

ARUBA CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

Annual Report

2025





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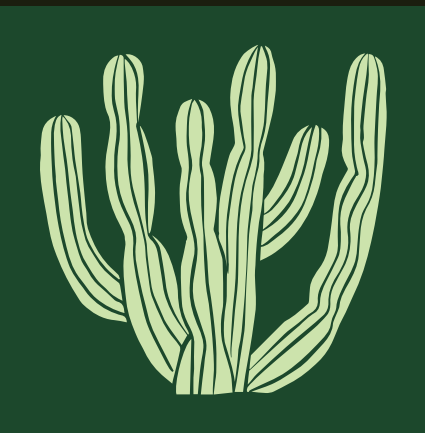


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Our island is telling us something. Let's *listen*.



CHAPTER 1

From the Executive Board



“Healthy ecosystems begin with a resilient organization—one that invests in people, acts with purpose, and remains steadfast in protecting nature for generations to come.”

As a conservation management organization, the Aruba Conservation Foundation (ACF) continues to advance its ambitions through the implementation of its Multi-Annual Corporate Strategy 2023–2032. The year 2025 marked a significant milestone, as ACF completed its first full planning cycle supported by a Corporate Plan and an accompanying budget. This achievement represents an important step in strengthening organizational discipline and aligning strategic priorities with operational execution.

In an ever-changing world, maintaining focus on long-term direction remains both a challenge and a necessity. The Executive Board continues to prioritize targeted strategic actions and deliberate resource allocation to drive meaningful organizational transformation and increase conservation impact. It is increasingly evident that lasting conservation success depends on strong people, a healthy organizational culture, and clear, effective processes. Sustainable conservation cannot exist without a sustainable organization.

In 2025, ACF took concrete steps to strengthen its organizational foundation. Negotiations for a collective labor agreement were initiated following the rollout of key HR tools, with continuation planned for 2026. Financial management was further enhanced through a more integrated role in planning and budgeting, supported by cost control mechanisms that improve efficiency and accountability.

Operational capacity was reinforced through targeted investments, including fleet expansion, ongoing maintenance, and the initiation of the office and workshop expansion project. Improvements such as the renovation of the Vader Piet entrance enhanced both operations and visitor experience. In parallel, the launch in 2026 of the Mondri Café will contribute to revenue diversification and visitor engagement, while continued branding efforts strengthened ACF’s positioning as a leading conservation organization. This Annual Report outlines the concrete actions taken and demonstrates how they have contributed to ACF’s continued progress.

While significant progress has been made, consolidating and embedding these advancements remains essential. Strengthening internal systems, reducing operational risks, and ensuring continuity are critical as ACF continues to grow. Looking ahead to 2026, the focus will be on maintaining momentum while further strengthening leadership, people, culture, and processes. As the organization evolves, greater clarity and alignment across teams will be key to sustaining impact.

As CEO of ACF, I am proud to be part of this important phase in the organization’s journey. It is a privilege to work alongside a dedicated team committed to making a difference every day. While challenges remain, it is the shared passion and determination that continue to drive ACF forward.

Together, we will continue to safeguard Aruba’s natural and cultural heritage—now and for generations to come.

Tyson Lopez, MSc, BA
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



“Safeguarding the land that raised us.”

The year 2025 has been a defining period of corporate ambition, systemic consolidation, and profound operational vigilance for ACF. Confronting mounting environmental and anthropogenic pressures, our team successfully established and commenced the implementation of three new, comprehensive five-year Protected Area Conservation Management Plans (PACMPs). These PACMPs provide a unified, ecosystem-based framework to safeguard biodiversity, build climate resilience, and restore ecological connectivity across our numerous terrestrial, coastal, and marine protected areas.

Our ground-level operations translated this strategy into measurable impact. Through the ‘Turning the Tide’ initiative, we advanced critical mangrove and coral reef restoration alongside local partners. We scaled up native flora propagation, entered an international accreditation program for the Aruba Botanic Gardens (in development), and reinforced active threat mitigation for flagship endemic species like Shoco, Lora, and Cascabel.

True transparency, however, requires acknowledging that planning alone cannot guarantee ecological success. 2025 laid bare critical systemic challenges, from shifting political focus to illegal encroachment and escalating unregulated tourism. Most critically, an ACF human capacity constraint created an operational bottleneck. As we launch the ACF Corporate Plan for 2026-2027, our primary strategic mandate is to break this cycle. We are taking bold, transformative steps to address these urgent gaps. By capitalizing on our scheduled 2026 structural workforce expansion, we will onboard competent field staff to offload baseline tasks from senior management. This shift will allow leadership to focus entirely on strategy as well as standardizing internal procedures, and on securing conservation partnerships and building critical infrastructure, including our Marine Conservation Center, Wildlife Conservation Center, and Native Plants Botanic Garden.

Equally vital to our mission is cultivating a deep and lasting conservation ethic across all of Aruba. By igniting curiosity and fostering a profound connection to our island’s natural wonders, we aim to inspire both locals and visitors to become active stewards of the environment and its biodiversity. Through transformative awareness campaigns and educational programs and outreach, we continue to strive to weave a shared sense of responsibility for nature into the fabric of our community.

Nature conservation demands sustained, long-term commitment. This is a call to action for governments, businesses, and communities to join ACF in nurturing a deep conservation ethic. By aligning our efforts, weaving environmental responsibility into our community, and shifting to an institutionalized nature conservation and sustainability framework, we will ensure that Aruba’s natural ecosystems do not merely survive, but thrive for generations to come.

drs. Natasha Silva, MA, BA
CHIEF CONSERVATION OFFICER



Where wonder awaits.



CHAPTER 2

Supervisory Board

SUPERVISORY BOARD

Governance Structure

ACF's purpose is defined by its Articles of Association and outlines the scope and context of the Foundation's activities related to nature conservation in protected areas and beyond, within the national sustainable development framework.

The Foundation is committed to the protection, preservation, and restoration of Aruba's heritage, viewed from ecological, environmental, geological, cultural, archaeological, and historical perspectives.

Since transitioning from a one-tier to a two-tier governance structure in 2019, ACF has operated with a professional Executive Board responsible for management and an independent Supervisory Board responsible for oversight and guidance.

This structure reflects a strong and growing commitment to good governance, ensuring accountability, transparency, and the effective, ethical use of public and donor resources.

The Supervisory Board oversees the Foundation's policies and general affairs while providing strategic advice to the Executive Board where appropriate, without compromising its independent oversight role. Together, both boards promote a governance culture that is participatory, responsive to stakeholders, aligned with the rule of law, and increasingly supported by structured performance frameworks and oversight mechanisms.



Norman Kuiperi, BSc

CHAIR

Electrical engineer, experienced HR professional with a strong business and financial acumen, previously served on the Board of Aruba Chamber of Commerce. During his tenure at the Chamber of Commerce, he represented the business community in the “Raads Commissie Onafhankelijkheid voor Aruba” (RCOA) between 1983 and 1985, where the constitution was prepared for Aruba’s Status Aparte in 1986. Furthermore, Mr. Kuiperi served on the board the Aruba Trade & Industry Association, Treasurer to the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance, and was an active Board member in the nature NGO StimAruba. He enjoys researching Aruba’s economy and financial status, and has written many articles published in the local newspapers.

APPOINTED IN
END 2ND TERM

FEBRUARY 2019
JANUARY 2027



dr. Hellen van der Wal,
LLM, BA

VICE CHAIR

Holds a Ph.D. in law from Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam and is an expert in legal and governance matters. Her past roles include Secretary to the State Council of Aruba, member of the National Good Governance Committee, and on the Aruba Financial Supervision Board. Currently, she chairs the National Implementation Committee on Corporate Governance and the Supervisory Board of the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance. She is also owner and CEO of WABC Advies VBA. Committed to social causes, she was a founding member of the Aruban Children’s Telephone Foundation and served as Caribbean Representative to the UN NGO Advisory Council on violence prevention. Additionally, she founded the Society & Crime Foundation to promote research and educational materials on safety and prevention.

APPOINTED IN
END 2ND TERM

FEBRUARY 2019
JANUARY 2027



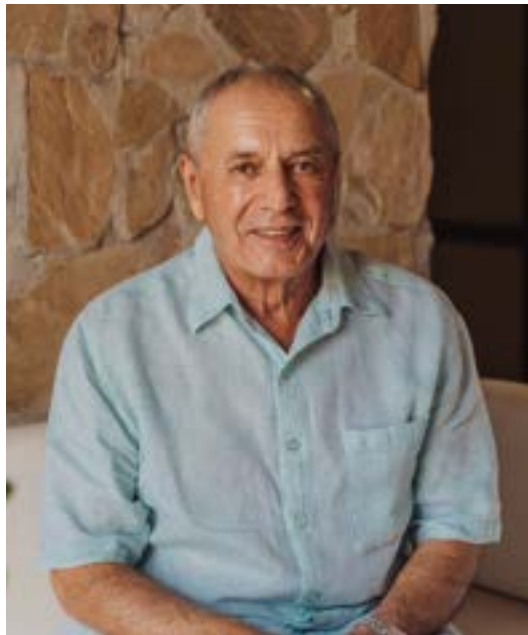
Sanju Luidens-Daryanani,
MBA, BA

BOARD MEMBER

Aruba Tourism Authority’s (ATA) Chief Marketing Officer, with 25+ years of marketing, finance, and tourism expertise effectively leading Aruba’s local and international destination marketing units. In her previous role as Advisor to Aruba’s Minister of Tourism, Transportation and Labor, Ms. Luidens-Daryanani led the project of privatizing ATA from a government department to an independent entity within the public sphere. This new format has allowed ATA to thrive in a highly competitive market and continue to improve as a tourism product. Outside of work, she is actively involved in the local community, and has served on a number of committees and boards, including the Aruba Airport Authority, the Board of the Rotary Club of Aruba, the Aruba Quality Foundation Board and the School Parent Committee, among others.

APPOINTED IN
END 2ND TERM

FEBRUARY 2019
JANUARY 2027



Ewald Biemans, BSc

BOARD MEMBER

Distinguished CEO of the Bucuti and Tara Resort, and a sought-after guest speaker on eco-tourism that has been honored on numerous occasions both locally and internationally for his environmental preservation work. Bucuti holds the most eco-certifications in the Caribbean, and in 2020 Bucuti and Tara was the first hotel to receive the United Nations’ ‘Climate Neutral Now’ award. Mr. Biemans is committed to being involved in the community and taking a leadership role whenever possible, encouraging other resorts on-island to take the initiative to protect Aruba’s natural resources. Biemans is currently on the board of the Aruba Hotel and Tourism Association.

