

ISLAND(ER)S AT THE HELM

Public Outreach Seminars March 2020

Seminar Schedule:

- Sint Maarten: 3-4 March
- St. Eustatius: 5 March
- Saba: 6 March
- Bonaire: 9 March
- Curaçao: 11 March
- Aruba: 12 March

Multi-disciplinary Caribbean research

In preparation of a proposal for the Dutch Research Council's (NWO) call for Caribbean multi-disciplinary research, Corinne Hofman (LU/KITLV) and Francio Guadeloupe (UvA/KITLV) visited the six Dutch Caribbean islands together with a team of researchers and societal partners to discuss their proposal on social adaptation to climate change challenges in the (Dutch) Caribbean with local stakeholders.

Abstract of proposed research programme

Recent hurricanes and the devastation of coastal areas have significant ecological and social implications for the (Dutch) Caribbean. These are affecting the basic living conditions (water, food, shelter) and heritage of the island inhabitants. This asks for immediate action! **Island(er)s at the helm** brings together researchers and societal partners to combine technical, traditional, and contemporary knowledge practices to co-create sustainable development strategies for social adaptation to climatic challenges with heritage safeguarding. Our ultimate goal is to contribute to a trans-Atlantic and pan-Caribbean academic platform and expertise center fostering research-based education in collaboration with the Universities of St. Maarten, Curaçao, and Aruba (SISSTEM) and the Caribbean Netherlands Science Institute (CNSI) on St. Eustatius.



Francio Guadeloupe and Corinne Hofman moderating the discussion at the public outreach seminar on Aruba (March 12) (Photo: Menno Hoogland).

“Caribbean wisdom that ‘equality is primary’ marked our trip. During every session, on every island, the people who came out to our outreach seminars reiterated the primacy of equality. Respectful research starts by listening to one’s interlocutors.”

— Francio Guadeloupe and Corinne Hofman

Public Outreach Seminars

From 2 to 13 March, a team of researchers and societal partners travelled to the six Dutch Caribbean islands to organize outreach seminars and bring together researchers and local stakeholders to discuss the initial ideas and set-up of the NWO programme **Island(er)s at the helm**. The main objective of the seminars was to discuss the climate change challenges that face the Caribbean island(er)s; to define common goals of interest towards social adaptation to climate change; to make incentives to broaden and consolidate the prospective network of partnerships; and to start off discussions to co-create questions and approaches to shape the full proposal. Invited were GOs, NGOs, community organizations, and all other interested parties. The team consisted of Corinne Hofman (LU/KITLV), Francio Guadeloupe (UvA/KITLV), Menno Hoogland (LU/KITLV), Jay Haviser (SIMARC, SABARC, BONAI), Antonio Carmona Báez (USM), Sharelly Emanuelson (UNIARTE, Curaçao), Charissa Granger (EUR), Tibisay Sankatsing Nava (KITLV), Denisio Wyattte (ECO St Maarten Agricultural Research & Development Foundation), Andrea Richards (Unesco Caribbean), Liliane de Geus (Unesco Bonaire), Filomeno Marchena (UoC), Ergün Erkoçu (UoC), Ellen van Bueren (TUD) Johan Stapel (CNSI), and Harold Kelly (NAMA).



A part of the Island(er)s at the Helm team in Saba. Fltr: Tibisay Sankatsing Nava, Charissa Granger, Liliane de Geus, Corinne Hofman, Andrea Richards, Menno Hoogland (back), Francio Guadeloupe (back), Antonio Carmona Baez, Denisio Wyatt, Jay Haviser and Sharelly Emanuelson (sitting at the front) (Photo: Jay Haviser).

Sint Maarten

The series of public outreach seminars kicked-off in Sint Maarten on March 2nd with a welcome drinks and buffet at the house of Maria and Henk van der Sluijs-Plantz.

