



U.S. Virgin Islands

CORAL REEF LOCAL ACTION STRATEGIES



For the first phase of the Local Action Strategy (LAS) initiative, the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI) developed action plans to address 4 priority topics and focused implementation of projects within the Territory's first marine park, the St. Croix East End Marine Park (STXEEMP). Management of the STXEEMP and coordination of the LAS are led by the Department of Planning and Natural Resources, Division of Coastal Zone Management. Recently, the USVI has begun a process to review, revise and expand the Territory's LAS, expanding current strategies territory-wide, and evaluating the adoption of new focal areas. The development and implementation of LAS, with commitment from both local and federal partners remains key to effective management of our natural resources.

Lack of Awareness

- Promoting environmental and cultural education through establishing, (in 2004) and providing leadership for the VI Network of Environmental Educators (VINE). VINE is comprised of St. Croix and St. Thomas/St. John chapters and has a membership that represents 25 territorial agencies including local government, federal government, NGOs and academia. Through collaboration, a sister chapter is being developed in the neighboring British Virgin Islands.
- Providing bayside walking and snorkel tours for thousands of students and community members through STXEEMP Interpretive Program since its inception in Fall 2007.
- Supporting the Park's education and outreach events with the mobile STXEEMP EcoVan using a specialized curriculum developed in collaboration with numerous local partners.

Fishing

- Conducting biological monitoring to provide data on benthic habitats, reef fish, *Acropora* species and spiny lobster populations.
- Hiring Park Interpretive Rangers to support park education and outreach activities and, enforcement efforts, and as a mechanism to provide alternative livelihood opportunities for displaced fishers.
- Installing interpretive signage along roadsides and bayside access points in order to educate the public about the STXEEMP, its management strategies, rules and regulations.

Recreational Use

- Reducing damage to seagrass and coral reef habitats through the installation of a system of daytime use moorings within the park.
- Holding snorkel clinics to teach snorkelers safe, environmentally-friendly practices.

Land-Based Sources of Pollution

- Development of island-specific Best Management Practices to manage land-based sources of pollution within the STXEEMP.
- Using signage installed on roadsides in areas adjacent to the STXEEMP to address pollution impacts from land-based activities.

For more information, please visit:

www.allislandscorals.org

www.stxeastendmarinepark.org