APPOINTED IN
END 2ND TERM

OCTOBER 2020
OCTOBER 2028



Pierre Rafini, MBA, BA, CAMS

BOARD MEMBER

A successful banker with over 27 years of banking experience. Managing Director for RBC Royal Bank (Aruba) N.V. and also the Country Manager for Aruba overlooking the local operations of the bank. In addition, Mr. Rafini serves as the Vice President of Business Banking Dutch Caribbean is responsible for all commercial activities for Aruba, Curacao, Bonaire, Sint Maarten and Saba. Throughout his banking career he held key positions in Insurance, Retail Sales, Marketing and Corporate and Commercial Banking.

APPOINTED IN
END 1ST TERM

FEBRUARY 2023
FEBRUARY 2027

Overview

During 2025, the Supervisory Board continued to strengthen its oversight role through structured meetings and improved governance practices, including the development of a KPI-based evaluation framework for the Executive Board for 2026. The Board maintained an active engagement with management, focusing on strategic direction, financial sustainability, organizational development, and risk management. ACF’s Supervisory Board consists of five members, with meetings attended by the CEO and CCO of ACF.

Highlights of topics from Supervisory Board meetings in 2025

Governance Strengthening & Board Effectiveness: Across the meetings, the Board consistently focused on improving governance practices, including clearer structuring of meetings, timely decision-making, and strengthening oversight tools. Initiatives such as Board evaluations, governance training, and the introduction of KPI frameworks aim to enhance accountability, transparency, and overall effectiveness of supervision. The Board is committed to prepare the foundation for the to be implemented Corporate Governance Code.

Financial Oversight & Sustainability: The Board closely monitored financial performance, budget realism, and audit processes, while addressing funding dependencies and exposure risks. Strategic decisions on capital investments and financial structuring were made to ensure long-term financial stability and responsible resource allocation.

Strategic Planning & Performance Management: Significant attention was given to aligning the Corporate Plans with measurable outcomes. The Board emphasized the need for clear KPIs and quarterly dashboards to better track progress, shifting from descriptive reporting toward results-based management and strengthening its ability to evaluate Executive Board performance.

Organizational Development & Human Capital: Workforce challenges emerged as a central concern, particularly staffing shortages affecting execution capacity. The Board supported organizational restructuring, talent acquisition, and Collective Labor Agreement negotiations, while highlighting the need for leadership development, cultural alignment, and stronger HR functions to sustain long-term organizational effectiveness.

Risk Management, Compliance & Stakeholder Relations: The Board addressed key legal, regulatory, and environmental risks, including compliance obligations, land-use conflicts, and audit findings. At the same time, it reinforced strategic partnerships and national initiatives, positioning ACF as a leading conservation actor while managing external stakeholder expectations.

Governance Structure: ACF’s purpose is anchored in its Articles of Incorporation and defines the scope and context of its conservation activities, both within protected areas and in support of Aruba’s broader sustainable development framework. The Foundation is committed to the protection, preservation, and restoration of Aruba’s natural and cultural heritage from ecological, environmental, geological, archaeological, and historical perspectives.





Come together for nature.



CHAPTER 3

Organizational Profile

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

Overview

ACF is an independent professional nature conservation organization in Aruba, entrusted with the conservation and management of designated Terrestrial and Marine Protected Areas.

ACF is, first and foremost, a nature conservation management organization that focuses on executing species and habitat conservation programs for biodiversity enhancement, ecosystem restoration, and protected area management while educating and raising public awareness and making the protected areas sustainably accessible to visitors for their enjoyment.

The Foundation was established on the 26th of September 2003, and was later registered as a Foundation at the Chamber of Commerce. ACF has a Service Level Agreement with the Government of Aruba for the conservation of the protected areas. On the January 1st, 2005, the Foundation became fully operational and took over management of Parke Nacional Arikok from the Department of Agriculture. In 2017 Spaans Lagoen, in 2019 Parke Marino Aruba, and in 2020, 11 additional Nature Protected Areas were brought under ACF's management.

In 2017 the Foundation started the process of professionalization, and this is an ongoing effort within the organization.

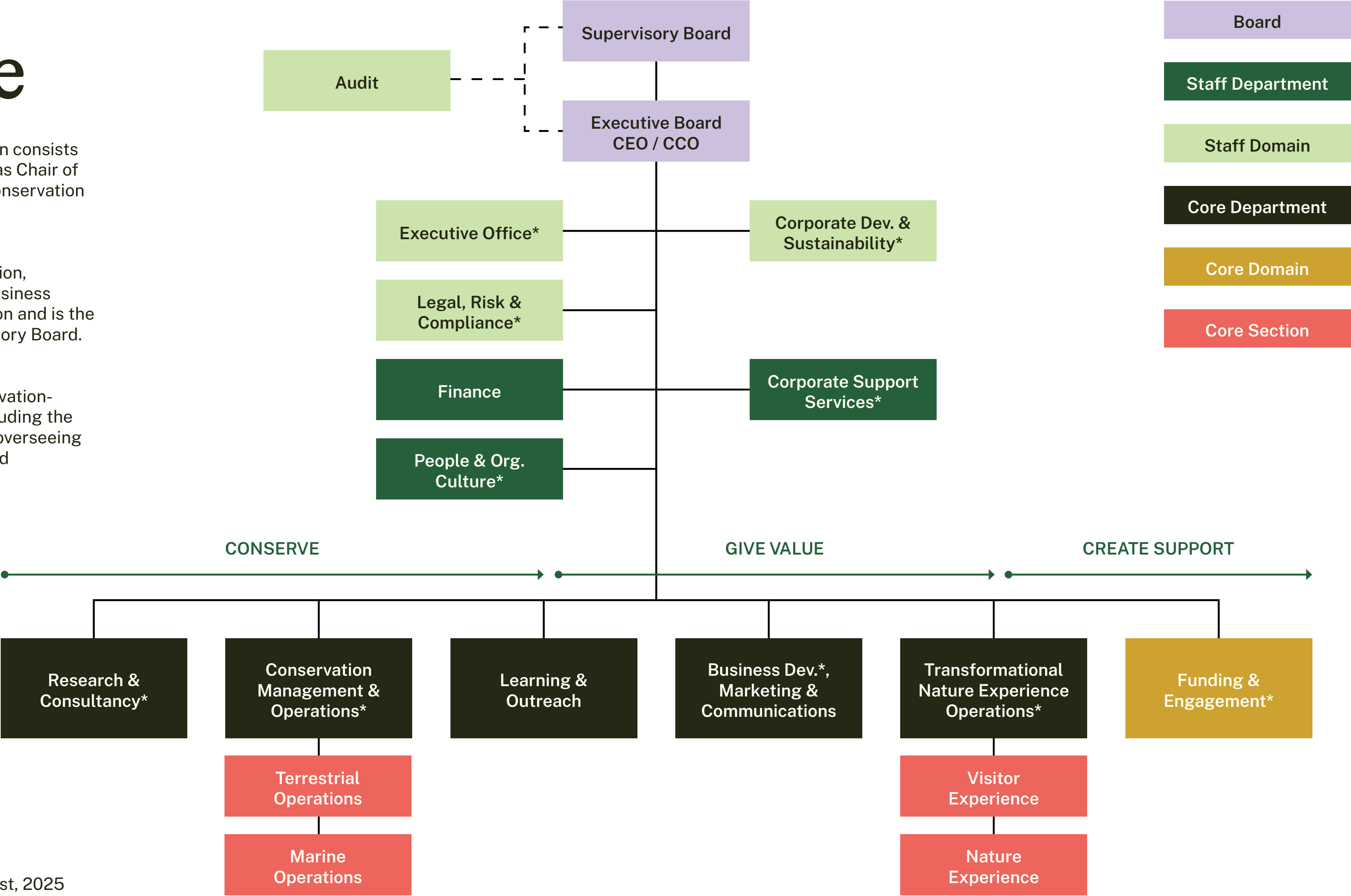
ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

Structure

The Executive Board of the Foundation consists of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), as Chair of the Executive Board, and the Chief Conservation Officer (CCO).

CEO
The CEO is in charge of the overall vision, leadership, strategic direction, and business management aspects of the foundation and is the main point of contact for the Supervisory Board.

CCO
The CCO is in charge of all the conservation-related matters of the foundation including the conservation strategy, management, overseeing all conservation-related programs, and implementation.



*Vacant as per year-end December 31st, 2025



“ For a Sustainable Future,
We *Act*, *Inspire*, and *Engage* All
to Value and Conserve Aruba’s
Natural and Cultural Heritage.

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

Aspiration towards 2032

Core Purpose					Vision			Roles		
For a Sustainable Future, We Act, Inspire, and Engage All to Value and Conserve Aruba's Natural and Cultural Heritage					Through Conservation Leadership Excellence, We lay the Foundation for Thriving Biodiversity, Resilient Ecosystems, and Celebrated Heritage, For a Sustainable Aruba			• Conservation Authority • Connector	• Educator • Facilitator	
Core Values					Our Sustainability Ambition					
Passion We Love Nature and We Love What We Do	Integrity We Do The Right Thing. Always	Unity Together We Achieve More.	Commitment We Aim for Excellence in All That We Do.	Innovation We Look for Solutions from Fresh Perspectives.	Sustainable Natural Ecosystems Diverse, Healthy and Resilient Natural Ecosystems	Sustainable Transformational Experiences Connected and Engaged with Nature		Sustainable Operations Exemplary in Sustainability		

The Aspiration of the ACF provides a clear picture of what we as a foundation stand for and where we want to go, with sustainability central in everything we do.

As a custodian of protected areas on behalf of Aruba, we promote sustainable practices that integrate environmental, social, cultural, and economic objectives and address long-term concerns in meaningful ways to ensure that our natural and cultural resources remain relevant for present and future generations.

We lead by example and embrace sustainable development goals in everyday decision-making.



Strategic Pillars & Goals

The ACF distinguishes four pillars that form the foundation for our strategic choices for the coming ten years. To accomplish our Aspiration 2032, we have committed to a broad strategic approach to focus our attention, energy, and resources on four distinct but interrelated strategic areas.

These four strategic pillars are translated into a set of strategic goals.

I

Leadership in Nature Conservation

Integrated and inclusive care for nature of Aruba and its sustained conservation.

II

Transition To Sustainable Nature Experiences

Create value towards a nature-based experience economy for nature of Aruba, Aruba as a whole and its stakeholders.

III

Excellence In Conservation Co-Creation

Connect and engage people to nature by increasing understanding, stewardship and support for long term conservation.

IV

Sustainable Organizational Development

Transformation to a modern, high performing conservation management organization with future proof capabilities and exemplary leadership in sustainability.