Present at the reception were prime minister of St. Maarten Silveria Jacobs and government officials, amongst whom Erwin Arkenbout, representative of The Netherlands in Curaçao, Aruba, and St. Maarten; Jorien Wuite, former minister plenipotentiary of St. Maarten in The Hague; and Chris Johnson representative of The Netherlands in St. Maarten.



Opening drinks and buffet of the Island(er)s at the Helm Public Outreach Seminars at the house of Mrs. Maria and Henk van der Sluijs-Plantz in Sint Maarten. Top: Antonio Carmona Báez. Bottom left: Maria Plantz; bottom right: Francio Guadeloupe and Corinne Hofman (Photos: Ergün Erkoçu).

“For now, this seminar is an opportunity to connect our communities with top researchers in the Kingdom and throughout the Caribbean region in a very tangible manner. With the presence of top researchers on the island, and later in St. Eustatius, Saba, Bonaire, Curaçao, and Aruba, we will build a network of concerned scholars to tackle the most pressing issue of our era: climate change.”

— Antonio Carmona Báez, President of the University of Sint Maarten



Participants at the public outreach seminar in Sint Maarten on March 4 (Photo: Tibisay Sankatsing Nava).



Presentations and discussions at the public outreach seminar in Sint Maarten. Left: Jay Haviser; middle: Francio Guadeloupe; right: Francio Guadeloupe, Corinne Hofman, and Antonio Carmona Báez

On March 3 and 4, a workshop and the outreach seminar were held at the University of Sint Maarten (USM). The seminar was opened by Dr. Antonio Carmona Báez and presentations were given by Jay Haviser, Filomeno Marchena, Charissa Granger, Sharelly Emanuelson, and Andrea Richards. The team also visited the ECO St. Maarten Agricultural Research & Development Foundation and the Amuseum Naturalis.



Left: Team meeting in Sint Maarten to discuss the proposal. Right: St. Maarten seminar, discussion panel after presentations at the outreach seminar. Fltr: Jay Haviser, Filomeno Marchena, Andrea Richards, Charissa Ganger, and Sharelly Emanuelson (Photos: Menno Hoogland).



Left: Mark Yokohama gives a tour of the nature museum Amuseum Naturalis in Saint Martin. Right: Visit to ECO St Maarten Agricultural Research & Development Foundation with founder Denisio Wyattte, Sint Maarten. (Photos: Ergün Erkoçu).



Left: The team at the airport, en route from Sint Maarten to St. Eustatius. Right: view of Sint Maarten from the plane (Photos: Ergün Erkoçu).

In the news — Sint Maarten:

- The Daily Herald: <https://www.thedailyherald.sx/islands/usm-to-host-researchers-of-climate-change-vulnerability>



Sint Eustatius

In the early morning of March 5, the team travelled to the island of Sint Eustatius, where they were hosted by the Caribbean Netherlands Science Institute (CNSI).

The public outreach seminar took place in the afternoon of the same day. Participants included youth from Mega D Youth Foundation, Foundation the Quill, STENAPA, SECAR, CNSI, the New Challenges Foundation Statia, the Brighter Path Foundation, teachers from the Gwendoline van Putten School, and community members.

The seminar was opened by Johan Stapel (directeur CNSI), followed by words of welcome from Governor Marnix van Rij, and presentations by Fred van Keulen (SECAR), Erik Boman (STENAPA), Kenneth Cuvalay (president of Foundation the Quill), Denisio Wyatte, Sharelly Emanuelson, Charissa Granger, and



Island(er)s at the helm public outreach seminar hosted at the Caribbean Netherlands Science Institute in Oranjestad, St. Eustatius (Photo: Tibisay Sankatsing Nava).

The research team was taken on a walking tour of Oranjestad in the morning of March 5 by Gay Soetekouw (SECAR).



Guided tour through Oranjestad, St. Eustatius with Gay Soetekouw (SECAR) (Photo: Sharelly Emanuelson).

