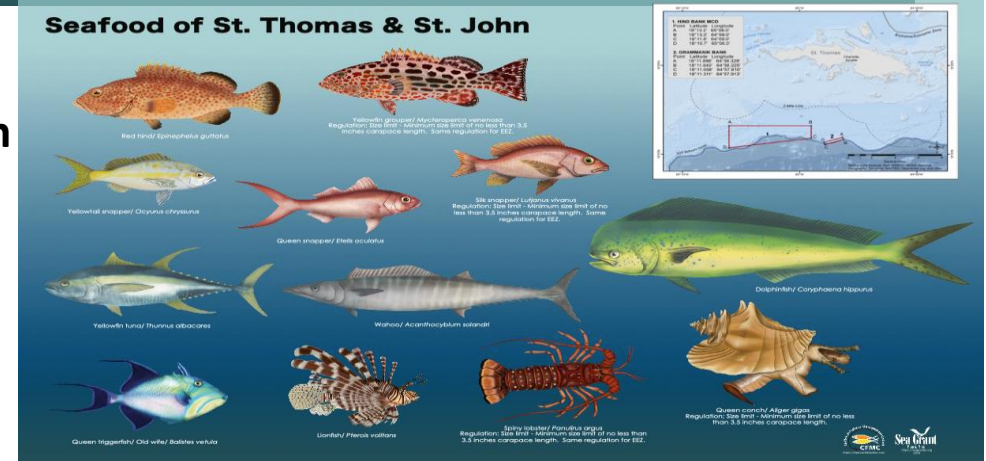
Hind Bank MCD and Grammanik Bank CFMC Map

## Local

## Seafood of St. Thomas & St. John



## Tourism



4 pages Fact sheet

# Presentation to Tourist Guides with the PRTC



Consumidor responsable = Pesca sostenible

Alida Ortiz Sotomayor      Marcos Hanke  
Caribbean Fishery Management Council





Conoce el ecosistema marino pesquero y las Islas Vírgenes Estadounidenses. Para más información sobre el ecosistema marino, los hábitats esenciales para peces y las estrategias de manejo aplicadas a la pesca, visite: [www.caribbeanfmc.com](http://www.caribbeanfmc.com)



# Tenemos que educar al consumidor



## Lane snapper *Lutjanus sinagris*

Recognized by a diffused black spot mainly above the lateral line and below the anterior portion of the soft dorsal-fin rays. Adults are found over all types of bottoms, but mainly around coral reefs and on vegetated sandy areas. **Catch and sale are prohibited from April 1st through June 30th in federal waters.**

## Blue runner *Caranx crysos*

A schooling species generally not far from the coast, in coastal marine and brackish waters to at least 100m depth. They spawn offshore from January through August.

## White grunt *Haemulon plumieri*

Silvery cream color with numerous yellow and blue horizontal stripes present throughout the body color variable but usually light yellowish. Found in dense aggregations during the day on patch reefs, around coral formations, or on sandy bottoms. Its average size is six inches to more than a foot.

## Underutilized species

The health and sustainability of the marine fisheries    Besides those species that are traditionally present on

- Escuelas
- Villas pesqueras
- Restaurantes
- Turistas

# Ongoing OEAP projects

Recipe Book

Illustrated Booklets on MPAs and Climate Change  
and US Caribbean Fisheries

Fact sheets, stickers and infographics on each  
IBFMP

Integration of concepts on marine fisheries in the  
US Caribbean to the regular education curriculum.





# Questions?