I: Leadership In Nature Conservation	II: Transition to Sustainable Nature Experiences
1.1 Position ACF as Professional Conservation Authority 1.2 Optimize Ecosystem-Based Conservation Management 1.3 Strengthen Biodiversity-Based Conservation Management 1.4 Advocate Optimal Biodiversity Conservation (Including Urban Areas)	2.1 Build Future Proof Infrastructure for Sustainable Nature Experiences 2.2 Build Sustainable Nature Experiential and Transformative Visitor Propositions and Experiences 2.3 Build Inclusive and Inspiring Sustainable Nature Education and Learning Propositions and Experiences
III: Excellence In Conservation Co-Creation	IV: Sustainable Organizational Development
3.1 Build Inclusive and Engaging Sustainable Nature Education and Learning Propositions and Experiences 3.2 Build Inclusive and Sustainable Nature Engagement Propositions and Experience 3.3 Build Network of Strategic Partnerships to Mobilize Resources for Sustained Nature & Heritage Conservation	4.1 Cultivate an Agile, High Performance Organization and Thriving Workplace 4.2 Safeguard Financial Sustainability and Resilience 4.3 Position ACF as Exemplary in Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

Our Cycle of Business (CoB) behind our Aspiration 2032

ACF’s CoB consists of three main flows, which together function to improve the overall performance of ACF, improve the long-term integrity of the entire nature business ecosystem, and prepare for a better tomorrow.

This framework keeps our focus and management attention on our primary task of nature conservation and, consequently, on value creation for nature, our environment, our residents, our communities, our visitors, and our economy to generate their stewardship and support for sustained conservation of our natural assets.

A CoB, in general, describes (visually) a business system. This CoB describes the nature ecosystem of which ACF is the custodian. It provides a deeper contextual understanding of the interrelations and flows between the critical components for sustained long-term conservation of natural assets, including the assurance of financial sustainability of ACF to be able to maintain investing in conservation. We cannot conserve our natural resources without long-term financial commitments.

Our CoB consists of three main flows:

CONSERVE

‘Care for Nature with Resources’.
This flow encompasses the first and foremost task of ACF. It contributes to safeguarding the conservation of natural and cultural heritage both now and in the long term (Stability and Growth) within a dynamic environment.

CREATE SUPPORT

‘Mobilize Resources for Conservation’.
This flow contributes to making long-term conservation possible and better. It aims at substantially increasing a broad and deep understanding of the value of nature, commitment and support (respect, time, resources), and sustainable revenue streams to fund nature conservation for sustained conservation.



GIVE VALUE

‘Create Value for Nature’.
This flow aims to create value through the protection, preservation, and restoration of biodiversity and habitats, improving the condition and sustainability of ecosystem services, and developing and providing sustainable nature-based propositions and experiences.



Honor the *land* that raised us.



CHAPTER 4

Conservation Management & Operations

ANNUAL REPORT

2025



Manangement Areas in Size & Profile



Protected areas under management of ACF

Parke Nacional Arikok (2000), the first protected area and only national park in Aruba. Size: 3400 hectares.

Spaans Lagoen (Ramsar site # 198), Rooi Frances, Rooi Bringamosa, Spaans Lagoen, and Rooi Taki (2017). Size: 70 hectares.

Parke Marino Aruba (PMA) (2018/2019), consisting of 4 MPAs: MPA Oranjestad, MPA Mangel Halto, MPA Sero Colorado and MPA Arikok. Size: 6020 hectares.

Areanan Natural Protegi (2020), consisting of 11 new nature reserves and diverse ecosystems. Size: 880 hectares.

KBAs under management of ACF

KBAs are sites that contribute significantly to the global persistence of biodiversity, in terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems. They represent the most important sites for biodiversity conservation world-wide and are identified nationally using a Global Standard from the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Aruba has five (5) KBAs: **Saliña Druif, Saliña Bubali, Oranjestad Reef Islands, Parke Nacional Arikok and San Nicolas Reef Islands.** All five KBAs fall under the management of ACF.

Important bird and biodiversity areas (IBAs) under management of ACF

IBAs are globally important sites for the conservation of bird species, as identified by Birdlife International. They are the sites needed to ensure the survival of viable populations of most of the world's bird species. The IBA network also holds a large and representative proportion of other biodiversity. IBAs are a subset of the Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs).

Aruba has four (4) IBAs: **Saliña Druif, Saliña Bubali, Oranjestad Reef Islands and San Nicolas Reef Islands.** All four IBAs fall under the management of ACF.

Ramsar sites under management of ACF

A Ramsar site is a wetland area of international importance, designated under the Ramsar Convention, also known as "The Convention on Wetlands", an intergovernmental environmental treaty established in 1971 by UNESCO.

Aruba currently has five (5) Ramsar sites: **Spaans Lagoen** was designated a Ramsar site #198 on May 23rd, 1980, and **Western Wetlands** #2528, **Westpunt** #2527, **Zuidkust** #2526, **Oostpunt** #2525 were designated on November 10th, 2023. Note that these Ramsar sites either completely or partly overlap with some of the protected areas managed by ACF.

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS

Terrestrial, Coastal, and Marine Conservation Operations

ACF's Conservation Management & Operations unit is responsible for the core conservation and daily operations of Aruba's 16+ terrestrial, coastal, and marine protected areas. This work includes implementing protected area conservation management plans (PACMPs/PAMPs), ecosystem-based spatial management, environmental and species monitoring, promoting compliance with rules and regulations, and enforcement. The department delivers both fundamental, day-to-day protected-area management — visitor conduct, threat mitigation, and monitoring of human and wildlife activities — and thematic programs focused on restoring and conserving native, endemic, and endangered species and their habitats.

Through strategic planning, implementation, and ongoing monitoring at ecosystem, habitat, and species levels, ACF aims to conserve and sustainably manage biodiversity and cultural heritage within designated areas, fostering resilience and adaptability to the island's changing environmental dynamics.

Terrestrial, Coastal, and Marine Conservation Operations

Fundamental Conservation of the Terrestrial, Coastal, and Marine Protected Areas

Protected Area Conservation Management Plans

In 2025, three new, ambitious PACMPs were established for Aruba’s terrestrial, coastal, and marine protected areas; additionally, an action plan specifically for the Western Wetlands was compiled. These plans were developed through stakeholder engagement and approved by government for a five-year management cycle (2025–2029), covering terrestrial, coastal, and marine ecosystems. Together, they provide a unified, ecosystem-based framework to safeguard Aruba’s natural heritage, enhance climate resilience, and support sustainable development. Across land and sea, ACF’s management during 2025–2029 will focus on:

- Protecting and restoring biodiversity in arid (xeric) landscapes, caves, beaches, dunes, barancas, salinas, wetlands, mangroves, seagrass meadows, coral reefs, and reef islands.
- Creating island-wide ecological connectivity linking terrestrial, coastal, and marine habitats.
- Recovery actions for priority terrestrial, coastal, and marine endemic and native species.
- Addressing climate change impacts through nature-based solutions (NbS) and adaptive management, including watershed for (rooi, dam, tanki) systems and coastal protection.
- Reducing pressures from tourism and recreation, pollution, invasive species, and habitat fragmentation.
- Strengthening governance, enforcement, and partnerships Engaging communities and stakeholders as active stewards of nature by strengthening public support, education, and participation in conservation.

The integrated management of Aruba’s protected areas will strengthen ecological resilience while supporting economic and cultural values. Continued commitment to evidence-based decision-making, adaptive governance, and collaborative partnerships will help ensure Aruba’s ecosystems thrive for present and future generations.

The PACMPs for Aruba’s terrestrial, coastal, and marine protected areas are deliberately ambitious. They reflect the scale of ecological challenges facing the island, the urgency of climate adaptation, and Aruba’s national and international biodiversity commitments. Successful implementation, however, is not guaranteed by planning alone.

The operationalization of the PACMPs remain highly vulnerable to external pressures:

- *Political instability:* Long-term environmental outcomes depend on policy continuity and public financing. The 2025 national elections and ensuing change of government have shifted priorities, threatening the pace and scope of plan implementation.
- *Escalating anthropogenic pressures:* Unregulated adventure tourism, off-roading, and illegal coastal developments (including unauthorized ranchos and piers) continue to compromise sensitive ecosystems such as the San Nicolas Reef Islands and the Western Wetlands.
- *Legal challenges:* Stopping encroachment into natural and protected areas increasingly forces ACF to divert scarce resources from fieldwork into protracted, multi-year litigation to defend fragile habitats and biodiversity.

Long-term conservation outcomes require policy continuity, adequate public financing, effective enforcement mechanisms, and sustained cross-ministerial collaboration. Disruptions to these enabling conditions may directly affect the pace and scope of implementation.

Accordingly, ACF remains vigilant in protection measures, increasingly including initiating or joining court cases to defend nature. In 2025, a prominent court case was tried to halt proposed development within the fragile, high-nature-value area of Isla di Oro — the island’s largest adjoining mangrove, seagrass, and coral.

ACF will continue strengthening protected-area management and is actively supporting the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Reserve designation — a primary strategic target in ACF’s Multi-Annual Corporate Strategy 2023–2032 — which promotes balance among tourism, economic growth, and nature.

The multi-stakeholder, full-island designation proposal, consolidated and refined in 2025 under the leadership of UNESCO Aruba, is scheduled for review and approval in 2026. If approved, it will establish Aruba as a “living laboratory” for sustainable development in the Caribbean, with ACF-managed terrestrial, coastal, and marine protected areas forming the core of an integrated, island-scale sustainable development management approach.





CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS

Terrestrial Conservation Operations

Cleaning Services and Ecological Maintenance

As ACF prepared for the 2026 workforce shift and an increase in human resources and capacity, 2025 was largely a year of maintaining the fundamentals of protected-area management while further consolidating existing conservation programs. Protected-area boundaries (boulders, gates, etc.) were strengthened and expanded, with continual monitoring and threat mitigation — especially against illegal, high-impact activities and land clearing — giving priority to high-activity coastal-zone protected areas.

Much of ACF’s conservation work focuses first on protection and threat mitigation. Pollution remains an immediate and ongoing threat within protected areas and across the island.

Since 2022, ACF has contracted four cleaning crews to service all protected areas daily. In 2025 these crews conducted terrestrial waste collection across ACF’s protected areas, removing a total of 29,720 kilograms of bulky waste. Operations incurred AWG 10,023.60 in waste-tipping fees alone. In contrast to government practice, organic material (for example, from conservative pruning along roads and trails) is not removed from protected areas but is left to decompose and enrich the soil.