In the news — Sint Eustatius:

- The Daily Herald: see at the end of newsletter

Saba

On March 6 the team travelled on to Saba, where the public outreach seminar was hosted at St. John's School in collaboration with [SABARC](#). Participants included representatives from the [Conservation Foundation](#), [Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance](#) (DCNA), Government representatives, and community members. The seminar was opened by John Angus Martin (director [Saba Heritage Center](#)), followed by presentations by Vito Charles (island councilor), Charissa Granger, Jelle van de Velde (Saba Conservation Foundation), and Andrea Richards.



Top: Vito Charles, island councilor, presenting during the Island(er)s at the helm public outreach seminar hosted at the St. John's School in Saba (Photo: Menno Hoogland). Left: Francio Guadeloupe in discussion with Jelle van de Velde at the seminar (Photo: Sharelly Emanuelson). Right: Andrea Richards presenting (Photo: Menno Hoogland).

“The issue with Climate Change in the Caribbean is most opportune considering the detrimental effects that have already been taking place in these vulnerable islands. The outreach seminar by the “Island(er)s at the Helm” in the Dutch Caribbean was quite pertinent in both its timing and scope, but particularly its approach to engaging local communities to explore sustainable solutions to these challenges. It was good to discuss with such a diverse community the varied aspects of this problem that will affect so much of our lives in the coming years.”

— John Angus Martin, director of the Saba Heritage Center

As part of the seminar, teacher Peter Johnson invited schoolchildren from the St. John's secondary school to participate in the Climate Change Art Creation Competition (sponsored by the Island(er)s at the helm project), to create a piece of art, drawing, or painting that explored the theme of climate change and how it has already or will affect Saba and Sabans. The winner of the competition was Tyler Johnson, congratulations! In second place came Seneca Shillingburg and in third place came Keeshaun Hughes, great job!



The award ceremony of the Climate Change Art Creation Competition at the St. Johns School in Saba (Photos: Sharelly Emanuelson).



The winning piece of art in the Climate Change Art Creation Competition by Tyler Johnson (Photo: Sharelly Emanuelson).

“Tyler's art work evokes the crucial need to address climate change. It touches on aspects such as coral bleaching, the Invasion of lionfish and the threat they pose to native fish that most of the islands are confronted with. Tyler's piece embraces the architectural aesthetic from his personal everyday surrounding in Saba by illustrating the destruction of the beautiful green shutters and the red roofs. These were painted in such detail, enabling an embodied response. At the centre is the human who is entangled with the destruction as both a cause and as the affected one, which the tears speak towards. The bent trees, the blood of the person's neck, the discarded tire and number/licence plate that both speak of destruction, draws all the senses into experiencing this amazing artistic expression on climate change.”

— Charissa Granger, Climate Change Art Creation Competition Jury member

During their visit to Saba, the team visited the international exhibition **Caribbean Ties. Connected people, then and now**, with a tour by John Angus Martin, Corinne Hofman, and Tibisay Sankatsing Nava. Caribbean Ties was developed in context of the [ERC-Synergy project NEXUS1492](#).



The team and participants of the seminar in Saba visit the Caribbean Ties exhibit at the Saba Heritage Center (Photos: Menno Hoogland).

In the news — Saba:

- Saba News: <https://www.saba-news.com/discussion-on-sustainable-solutions-for-climate-challenges-in-the-dutch-caribbean-march-6/>

Bonaire

In the afternoon of March 7, the team made their way from Saba through Sint Maarten towards Bonaire. On March 8, the team went to visit Lac and the archaeological site of Den Bon (B-015), excavated by Haviser in 1978, and again by BONAI in 2003. Together with Sabine Engel, the team also visited the Washington-Slagbaai National Park museum and the Onima indigenous rock paintings.



Visits to the Onima indigenous rock paintings (left) and the Den Bon archaeological site in Bonaire (Photos: Menno Hoogland).

The Island(er)s at the helm public outreach seminar was held in the morning on March 9 in the conference room of the Cap'n Don's Habitat hotel. Participants included representatives from STINAPA, the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance, BONAI, the Terramar Museum, and community members.

