

## The Destruction of Natural Habitat and Flora

In Aruba the destruction of natural habitat and flora has been growing at an alarming rate, and not much has been done to stop the ongoing decimation of our natural resources.

So much so that it has even caught the eye of the international tourism media.

In a 2004 article by National Geographic Traveler, called Destination Scorecard 2004, which can be found on the internet, international experts were asked to evaluate 115 of the world's best known places and tourism destinations on six criteria, being

1. Environmental Conditions
2. Social/Cultural Integrity
3. Condition of Historic Structures
4. Aesthetics
5. Tourism Management
6. Outlook

The scores ranged from 1 to 100 and no destination scored above the 90 mark.

When we look up Aruba in this list, we find a score of 54, and a summary which states that the "social/cultural integrity is questionable" and "inappropriate coastal development and misuse of the scarce water resources are the largest challenges to sustainability."

Under "inappropriate coastal development" we can file the destruction caused by four wheel drive vehicles which regularly, often in organized jeep or quad racer tours, plough through the dunes and uproot and destroy the existing vegetation.

The same goes for the natural vegetation along the coast, which is regularly cleared to make way for tourism development, and recently a patch of mangrove trees disappeared in front of a high-rise hotel, much to the dismay of local conservation groups.

Water sports are still unregulated in Aruba, although the verdict in a recent court case by Bucuti Beach Resort may finally force the authorities to designate and enforce zones for personal water craft in Aruba.

The much lamented vandalism on the mangrove tree (Fofoti) at Eagle Beach, which tree had become a signature image for the island of Aruba, pales in comparison to what goes on unabated elsewhere on the island in the name of progress.

Fortunately, the National Geographic article states that there may still be hope for the low scoring destinations, but it will take decision-makers to take tough decisions, and the community at large to assume responsibilities and find a balance to ensure that the natural heritage is conserved and protected for the enjoyment and benefit of both current and future generations of the island's inhabitants and visitors alike.



Endangered dunes in Aruba



Landmark tree victim of vandals

## E Destruccion di Habitat Natural y Flora

Na Aruba e destruccion di habitat natural y flora ta creciendo na un paso alarmante y casi nada ta ser haci pa para e decimacion continuo di nos recursonan natural.

Asina tanto cu hasta esaki a capta e atencion di prensa internacional turistico.

Den un articulo publica na 2004 pa National Geographic Traveler, titula Destination Scorecard 2004, cual por ser haña riba internet, expertonan internacional a ser puntra pa evalua 115 di e lugarnan y destinacion turistico mas conoci na mundo, basa riba seis criterio, siendo

1. Condicionan Ambiental
2. Integridad Social/Cultural
3. Condicion di Structuranan Historico
4. Estetica
5. Maneho di Turismo
6. Perspectiva pa Futuro

E scorenan tawata varia entre 1 y 100 y ningun destinacion a surpasa e score di 90.

Ora nos busca Aruba den e lista aki, nos ta encontra un score di 54, y un resumen cu ta declara cu "e integridad social/cultural ta cuestionabel" y "desaroyo inapropia di costa y mal uso di recurso escaso di awa ta e retonan mas grandi pa sostenibilidad."

Bao "desaroyo inapropia di costa" nos por clasifica e destruccion causa pa vehiculo four wheel drive, cual regularmente, hopi biaha den forma organisa di tours pa jeep of quad racer ta roza dor di e dunanan, rancando y destruyendo e vegetacion existente.


Mescos ta conta pa e vegetacion natural a lo largo di costa, cual ta ser roza regularmente pa facilita desaroyo turistico, y recientemente un area di mata di mangel a desaparece dilanti un high-rise hotel, causando un gran disgusto di gruponan conserva-

cionista local.

Deporte acuatico ainda no ta regula na Aruba, aunke e veredicto den un caso den corte recien entabla dor di Bucuti Beach Resort kizas por fin lo por forza autoridadnan pa designa y enforza zonanan pa jet ski na Aruba.

E hopi lamenta vandalismo ariba e Fofoti na Eagle Beach, cual mata a bira un imagen simbolico pa nos isla, ta cay chikito compara cu e destruccion cu ta sigui incesantemente na otro parti di nos isla den number di progreso.

Afortunadamente e articulo di National Geographic Traveler ta manifesta cu ainda por tin speranza pa e destinacionan cu score malo, pero e lo requiri cu mandatarionan lo mester tuma decision duro y e comunidad en general asumi responsabilidad y haña un balance pa asegura cu nos patrimonio natural ta ser conserva y proteha pa e deleite y beneficio di e actual y futuro generacion di habitante y bishitante di nos isla igualmente.



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and  
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