Wildlife Hotline & Invasive Species Mitigation

In 2025 the ACF Wildlife Hotline received 270 wildlife-related reports divided between boa related calls and Wildlife reports (all non-boas reports). Reports came from residents, tourists, schools, and partner organizations across Aruba, reflecting growing public awareness and engagement with wildlife conservation.

The busiest period was the first quarter (January–April), which accounted for 111 reports — 42% of the annual total. March and April were the highest-activity months (34 reports each). Activity dropped notably in the summer (June–September) before picking up in the final quarter, with December being the highest recorded incidents in a single-month WhatsApp (18).

At least 17 distinct species or species groups were identified from hotline reports. About nine cases could not be attributed to a specific species due to media-only submissions or deleted messages. The Shoco (Burrowing Owl) was the most frequently reported species, representing nearly 30% of all species-identified hotline cases, consistent with its status as an endemic subspecies and a flagship terrestrial conservation species for Aruba.



CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS

Terrestrial Conservation Operations

Landbird monitoring

In 2025, under the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA) PROALAS “Monitoring for Bird Biodiversity in the Dutch Caribbean (2023–2028)” (final reporting due in 2027), conducted two land-bird surveys at 20 sampling points in calcareous terrace vegetation and deciduous volcanic areas within Arikok National Park — carried out in February and November. As a DCNA member, ACF facilitated site access for both surveys. The resulting data will guide ACF’s future land-bird monitoring and conservation efforts.

Thematic Terrestrial Species & Habitat Conservation Programs

Cascabel Conservation Program

The primary goal of the Cascabel (*Crotalus unicolor*) Monitoring Project is to prevent extinction of the Aruba Island Rattlesnake by collecting critical data to inform long-term conservation strategies. The semiannual monitoring program began in 2025 and is led by herpetology experts from Toledo Zoo and Eckerd College (USA), with support from ACF volunteer rangers. The project uses population surveys, radiotelemetry, and thermal drones to track snake movements and habitat use. It also functions as a citizen-science initiative, relying on public reporting to map occurrences of this rare species.

Cascabel population status on Aruba is largely unknown. Early work suggested there could be as few as 225 individuals remaining in the wild (Reinert et al. 1995: N = 225–450); however, inconsistencies associated with those initial estimates (Appendix A) likely reflect the inherent difficulty of estimating population size for a cryptic, hard-to-detect species (Reinert et al. 2002).

In coming years the compiled data will help us: map habitats (identify areas where snakes live, breed, and travel); monitor population trends (estimate current population size and assess increases or declines); study behavior (determine movement patterns, home-range sizes, and daily activity); assess threats (quantify impacts from habitat loss, vehicle collisions, and other pressures); and build public awareness to reduce human–snake conflicts and strengthen local citizen-science reporting.

Preliminary results support the need for robust surveys to produce accurate assessments. Comparing the current data to earlier work is difficult due to differences in methodology, timing, and enacted conservation measures. Caution is warranted when extrapolating results from limited surveys to entire populations: as demonstrated, outcomes can vary markedly.

Terrestrial Conservation Operations

The current estimates are based on limited surveys conducted within a single year and may not reflect long-term trends or natural population fluctuations.

Although the abundance estimates are encouraging, population viability analyses (PVAs) using historic parameters indicate the population could still be declining, even under best-case adult-mortality scenarios. Those models excluded stochastic events and potential increases in mortality from frequent human encounters and assumed an initial adult population of approximately 225. Effective Cascabel conservation will therefore require a comprehensive understanding of population trends and updated knowledge of natural history. Continued surveys, together with collection of genetic samples, are essential to develop more accurate population estimates.

Cascabel *Data* Overview

Parameter	Value(s)	Description	Source
Population Size	225	Start with a known adult population size then add realistic #s of juveniles (~13%) and subadults (22%)	Reinert et al. 1992
Survival	Juvenile: 25% Subadult: 65% Adult: 55%	Juveniles and subadults based on estimates from similar species; adults from telemetry studies	Reinert et al. 2008
Lifespan	7-8 yrs	Average assumed lifespan for wild Cascabel	CBSP 1992
Maximum age	20 yrs	Captive individuals	Captive individuals
Age of first reproduction	3 yrs	Age at which snakes reach sexual maturity	CBSP 1992
% Breeding	20% -40%	Proportion of adults available to breed annually	CBSP 1992
Mean litter size	8-10	Average litter size for wild snakes.	CBSP 1992
Sex ratio	50:50	Observed sex ratio from field data	CBSP 1992

Source: Population Assessment of Cascabel on Aruba | 2025 Annual Report (Toledo Zoo)



Terrestrial Conservation Operations

Lora Conservation Program

Originally extirpated from Aruba in 1947 due to poaching and habitat loss, the first 25 wild-smuggled and rehabilitated Lora (Yellow-shouldered Amazons, *Amazona barbadensis*) were successfully released into Parke Nacional Arikok in 2024. Despite setbacks from suspected poaching for the illegal pet trade, 2025 saw the successful hatching and rearing of the group’s first wild-born Lora. As of late 2025 and into 2026, the program is transitioning from an emergency release effort to a structured ten-year recovery strategy in partnership with Stichting Vogelpark Avifauna and the World Parrot Trust. Meanwhile, the birds continue to be monitored weekly by rangers and a dedicated volunteer.

Tern Conservation

Aruba is unique as a critical breeding sanctuary for ten tern species. As outlined in ACF’s Coastal PACMP, ACF intensified its response to rising human and environmental pressures on these species. In 2025 ACF focused tern conservation on long-term coastal management policy, strengthened enforcement, and preservation of critical nesting habitat along the island’s shores. Efforts targeted primary breeding grounds with an annual pre-breeding cleanup and addressed acute anthropogenic threats by mitigating disruptive activities on the San Nicolas Reef Islands and the north coast. ACF worked with local tour operators to curb unregulated adventure tourism and off-roading and issued targeted public-awareness factsheets via social media explaining disturbance signals and appropriate behaviors. In 2025 ACF also engaged key partners Vogelbescherming Nederland and Waardenburg Ecology to secure long-term support and began developing a dedicated monitoring and management plan for Aruba’s terns.

Native Flora Biodiversity Conservation

In 2025 ACF substantially escalated its native xeric-flora conservation efforts, shifting from local site management toward institutional and international engagement. By expanding local cultivation and integrating into global botanical networks, ACF laid groundwork for Aruba’s ecological resilience. Botanical infrastructure was strengthened through expansion of the native plant nursery, which functions as a genetic bank and primary propagation hub for rare, threatened, and ecologically critical xeric species indigenous to Aruba, and through formal integration with the National Reforestation Program (Sembra Speranza).

From 2026 the nursery will act as a biological engine for ecological restoration across Aruba’s protected areas via partner-funded projects, supplying saplings for outplanting in degraded ecosystems, urban zones, and new ecological corridors to reduce soil erosion and restore native biodiversity. Recognizing the need for long-term botanical capacity, ACF advanced multi-year development of the Aruba Botanic Gardens through regional partnerships with guidance from Naples Botanic Garden. The two institutions began designing the garden’s physical layout, institutional mission, and conservation priorities.

ACF initiated a three-year (2025–2028) Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) professional training and accreditation process to ensure the emerging garden meets international standards, strengthening living-collection management, data tracking, and curation strategies. In 2025 ACF also joined the Society for Ecological Restoration (SER) and attended the SER World Conference in Denver, including a full-day mangrove-restoration training. There ACF aligned arid-island restoration challenges with global scientific frameworks and adopted community-led propagation and climate-adaptation methodologies for incorporation into policy and capacity building.

By the end of 2025 ACF’s greenhouse held a documented collection of 466 plants representing 40 species. This collection underpins the native propagation program, is being developed in line with BGCI standards, and will supply plants for habitat restoration within Aruba’s protected areas and for targeted donations.

Terrestrial Conservation Internships

The Terrestrial Conservation team continued to support student development through practical internships. A ‘Bos-en natuurbeheer’ student from Yuverta MBO Velp completed his placement in early 2025, contributing to field conservation work and daily operations, including lora care, greenhouse maintenance, composting, and assistance during wildlife emergencies. He also developed a planting plan for the San Nicolaas/Vader Piet entrance of Arikok National Park, prioritizing suitable species, biodiversity value, visitor experience, and practical maintenance.

Later in 2025, an Aruban student studying ‘Management van de Leefomgeving’ at Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Sciences began an internship with ACF that continued into January 2026. Her placement included lora care, greenhouse and native-plant work, ecological data processing, flora-list development, field support for fauna monitoring and flora analyses, and Learning & Outreach activities. Her primary assignment was redesigning the San Fuego entrance, for which she conducted project planning, site analysis, design development, budgeting, and reporting.

A third volunteer focused on wildlife rehabilitation, specifically aiding bird-recovery efforts.

These internships strengthened ACF’s conservation capacity while providing the students with valuable hands-on experience in Aruba’s terrestrial conservation context.





“ Raising a voice for the
land that raised us.

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS

Coastal & Marine Conservation Operations

The Coastal & Marine Conservation Operations unit plays a critical role in the core conservation and daily management of Aruba's marine protected areas. Its responsibilities include implementing marine protected area management plans, conducting environmental and species monitoring, promoting compliance, and enforcing regulations. In addition to these essential functions, the department leads special thematic projects and initiatives focused on the protection and recovery of key marine species and habitats. These efforts aim to restore ecological integrity and enhance the resilience and adaptability of Aruba's impacted marine ecosystems in response to evolving environmental challenges.

In 2025 ACF advanced coastal and marine conservation initiatives. The "Turning the Tide" pilot project, which had begun in 2023 and continued through 2024 and 2025, sought to kick-start rehabilitation of Aruba's spatially linked coral reefs and mangroves. The initiative aimed to assist natural recovery of marine habitats through rehabilitation — improving ecological value — with the long-term objective of full restoration to former conditions. Turning the Tide, an EU RESEMBID-funded pilot, paired ACF with Wageningen University & Research (WUR), the University of Aruba (UA), and the ScubbleBubbles Foundation to test a range of restorative interventions for corals and mangroves, to rigorously monitor outcomes, and to build local capacity to sustain these efforts. The project supported ACF's broader ecosystem and biodiversity restoration and co-creation goals.



CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS

Thematic Coastal & Marine Conservation

Thematic Marine Species & Habitat Conservation Projects and Initiatives

Coral Monitoring

Foundational to ACF’s conservation work, ecosystem monitoring informed management. Following Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN) guidelines, ACF conducted coral monitoring biennially at 12 representative sites along Aruba’s southwest coast. In 2025 the Marine Conservation team, together with trained volunteers, collected monitoring data at 10 of those sites.