Presentations were given by Liliane de Geus, Jason Tunk (GoLokal Walking Tour Bonaire), Sharelly Emanuelson, Jay Haviser, and Caren Eckrich (STINAPA).

“Today our projects have merged under the title is ‘Island(er)s at the helm’ which takes in earnest the social fact that since the earliest days of the settlement of the islands people have found modes and ways to adapt to their environment and to the challenges brought by natural and other disasters.

— Francio Guadeloupe and Corinne Hofman



Public outreach seminar in Bonaire with presentations by Caren Eldrich (STINAPA; top left), Jay Haviser (BONAI, SABARC, SIMARC; top right) (Photos: Menno Hoogland), and discussions (bottom) (Photo: Ergün Erkoçu).

"We can see the Kingdom as a Village, and each entity within it is a house, all with their own unique characteristics and internal management, ...this program is seeking to find the Common Heritage of our village, with respect for the individual uniqueness of each partner in dealing with the changing climate... yet Common Heritage does not mean the same heritage, it means shared heritage, seeing beyond simply the physical issues of our changing world, to also look deeper and understand the critical role of the arts and social sciences to seek solutions."

— Jay Haviser, director of SIMARC, and president of BONAI and SABARC

Sharelly, Charissa, and Tibisay also attended 'Luna Yen', a full moon community poetry event in Bonaire.



'Luna Yen' full moon community poetry event (Photos: Sharelly Emanuelson).

In the news — Bonaire:

- Nothing yet



Curaçao

On the morning of March 10, the team flew on to Curaçao. The Island(er)s at the helm public outreach seminar was hosted at UNIARTE on March 11. Uniarte is an independent non-profit foundation that provides a platform for artists, curators and cultural agents involved in research, experimentation, production and dissemination of contemporary artistic practices from and about the Caribbean.

The seminar was opened by Liesbeth Echteld (UoC). Presentations were given by Sharelly Emanuelson, Filomeno Marchena, Ergün Erkoçu, and Charissa Granger.



Top left: Opening speech by Liesbeth Echteld (UoC) at the public outreach seminar in Curaçao. Top right: Presentation by Sharelly Emanuelson. Bottom left: Presentation by Ergün Erkoçu. Bottom right: Johan Stapel (CNSI) and Corinne Hofman in discussion with the public at the seminar (Photos: Menno Hoogland).



The team in at the University of Curaçao, working on incorporating feedback and input received during the seminars into the final proposal that will be sent to the NWO (Photo: Ergün Erkoçu).

“It was amazing to see how the multiple disciplinary approaches to the project succeeded to engage a wide variety of islanders in discussing practices to cope with climate change challenges in their daily living environment.”

— Ellen van Bueren, Delft University of Technology

In the news — Curaçao:

- Antilliaans Dagblad: <https://www.universiteitleid.nl/nexus1492/in-the-media#antilliaans-dagblad-reports-on-island-er-s-at-the-helm-public-outreach-seminar>



The team at airport Curaçao, waiting for the flight to Aruba (Photo: Ergün Erkoçu).

Aruba

On the evening of March 11, the team travelled on to the final stop: Aruba. The Island(er)s at the Helm public outreach seminar was hosted at the National Archaeological Museum Aruba (NAMA) on March 12.

The seminar was opened by Margarita Wever (communications at NAMA). Presentations were given by Charissa Granger, Harold Kelly (archaeologist at NAMA), Ellen van Bueren, and Ergün Erkoçu.

Among those in attendance was Her Excellency Acting Governor Yvonne Lacle-Dirksz.



Left: Harold Kelly (NAMA) presenting at the public outreach seminar in Aruba (Photo: Tibisay Sankatsing Nava). Right: Corinne Hofman explaining about the possibility of a minor in social adaptation to climate change challenges (Photo: Ergün Erkoçu).





Discussions with the public at the seminar in Aruba. Left: Charissa Granger talking with participants. Left: Francio Guadeloupe presenting and discussing with participants (Photos: Sharelly Emanuelson).



