

The Netherlands gains three Caribbean municipalities

Bonaire

Surface Area: 38 km long, 4 to 11 km wide

Population: 12. 900

Nature: Bonaire not only has a jungle and underwater nature, but it also has cactus forests. Sea turtles lay their eggs on protected beaches. Six areas have been designated as Important Bird Areas by Bird Life International.

History: The Dutch conquered Bonaire in 1636. In the late seventeenth century, African slaves were brought to the island to work. In 1816 Bonaire became part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Referendum: 60 percent of the population was in favour of joining the Netherlands.



HANS LEIJNSE





REDACTIE



Saba

Surface Area: 13 square km

Population: approximately 1500

Nature: A dormant volcano covered by cloud forest. There are a large number of underwater coral pillars. The Saba bank is an important marine ecosystem, which whales use as a birthing ground.

History: Traces of Arawak and Caribbean Indians. The Dutch arrived in 1640. Between 1632 and 1816 the island was owned by 12 different powers. In 1816 it finally became part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

Referendum 2004: 86 percent of the population voted in favour of direct ties with the Netherlands.

Saba



St Eustatius

St Eustatius

Surface area: 32 square km

Population: 3400

Nature: Beaches where sea turtles lay their eggs, marine parks with clumped coral. On the island the steppe gradually makes way for tropical forest with a unique ecosystem and rare plant species, such as the Statia Morning Glory.

History: The Dutch occupied St Eustatius (Statia) in 1636. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it was a large trading post with 20,000 inhabitants, but by the end of the eighteenth century it fell into decline.

Referendum 2005: 75 percent of the population chose to remain part of the Dutch Antilles.



REDACTIE