Turning the Tide — Coral Restoration

As part of the ongoing coral-restoration efforts, the project team continued to maintain and monitor both the artificial reef structures and nearby natural reference sites. Maintenance tasks included assessments of reef-structure stability and replanting fragments where earlier pieces had died or detached. A team of volunteers assisted with placement and replacement of fragments from the ScubbleBubbles nursery onto the artificial reefs while recording their condition. To track the progress and health of the artificial reefs and newly outplanted corals, a monitoring session was conducted during the year. This assessment provided a valuable status update for the pilot phase and helped conclude the formally funded portion of the project.

Turning the Tide — Mangrove Restoration

As part of mangrove restoration, the optimal approach for re-opening channels to restore water flow was determined. The external contractor hired in 2024 to excavate channels in the salina completed all feasible work within its scope in 2025. For channels within the mangroves, five volunteer events were held to continue hand-digging initiated in 2024, engaging a total of 75 volunteers. Corporate volunteer events were preceded by educational presentations on mangrove ecology, importance, and threats. Mangrove monitoring was conducted by the project team with trained interns to track ecological and biodiversity changes before and after interventions, assessing birds, fish, macrobenthos, and water quality.

Seagrass Restoration

Funded by the Blue Marine Foundation, ACF initiated a seagrass restoration program to rehabilitate native seagrass habitat in Aruban coastal waters because of its role in supporting marine biodiversity, climate regulation, coastal protection, and local livelihoods. In 2025 ACF completed an assessment and inventory of restoration zones at Mangel Halto and conducted initial beta testing of seagrass propagation at a low-impact test site. Continued beta testing into 2026 will inform active restoration planning.



CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS

Thematic Coastal & Marine Conservation

Thematic Coastal & Marine Species

Habitat Conservation Projects and Initiatives

Marine Mammal Sightings and Stranding Response

Several marine mammal sightings and strandings occurred on Aruba's coasts in 2025. ACF supported the Aruba Marine Mammal Foundation (AMMF) as needed to assist live strandings, or to secure and store deceased animals for potential necropsy or further analysis. ACF assisted with a dead stranding of a Gervais's beaked whale (*Mesoplodon europaeus*) on Aruba's west coast and secured the carcass within protected-area boundaries for later skeletal analysis. ACF also assisted with a live stranding of an Atlantic spotted dolphin (*Stenella frontalis*) that was returned to the ocean the same day; the dolphin was found deceased the following day and was held at an ACF facility pending necropsy arrangements. When a pod of dolphins entered the MPA Mangel Halto lagoon, ACF supported AMMF by minimizing human disturbance to allow the animals to use the lagoon as a temporary refuge.

Invasive Species Mitigation

ACF continued to support control of invasive lionfish within MPA Arikok by facilitating access for trained volunteer lionfish hunters. During the year ACF enabled 23 targeted lionfish removal dives, resulting in the extraction of 201 lionfish from MPA Arikok.

These removals contributed to reef health and ACF also supported the Lionfish Derby organized by Lionfish Snack Aruba and Hadicurari Centro di Pesca.

Supporting Strategies for Coastal & Marine Conservation

Advisory & Consultancy

Embassy Suites Addendum report

To update the findings of the 2023 Hilton Embassy Suites Quick Scan of the Marine Environment, ACF reassessed the area and prepared an addendum report. As a result of this assessment, the number of documented species in the area nearly doubled — from 48 to 92. This increase included the addition of endangered and protected species such as the spiny lobster, queen conch, and loggerhead sea turtle.

Isla di Oro Addendum report

To further clarify the implications and legal framework in effect for the Isla di Oro area, ACF prepared an addendum to the 2024 Isla di Oro Quick Scan. This document provided the Directorate of Infrastructure and Planning, ACF, and other environmental representatives with the contextual information needed to support legal processes related to the potential development of a parcel within this protected nature area.

Marine Conservation Operations

Supporting Strategies for Marine Conservation

Reef Island Impact Report

Given the increasing pressures from expanding recreational development — including the construction and expansion of illegal ranchos and piers, as well as unregulated visitor access — ACF conducted a rapid assessment of several popular reef islands. Based on this assessment, a report was prepared to highlight the natural value of this biodiversity hotspot, which features the “Power of Three”: the vital interconnection between mangroves, seagrasses, and coral reefs. The report also describes the anthropogenic impacts on these protected areas and provides the Directorate of Infrastructure and Planning (DIP) with rationale to withhold exploitation permits for the islands.conservaion priority and ACF’s role as an expert advisor in marine protection.

Legal support

Several developers continue to take legal action against the government of Aruba in order to exploit properties in or near protected nature areas, such as Isla di Oro.

ACF supports the government by providing advice and rationale to uphold the legal status of these protected areas. Where necessary, this support extends into the courtroom.

Sustainable Fisheries

Several government ministries continue to explore ways to develop marine aquaculture and implement Fish Aggregation Devices (FADs) in an effort to enhance food security. However, such developments can have significant negative impacts on marine ecosystems and megafauna if concerns and precautions are not carefully addressed. Therefore, ACF has expressed its concerns in multiple meetings and briefing documents. ACF emphasized that developing a truly sustainable fishery for Aruba is crucial to protecting marine biodiversity and ecosystem services, both for current and future generations.





CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS

Coastal & Marine Conservation Operations

Coastal & Marine Conservation Internships

ACF offered a range of internship opportunities throughout 2025, providing hands-on conservation experience. The Marine Conservation Department supervised six interns who contributed to research and monitoring on key ecological topics — wetlands, mangroves, and coral reefs as part of the Turning the Tide project — alongside seagrass restoration monitoring and mooring-buoy inventories. These internships supported ACF’s scientific programs and helped build local and international capacity in marine and coastal conservation.



Connection with nature is *never lost*, only forgotten.



CHAPTER 5

Learning & Outreach



LEARNING & OUTREACH

Overview

ACF engages a wide and diverse audience through its core concept of “Conservation Education” — a dynamic process designed to shape attitudes, emotions, knowledge, and behaviors toward nature and the environment. This approach goes beyond transmitting environmental facts to emphasize competencies such as awareness, issue analysis, critical thinking, problem solving, decision making, leadership, collaboration, and responsible, sustainable behavior. Initiatives are designed to deepen understanding, foster stewardship, and promote responsible environmental actions among local communities and visitors.

As part of its mission, ACF is committed to providing inclusive, engaging learning opportunities that highlight the value of protected areas and the critical roles of Aruba’s ecosystems and biodiversity. By nurturing an environmentally literate and conscious society, ACF supports the long-term resilience and success of conservation efforts. To achieve this, ACF promotes lifelong learning through a variety of programs, including formal school education, informal community outreach, and corporate environmental training, empowering people of all backgrounds to contribute to a sustainable future.

In 2025 the Learning & Outreach (L&O) Department advanced ACF’s objectives by strengthening community connections to Aruba’s natural environment through structured education, awareness, and engagement initiatives. A key achievement was the development and launch of the community outreach program Naturalesa ta Papia (NTP), which translated conservation work into accessible, engaging, and action-oriented dialogue with the public. Through NTP the department positioned ACF as a clear “voice of nature,” creating opportunities for the community to better understand local ecosystems, conservation challenges, and their role in protecting them.

The department also progressed ACF’s long-term goal of curriculum integration by initiating a redesign of school presentations to align with local curriculum standards (kerndoelen), ensuring conservation education is structurally embedded in the education system and delivers sustained impact for younger generations. In addition, internal capacity-building through in-house workshops strengthened staff and ranger skills, improving the consistency and effectiveness of ACF’s conservation messaging.



LEARNING & OUTREACH

Initiatives

Naturalesa ta Papia

The primary accomplishment of 2025 was the successful rollout and expansion of the Naturalesa ta Papia (NTP) program. NTP was designed as an interactive, dialogue-based outreach experience that combines awareness, education, and a call to action.

Topics covered in 2025 included:

- Mangroves
- Coral reefs
- Lora (*Amazona barbadensis*)
- Cascabel (*Crotalus unicolor*)

Owing to its popularity, a strategic decision was made to limit sessions to 40 participants to preserve quality, interactivity, and depth of engagement, ensuring sessions remained impactful rather than solely high-volume. NTP was also delivered internally as an in-house workshop for ACF staff; evaluation results from these sessions are being used to strengthen internal knowledge alignment and improve training methods. Requests are typically addressed via email or interviews, with responses provided by relevant ACF staff members based on their area of expertise.

Educational Excursions

Throughout 2025 ACF facilitated a substantial and sustained series of school visits to the park. These programs were well attended by primary and secondary students from across the island and demonstrated strong, growing interest from schools in hands-on environmental education. Visits included guided field tours, species identification exercises, interactive demonstrations on habitat restoration, and age-appropriate talks on local biodiversity and conservation challenges.

To assess impact and continuously improve program quality, teachers were asked to complete standardized evaluation forms after each visit. The feedback collected covered learning outcomes, logistical arrangements, curriculum alignment, and suggestions for future programming.



LEARNING & OUTREACH

Initiatives

Schools visiting protected areas in 2025

- Abraham de Veer School
- Ceque college
- Colegio Ora Ubao
- Colegio Pastoor Kranwinkel
- Curason Contento Peuter School
- De Schakel School
- Filomena College MAVO
- International School of Aruba
- Johnson University
- Mon Plaisir Basisschool
- Montessori school
- Princess Amalia Basis School
- Santa Teresita School
- Scol Basico Washington
- Scouting Santanero
- Sint Aloysius School
- Spo St Cruz
- University of Aruba
- YMCA Dakota

Revamping School Presentations

A major ongoing initiative is the redesign of school presentations to align with the Aruban curriculum (kerndoelen).

The new approach aims to:

- Integrate conservation topics into classroom subjects
- Emphasize local flora and fauna and their habitats
- Promote understanding, relevance, and actionable learning

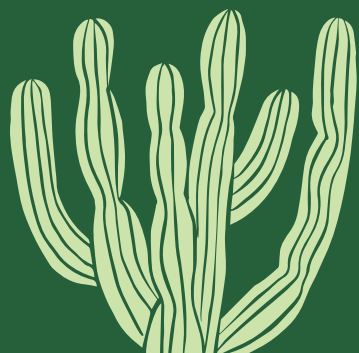
The objective is to shift from general awareness talks to curriculum-based educational modules that directly support teachers and their students development.

Current transition phase:

- Existing carousel-style presentations continue to be delivered
- New curriculum-aligned presentations are under development
- Once development is complete and rangers have finished a conservation onboarding process, the department will fully adopt the new standardized format



Raising a voice for the land that raised us.