Francio Guadeloupe, Corinne Hofman, and Harold Kelly at an interview for Aruban television show Nos Mainta. (Photo: Tibisay Sankatsing Nava).

In the news — Aruba:

- 24Ora: <https://24ora.com/museo-arkeologico-a-duna-charla-con-antropologia-y-arkeologia-ta-combina-cu-cambio-climatico/>
- Antilliaans Dagblad: <https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/nexus1492/in-the-media#antilliaans-dagblad-reports-on-island-er-s-at-the-helm-public-outreach-seminar>
- Nos Mainta: <https://www.facebook.com/NosMainta.Tlearuba/videos/1452595581575630/?d=w&vh=e&funlid=HUVqxyETKWHF3Xsd>
- Radio 100fm: <https://www.hits100fm.com/edd/2020/3/13/dr-francio-guadalupe-prof-dr-corinne-hofman-y-harold-kelly-seminario-consultativo-na-mana-riba-retonan-di-cambio-di-clima-den-caribe>
- Amigoe: see at the end of newsletter

“We learnt during this trip that collaboration between scientific disciplines, so the whole matter of multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary research, is only possible by starting off with the premise that all disciplines are equal.”

— Francio Guadeloupe & Corinne Hofman



Left: The team gathered on the porch of Nama (Photo: Tibisay Sankatsing Nava). Right: Dinner in Aruba after the final seminar (Photo: Ergün Erkoçu).

On behalf of the team we would like to thank our partners and hosts from all the islands for making the outreach seminars possible. We especially want to thank all of the participants who discussed their views with us and provided invaluable input and feedback on the project's ideas and goals. We are currently working on putting everything together into the full proposal, which will be submitted in Spring/Summer 2020.

This newsletter was made by Emma de Mooij (KITLV/CaribTRAILS), co-created with all team members. For questions and inquiries please contact her at demooij@kitlv.nl



Introducing the team

Prof. dr. Corinne Hofman: Professor of Caribbean archaeology at the Faculty of Archaeology, Leiden University, and the Royal Netherlands Institute for Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (KITLV/KNAW) (from NL).

Dr. Francio Gaudeloupe: Cultural anthropologist and senior researcher at the University of Amsterdam and KITLV/KNAW (from Aruba).

Dr. Menno Hoogland: Caribbean archaeologist and physical anthropologist at Leiden University and KITLV/KNAW (from NL).

Dr. Jay Haviser: Director of the Sint Maarten Archaeological Research Institute (SIMARC), and president of the Saba Archaeological Research Center (SABARC), and the Bonaire Archaeological Institute (BONAI) (from USA/NL).

Dr. Antonio Carmona Báez: President of the University of St. Martin, Researcher in Political Economy of Development. (from Puerto Rico).

Drs. Sharelly Emanuelson: Artistic Researcher, Artist, Filmmaker, Director of Uniarte (From Curaçao).

Dr. Charissa Granger: Marie Skłodowska Curie Leading Fellow Postdoctoral researcher, Erasmus University Rotterdam Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication (from Aruba).

Drs. Tibisay Sankatsing Nava: Community engagement coordinator at KITLV/KNAW and PhD researcher in science communication (from Aruba).

Drs. Denisio Wyatte: Founder and director of the ECO St. Maarten Agricultural Research & Development Foundation.

Drs. Andrea Richards: Principal director of Heritage Consultant (CHSolutions) (from Jamaica).

Drs. Liliane de Geus: Expert in cultural policy, tourism planning & development and downtown management. Leader of the UNESCO workgroup Bonaire (from Bonaire).

Prof. dr. Filomeno Marchena: Unesco professor in sustainable water technology at the University of Curaçao (from Aruba).

Dr. Ergün Erkoçu: Former dean of the Faculty of Engineering, University of Curaçao, associate professor and architect (from NL).

Prof. dr. Ellen van Buuren: Professor of Urban Development Management, Faculty of Architecture & the Built Environment, TU Delft (from NL).

Dr. Johan Stapel: Director of the Caribbean Netherlands Science Institute (CNSI) (from St. Eustatius).