CHAPTER 6

Transformational Nature Experience Operations



TRANSFORMATIONAL NATURE EXPERIENCE OPERATIONS

Overview

The primary objective of the Transformational Nature Experience Operations Department is to promote high-value, low-impact visitor activity that highlights ACF’s conservation mission and encourages sustainable behavior among local and international visitors. The department designs and delivers innovative recreational and educational excursions and services, co-creating with stakeholders to integrate protected areas into those offerings. Throughout the year it curated a diverse range of guided and self-guided experiences — designed to be meaningful, high-quality, immersive, and low-impact — that foster deeper appreciation and stewardship of Aruba’s natural and cultural heritage.

By collaborating with internal and external partners and continuing to develop new offerings, the department reinforces the Foundation’s conservation goals while maintaining a minimal environmental footprint.

TRANSFORMATIONAL NATURE EXPERIENCE OPERATIONS

Nature Experiences

Programmed Guided Hikes

Arikok National Park expanded its guided-hiking program. The park ran 11 Rough Hikes (up from 8 in 2024), averaging 22 participants each; these challenging, long-distance hikes were scheduled in the early morning to benefit from cooler temperatures. It also held 11 Full Moon Hikes, with average attendance rising to 33 participants (from 26 in 2024), offering nocturnal nature experiences. Additionally, two new Sunset Guided Hikes outside Parke Nacional Arikok — introduced to showcase other ACF-managed protected areas — averaged 29 participants each and provided a more relaxed, twilight experience.

Visitor Requested Guided Hikes

ACF conducted 240 guided hikes for tourists, schools, and private groups. The most requested trail was Cunucu Arikok (117 bookings), followed by Rooi Tambo & Dos Playa (51), Miralamar (46), and Sero Jamanota (16). The remaining 10 hikes covered other trails, including Conchi, Spaans Lagoen, and Rooi Juditi.

Mountain Bike Events

In 2025 ACF reduced the number of mountain-biking events in and around the park to better balance recreation with environmental protection. The events held still attracted strong participation and promoted outdoor activity, with organizers such as Gears & Beers Cycling Club, Aruba Wieler Bond, and Duo Xtreme sustaining an engaged community. This measured approach supported sport growth while minimizing impact on the park’s natural environment.





TRANSFORMATIONAL NATURE EXPERIENCE OPERATIONS

Visitor Experiences

Trail Running Events

In 2025 Stichting Ultimate Challenge organized two trail-running competitions within Parke Nacional Arikok, giving participants a chance to experience Aruba’s rugged terrain while promoting environmental awareness and appreciation for the park.

Outdoor Nature Venues

Demand for ACF’s outdoor and indoor venues remained strong, mirroring 2024 as visitors increasingly chose Aruba’s natural landscapes for memorable events. Popular uses included wedding ceremonies and receptions, vow renewals, milestone celebrations, corporate anniversaries, team-building retreats, educational seminars, wellness sessions, movie nights, and private breakfasts and brunches. ACF hosted 30 events in these settings during the year. This trend reflects a growing preference for nature-based alternatives to conventional venues and underscores the dual value of protected spaces for conservation and community enrichment.



TRANSFORMATIONAL NATURE EXPERIENCE OPERATIONS

Visitor Management

Conservation Pass Price Adjustments

In 2025, adjustments were made to the conservation pass fee structure for Parke Nacional Arikok to align with revised visitor categories and operational needs.

The updated pricing is as follows:

Non-residents: \$22

Tour Operators (Motorized): \$16

Tour Operators (Non-Motorized): \$10

The day pass for local residents remained unchanged, and children under the age of 17 continued to receive free admission, ensuring accessibility for younger visitors.

To strengthen community engagement, ACF again offered free entry to Arikok National Park on Flag and Anthem Day (18 March), with 30 residents joining the commemorative hike. All locals with valid ID received free park admission, bringing total local visitor numbers in 2025 to 273. These initiatives kept cultural and outdoor experiences accessible.



TRANSFORMATIONAL NATURE EXPERIENCE OPERATIONS

Visitor Management

Effective visitor management is critical to the long-term preservation of Aruba’s natural and cultural heritage. In 2025 ACF continued to implement and strengthen measures to minimize the environmental impact of human activity within protected areas.

Key actions included:

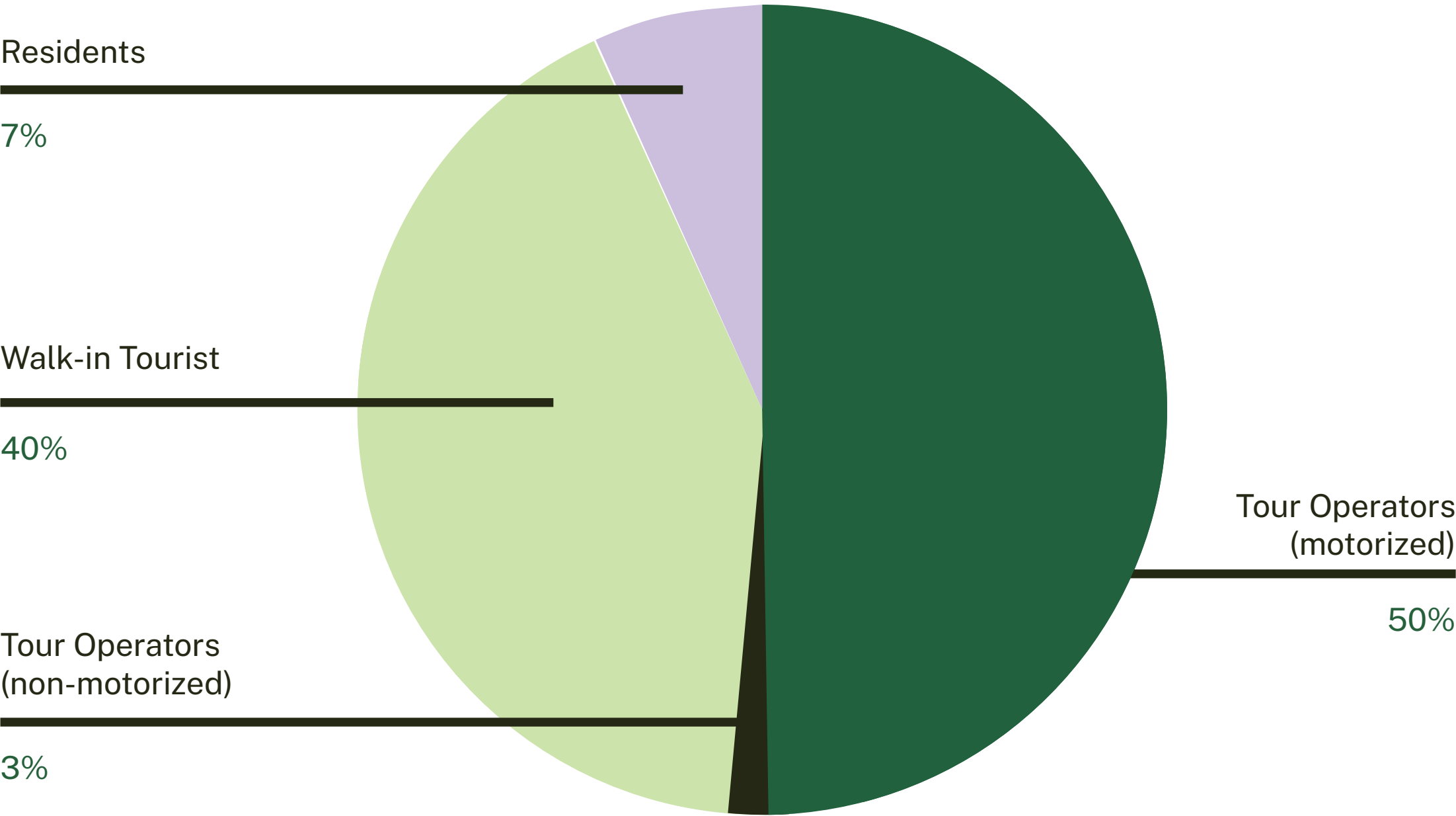
- Maintaining a consistent ranger presence at designated posts throughout the park.
- Conducting regular patrols and enforcement across protected areas, including Parke Marino Aruba.
- Installing clear, informative signage to communicate park rules and promote responsible behavior.
- Establishing physical boundaries to protect ecologically sensitive zones.
- Performing routine monitoring and reporting; documenting and addressing violations, including those by licensed tour operators.
- Coordinating with cruise ship schedules to manage visitor flow during peak periods for safer, more controlled visits.
- Keeping regular communication with tour operators to provide updates and reinforce compliance with park guidelines.
- Delivering targeted tour-operator education on conservation (e.g., tern breeding season guidance) to encourage responsible visitor conduct and foster shared stewardship.
- Through these combined efforts, ACF enhanced visitor management practices while safeguarding the park’s natural ecosystems.

TRANSFORMATIONAL NATURE EXPERIENCE OPERATIONS

Visitor Results

Conservation *Day* Pass

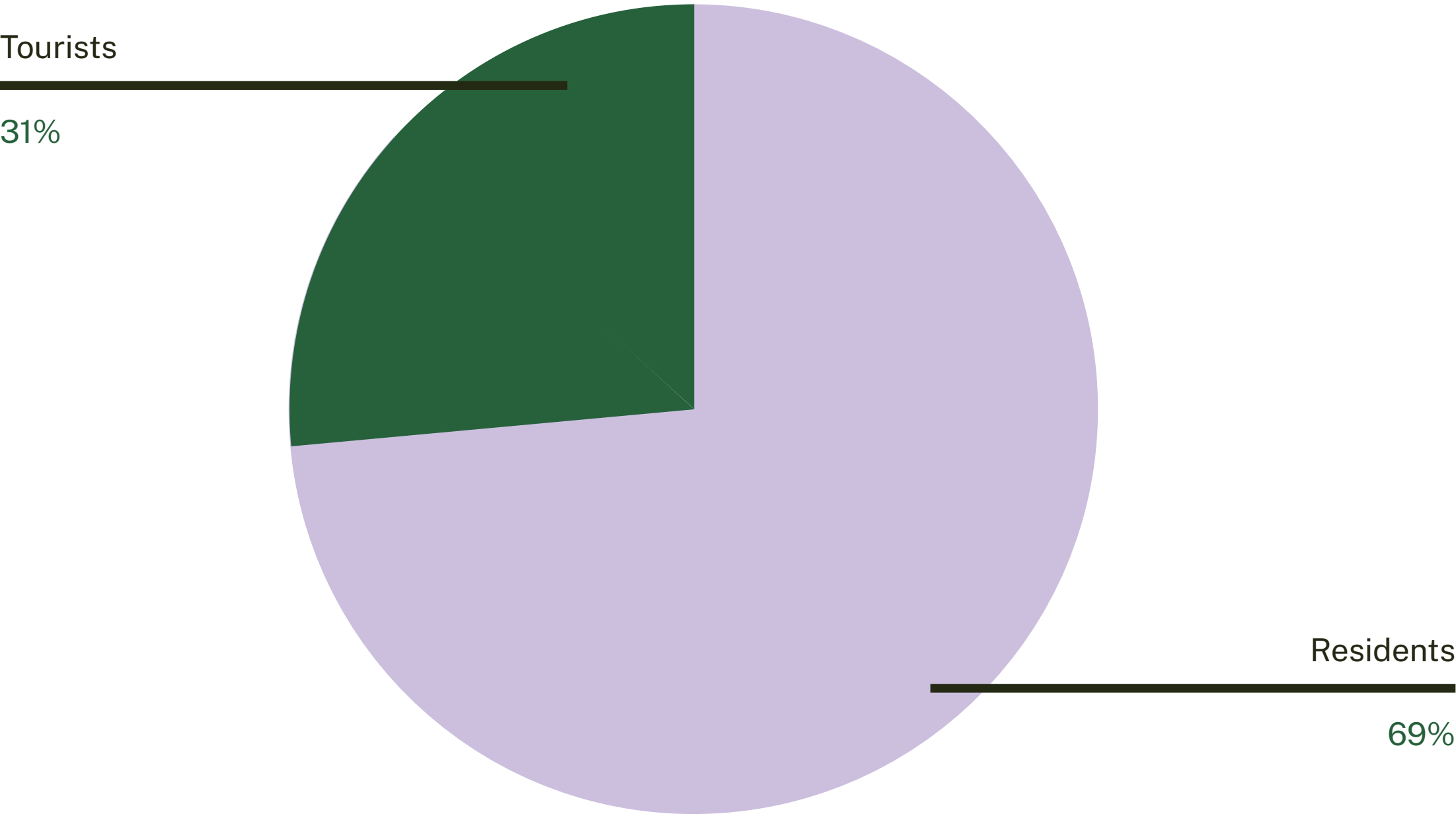
	2025	2024	VAR	% incr/-decr
Walk-In Tourists	79,087	79,811	(724)	-0.9%
Tour Operators (motorized)	98,094	93,138	4,956	5.3%
Tour Operators (non-motorized)	4,917	5,141	(224)	-4.4%
Residents	13,993	13,258	735	5.5%
Total	196,091	191,348	4,743	2.5%



Graph: Conservation Day Pass 2025

Conservation *Annual* Pass

	2025	2024	VAR	% incr/-decr
Residents	760	789	-29	-4.0%
Tourists	346	275	128	46.6%
Total	1,106	1,064	42	4.0%



Graph: Conservation Annual Pass 2025



Home to *more* than meets the eye.



CHAPTER 7

Business Development, Marketing & Communications

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Overview

Building on the foundation established in 2024 with ACF's renewed identity, 2025 focused on strengthening and expanding the organization's positioning locally and internationally. With a clear brand, tone of voice, and strategic direction in place, the department shifted to more consistent, targeted communications, ensuring ACF's recognition as a leading authority in nature conservation and as the independent manager of Aruba's protected areas.

A key milestone was the production and release of Aruba's first nature-restoration documentary, *Turning the Tide*. The documentary served as a compelling storytelling tool, showcasing ACF's work, enhancing credibility, and generating international exposure, partnerships, and dialogue around conservation.

Rebranding opened opportunities for deeper collaboration and new funding avenues, enabling ACF to strengthen relationships with key stakeholders, partners, and the broader community.

Communications were aligned with ACF's conservation framework, structuring content around terrestrial, coastal, and marine priorities while consistently promoting responsible behavior and stewardship.

A major focus in 2025 was humanizing ACF's work by elevating the voices of staff and field teams. By showcasing on-the-ground conservation efforts across platforms — and expanding capacity in marketing, communications, and content creation — the department made communications more personal and educational.

Through strategic storytelling, stakeholder engagement, and targeted outreach, the department continued to build trust, increase visibility, and deepen public connection to nature, supporting ACF's long-term conservation objectives.



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Business Development

In 2025 Business Development was formally established as a dedicated function, marking a key step in strengthening ACF’s capacity to develop sustainable, conservation-aligned opportunities and alternative revenue streams. Still in its early phase, the unit focused on laying a research-driven, collaborative foundation for future growth.

ACF deepened collaboration with the University of Aruba and NHL Stenden through the Destination in Transition (DIT) minor, expanding participation of local and international students. The year’s challenge tasked students with developing a business-development strategy to transform Hofi Fontein into a sustainable MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) venue — balancing use as a gathering space with preservation of natural and cultural values, sustainable operations, and long-term economic viability. This partnership reinforced ACF’s approach of coupling conservation with low-impact economic opportunities.

To advance data-informed decision-making, ACF partnered with the University of Aruba on a merchandise research project. Over six months a full-time student investigated visitor purchasing behavior — assessing product type, pricing, and storytelling — via focus groups and a survey of 331 respondents. The findings provided a sound basis for strategic development of ACF’s merchandise offering in 2026.

Concurrently, the department developed new visitor-experience propositions aligned with ACF’s conservation mission. Internal workshops and cross-department sessions produced four new experience concepts targeting key segments (Nature Explorers, Learners, Health & Wellness Seekers) and refined two existing experiences (Cunucu Arikok and Miralamar hiking trails). These efforts signaled a shift toward intentional experience design that balances engagement with responsible nature use.

Branding & Marketing

Brand Management

Following the introduction of ACF’s new brand identity in 2024, 2025 focused on further establishing and expanding the brand across all touchpoints. Efforts concentrated on strengthening recognition, ensuring consistency, and making the brand more accessible to local and international audiences.

The department developed and refined brand assets, including updates to visitor-facing materials such as the Parke Nacional Arikok map.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

A Spanish version of the map was completed and scheduled for roll-out in 2026 to broaden engagement. Brand visibility was extended through new Rules & Regulations signage beyond park boundaries at Saliña Cerca, Saliña Malmok, and Spaans Lagoen, reinforcing expected responsible behavior in sensitive areas. ACF also produced its first comprehensive Responsible Camping Guide in collaboration with Turtugaruba and distributed it to Aruba’s camping community to promote low-impact practices.

The Naturalesa ta Papia community outreach program was launched with its own visual identity as a sub-brand aligned with ACF’s overall voice and mission, enabling more targeted engagement. In preparation for the 2026 opening of Mondi Conservation Café, the department developed brand guidelines to ensure the partner-operated space aligned with ACF’s identity, values, and visitor-experience standards.

ACF also leveraged community events and public activations (including Open Day at the Marinierskazerne and Ban Bek den Caya) to increase visibility and strengthen public connections. Overall, branding efforts in 2025 reinforced consistency, expanded reach, and advanced ACF’s recognition as a trusted presence in Aruba’s conservation landscape.

Channel Management

ACF continued to leverage a diverse range of communication channels to engage community members, partners, stakeholders, and staff. While core channels remained consistent, the focus shifted to improving performance, refining content, and increasing audience engagement.

Primary channels included social media (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, and newly launched TikTok), email, traditional media, digital advertising, public relations, events, and community outreach. Internal communication was supported via WhatsApp, memos, and dedicated team sessions.

A key highlight was strong growth and engagement on Instagram, which remained a leading platform for visual storytelling and education. ACF also launched TikTok to experiment with dynamic content and reach new audiences. In the final quarter, a more structured content strategy — with defined content pillars and improved planning — boosted consistency and alignment across platforms.

These efforts strengthened ACF’s digital presence, improved engagement, and enhanced the effectiveness of communications in supporting awareness, education, and conservation messaging.

Social Media Performance 2025

 Facebook	 LinkedIn	 Instagram
Start: 18,555 End: 19,656	Start: 972 End: 1,287	Start: 2,715 End: 3,744
(Increase of 1,101 for the year 2025)	(Increase of 315 for the year 2025)	(Increase of 1029 for the year 2025) *not very active, largely due to inaccessibility to the platform.



Branding & Marketing

Instagram						
Metric	2025		2024		VAR	% incr/-decr
Followers	2,715		1,778		+937	53%
Reach (x1000)	51		6.8		+44.2	650%
Profile Visits (x1000)	7.9		1.4		+6.5	464%
Engagement (reactions, comments, and shares) (1000x)	26.6		4.6		+22	478%

Facebook						
Metric	2025		2024		VAR	% incr/-decr
Followers	18,555		17,355		+1200	7%
Reach (x1000)	273.9		180.8		+93.1	51%
Profile Visits (x1000)	56.3		27.3		+29	106%
Content Interactions	19,106		—		—	—
Engagement (reactions, comments, and shares) (1000x)	25.8		26.5		-0.7	-3%

Followers Instagram	2,715		1,778		+937	53%
Followers Facebook	18,555		17,355		+1200	7%
Total	21,270		19,133		2,137	11%



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Communications

Community Communications & Engagement

ACF strengthened its community engagement efforts by creating more structured, accessible, and impactful ways to connect people with nature and conservation. A key development was the launch of Naturalesa ta Papia, in collaboration with the Learning & Outreach department. Communications supported the program through branding, promotion, and registration management, while ensuring all content aligned with ACF’s voice and identity. The program introduced a more consistent and targeted approach to community engagement, reaching new audiences across the island. Throughout the year, eight information sessions were supported, focusing on key topics including corals, mangroves, the Yellow-shouldered Amazon, and the cascabel. Communication efforts were closely aligned with these themes, amplifying messaging across platforms and creating a more integrated outreach approach.

Community engagement was further strengthened through direct outreach to over 150 residents living near protected areas where new Rules & Regulations signage was installed. Through personalized communication, residents were informed of these efforts and invited to play an active role as guardians of these areas, supporting monitoring and responsible use.

A major highlight was the launch of Aruba’s first nature-restoration documentary, Turning the Tide, which became a powerful tool for community awareness and education. The documentary was screened publicly 70 times at local cinemas, reaching 1,846 viewers. In addition, private screenings were organized for 10 secondary schools, engaging a total of 946 students, with proceeds from public viewings supporting transportation and access for students.

To ensure inclusivity and wider access, additional community-focused screenings were organized, including a special viewing at the national park for differently abled groups and two nationwide broadcasts on Telearuba in celebration of Aruba’s National Day. The documentary was further made accessible globally through its release on YouTube on World Oceans Day.

In addition to local outreach, ACF extended its community engagement internationally through screenings of Turning the Tide in the Netherlands. Screenings held at two theatres connected with the Aruban diaspora and created opportunities to engage with international stakeholders and like-minded partners. These events supported knowledge exchange and opened doors for future collaboration.