Dr. Harold Kelly: archaeologist at the National Archaeological Museum of Aruba (NAMA) (from Aruba).

The Western university in 'exotic spaces'

It is common practice for researchers with degrees obtained from Western universities to enter "exotic spaces" for research purposes.

Spaces in which they engage with local organized groups, the keepers of traditional knowledge. Where phrases

such as, "Working together with you to improve island sustainability" or, "You islanders will remain in charge of your own narrative" are repeated continuously.

But conflicting messages oftentimes emerge. For while external researchers claim that traditional ways of knowing are respected and are included in their research findings, they state in the same breath that they come to teach locals innovative ways to improve their traditional knowledge system. A knowledge system gained through direct observation, experience and interaction with the natural environment. A knowledge system proven to be effective within the local space.

My issue is not only with external researchers, but also with the keepers of traditional knowledge, as there is this faulty belief that the Western university creates knowledge

that is somehow superior to traditional knowledge or is a true reflection of modernity.

Keepers of traditional knowledge should know that knowledge produced within the Western university, like traditional knowledge, is situational knowledge. Knowledge created within specific spaces. But unlike the keepers of traditional knowledge, keepers of Western university knowledge lay claims to the universality of their knowledge system.

Therefore, genuine keepers of traditional knowledge should only participate in research initiated by researchers from the Western university if the encounter results in decolonized spaces within the university. Spaces in which the curriculum is reflective of different, yet equal voices from different geographical places.

Xiomara Balentina

"Xiomara Balentina of the Brighter Path Foundation of Saint Eustatius, to our delight took it upon herself to write an article emphasizing this equality."

— Francio Guadeloupe & Corinne Hofman

Onderzoek naar impact klimaatverandering op erfgoed



Foto: Nadine Sultes

Francio Guadeloupe en Corinne Hofman.

ORANJESTAD — In het auditorium van het Nationaal Archeologisch Museum van Aruba vindt vanmiddag een seminar tevens consultatie plaats. Doel is Arubaanse onderzoeksvragen te verzamelen voor het multidisciplinair Caribisch onderzoeksproject 'Island(ers) at the helm: Coproducing sustainable solutions for climate challenges in the Dutch Caribbean'.

Het seminar vindt plaats van 14.00 tot 18.00 uur in het auditorium van het archeologisch museum. Het project, een samenwerking met de Universiteit Leiden, Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal, Land en Volkenkunde en de Universiteit van Amsterdam, is geselecteerd voor de tweede ronde door de Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (NWO). Professor Caribische Archeologie van de Universiteit Leiden Corinne Hofman en professor Antropologie Francio Guadeloupe van de Universiteit van Amsterdam

(UVA) en KITLV/KNAW zijn de aanvragers. Er is 3,5 miljoen euro beschikbaar voor het vijfjarige project dat uiteindelijk wordt geselecteerd uit de zeven aanvragen, waarvan deze er een is. 16 april is de uiterste inleverdatum. De uitslag wordt in het derde kwartaal van 2020 bekend gemaakt.

Het project richt zich op onderzoeken vanuit de antropologie en archeologie, waar gekeken wordt vanuit het verleden om zo uiteindelijk via een breed draagvlak antwoorden te formu-

leren op de uitdagingen van klimaatverandering en bestendigheid te creëren voor de eilanden.

Het seminar bestaat uit twee delen. Eerst worden er verschillende presentaties gegeven over het thema klimaatverandering en de invloed hiervan op (cultureel) erfgoed. Daarna wordt samen met aanwezigen onderzoeksvragen geformuleerd voor de definitieve projectopzet.

Ook op de andere vijf eilanden zijn dergelijke bijeenkomsten geweest tussen 3 maart en vandaag. Het seminar is niet alleen bedoeld voor Arubaanse overheidsinstellingen en niet-gouvernementele organisaties en wetenschappers maar ook voor het algemene publiek en mensen die betrokken zijn bij de bovengenoemde thema's.

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