Through these combined efforts, ACF continued to strengthen its role as a bridge between conservation work and the community, creating meaningful opportunities for awareness, dialogue, and shared responsibility in protecting Aruba’s nature.



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Communications

Internal Communication

Internal communications remained a priority in 2025, ensuring associates stayed informed and connected to the organization’s work and direction. Communication was maintained through established channels — WhatsApp, memos, emails — and four informative team sessions, “Atardi Informativo den Hofi Shon Shoco,” held in collaboration with the Executive Team and People & Organizational Culture.

The department strengthened its support for People & Organizational Culture, contributing to clearer internal messaging. Associates were regularly recognized through targeted communications for events such as International Women’s Day and International Men’s Day. A highlight was World Ranger Day, for which the department produced a new video showcasing the diversity and dedication of ACF’s team and honoring their commitment to Aruba’s nature.

Corporate Communications

Media Interviews & Expert Positioning

ACF strengthened its leadership and field experts as trusted voices in conservation by increasing strategic media engagement. The organization highlighted the expertise of Tyson Lopez (CEO), Natasha Silva (CCO), Sietske van der Wal (Marine Conservation Specialist), and Roger Solagnier (Terrestrial Biodiversity Conservation Ranger), expanding its portfolio of spokespersons.

In 2025 ACF participated in 26 media interviews and features across television, radio, print, podcasts, and international platforms, reflecting greater volume and consistency. These appearances positioned ACF’s executive board and subject-matter experts as credible voices on Aruba’s conservation issues.

Interviews were used to shape public understanding of priority topics, respond to emerging issues, and raise visibility for local and global conservation work — from the launch of Turning the Tide to ongoing species-conservation and visitor-management efforts. These activities strengthened trust, raised awareness, and reinforced ACF’s role as a leading voice for nature conservation in Aruba.



Media Interviews 2025

- January 2025**
- Baboe Hoek – Importance of Cascabel
 - Bon Dia Aruba – Importance of Cascabel
 - Telearuba Nos Mainta – Launch of Turning the Tide (full show)
 - Fresh FM – Launch of Turning the Tide documentary and project
 - Telearuba & Viral 297 – Launch of Turning the Tide
 - Bon Dia Aruba – Launch of Turning the Tide

- February 2025**
- Bon Dia Aruba – ACF x RIU Partnership on Coneu Program
 - 90 Grado di Noticia Radio – Importance of Cascabel

- March 2025**
- Telearuba – Responsible Camping Guide

- April 2025**
- DNM Podcast – Cadushi ta Zona: State and value of nature in Aruba

- June 2025**
- Telearuba – Upgrading work in Parke Nacional Arikok
 - 24ora – Mangel Halto visitor management

- July 2025**
- Revista Alo – Story of Parke Nacional Arikok and ACF’s role
 - Bon Dia Aruba – Decline of insects in Aruba
 - Telearuba – Visitor management at Mangel Halto
- August 2025**
- Flying Dutchman (KLM In-flight) – CEO interview on responsible behavior
 - Bon Dia Aruba – Status of Yellow-shouldered Amazon in Aruba

- September 2025**
- Voices & Choices with Marisol Tromp – Learning, outreach & conservation projects

- October 2025**
- XFM with Tarrick Ras – Toledo Zoo & ACF Cascabel monitoring
 - Magic FM – ACF & Toledo Zoo Cascabel monitoring
 - Bon Dia Aruba – Cascabel monitoring project

- December 2025**
- Bon Dia Aruba – Invasive species & habitat restoration
 - Bon Dia Aruba – Marine Park awareness
 - Bon Dia Aruba – State of nature in Aruba

Communications

Content Development

ACF strengthened its content management approach by combining performance-driven insights with more structured and intentional storytelling across its digital and media channels. Social media remained a key tool for awareness, education, and engagement. Across Instagram and Facebook, a total of 117 posts on Instagram and 122 posts on Facebook were published throughout the year. Consistency in posting remained important, while we shifted the focus toward creating more meaningful and engaging content rather than focusing on volume alone. This approach resulted in strong performance across platforms. Instagram, in particular, saw significant growth with an increase of +937 followers, alongside an +87% increase in reach and +82% increase in profile visits, reflecting a higher level of audience engagement and interest in ACF's content. Growth was driven by stronger visual storytelling and more human-centered content. Facebook also demonstrated steady growth, with an increase of +1,200 followers, a +34% increase in reach, and a +52% increase in profile visits, reinforcing its role as an important platform for community connection and information sharing.

On LinkedIn, ACF continued to strengthen its professional presence, growing from 972 to 1,287 followers (+315), supporting visibility stakeholders and the international conservation network. Beyond social media, ACF significantly increased its content output through media and press. A total of 15 press releases were developed and distributed in 2025, compared to 8 in the previous year. These releases focused on key milestones, including the launch and international positioning of Turning the Tide, the introduction of Naturalesa ta Papia,infrastructural updates within Parke Nacional Arikok, growing international collaborations, and ongoing research and biodiversity protection initiatives and conservation actions. The increase reflects a more proactive approach to storytelling and media engagement, ensuring ACF’s work is consistently communicated to both local and international audiences.

Press Releases 2025

- January 2025**
 - Aruba ta haña su propio documentario di restauracion di naturalesa
- March 2025**
 - ACF ta introduci ‘Naturalesa ta Papia’
- April 2025**
 - ACF ta inverti den mantencion y mehoracion di Parke Nacional Arikok
 - ACF y Ban Lanta y Planta ta duna bek na naturalesa riba Dia di Mama Tera
- June 2025**
 - Aruba su storia di restauracion di naturalesa riba pantaya na United Nations Ocean Conference
 - ‘Turning the Tide’ ta debuta riba Youtube pa Dia Mundial di Ocean
- July 2025**
 - ACF: e complehidad di maneha impacto di bishitante na Mangel Halto

- August 2025**
 - ACF ta dedica un siman na aprecio di ranger
- October 2025**
 - ACF ta fortifica colaboracion internacional pa conservacion di naturalesa
 - ACF ta organisa anochi di pelicula pa famia den Hofi Shon Shoco
 - ‘Turning the Tide’ ta estrena na Hulanda pa inspira colaboracion
- November 2025**
 - ACF ta organisa competencia di bowling pa su empleadonan
 - Studiantenan di Universidad di Aruba y NHL Stenden a presenta concepto pa Hofi Fontein
- December 2025**
 - ACF hunto cu partners internacional ta continua investigacion crucial riba Aruba su cascabel endemico
 - ACF ta lansa proyecto piloto di separacion di desperdicio den Parke Nacional Arikok
 - ACF ta reconoce coleganan campion 2025





The mouthpiece of mother nature.



CHAPTER 8

People & Organizational Culture



PEOPLE & ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Overview

The People & Organizational Culture Department supports ACF's objectives by strengthening organizational structure, leadership, and workplace culture. It enables high performance by attracting, developing, and retaining a capable, motivated workforce, ensuring ACF has the skills, capacity, and culture needed to deliver its conservation mission effectively. Furthermore the department undertook a significant effort to update and develop key Human Resources instruments, including the Job Profiles, Job Grading System, Salary Structure, and Performance Management System. These foundational tools are being prepared in anticipation of the implementation of ACF's first Collective Labor Agreement (CLA), marking a major step forward in formalizing and professionalizing the organization's labor relations framework.

In 2025, the department initiated the establishment of the Conservation Management Operations Department within ACF. This process included recruiting a new manager, identifying associates transitioning into the department with newly defined roles and responsibilities, and redistributing and aligning internal processes to embed the new unit. Following the manager's recruitment in 2025, the first group of associates was transferred to the department. The full transition is planned for completion in 2026, with further organizational alignment to the new structure continuing thereafter.

Overview 2025

Organizational Capability Building

Organizational Culture Development

To improve internal communication and foster an open, engaged culture, People & Organizational Culture supported the Executive Board in holding three town hall meetings (Atardi Informativo den Hofi Shon Shoco) in 2025 to share updates, promote transparency, and gather associate feedback.

The department also ran social and engagement activities to reinforce team culture and ACF's values, including a domino tournament, quiz night, storytelling evening at Cunucu Arikok, bowling, and the End-of-Year Celebration, strengthening collaboration and belonging.

For Ranger Appreciation Week 2025, a series of events promoted connection, wellbeing, and team spirit: Family Movie Night, a nature hike, a half-day team-building session, complimentary massages, and a closing shared breakfast to thank associates for their commitment.

Finally, People & Organizational Culture launched Colega Champion 2025, a peer-to-peer, values-based recognition program. Associates voted for colleagues who best embodied ACF's five values. The overall winner was named Colega Champion 2025, and top vote-getters per value were awarded Value Champion 2025; winners were announced at the End-of-Year Celebration.

Management Team Development

To further strengthen management capabilities, the People & Organizational Culture Department organized a series of workshops for directors, managers, and supervisors. These workshops were aligned with ACF's strategic priorities and aimed at building leadership capacity across the organization. In preparation for upcoming organizational changes, a Change Matters workshop was facilitated to highlight the importance of effective change management and to support leaders in navigating ongoing change. In addition, a Reward & Discipline workshop was organized to equip the management team with the skills needed to manage performance through constructive discipline and meaningful recognition. An Emotional Intelligence workshop was also facilitated, providing leaders with an opportunity to reflect on their own behaviors, better understand different personality types, and enhance communication and engagement with associates. Together, these workshops contributed to stronger leadership, improved communication, and a more resilient organizational culture.

People Flow

Recruitment, Onboarding, Offboarding

In 2025, the organization used a people-flow approach to onboarding and offboarding to ensure consistency, clarity, and appropriate controls across the employee lifecycle, supporting operations, workforce planning, and organizational resilience.

Several key positions were filled through a structured recruitment and onboarding process, including roles in marketing & communications, procurement & inventory, project coordination, learning & outreach, nature experience operations, and terrestrial conservation. Onboarding followed a consistent process to ensure timely system access, clear responsibilities, and alignment with organizational values.

Offboarding was managed respectfully and with appropriate controls to support smooth transitions and operational continuity. Departing roles included positions in marketing & communications, visitor experience, learning & outreach, nature experience operations, people & organizational culture management, and research & conservation management.

Performance Ability

Employee Learning & Development

A company-wide Change Matters workshop equipped associates with practical tools to navigate organizational change. An organization-wide First Aid & AED training was also delivered to ensure readiness for emergencies; this training will be offered regularly to maintain certification and safety preparedness, fostering a positive and supportive workplace culture.

Compensation & Benefits

In January 2025, a 6.7% inflation adjustment was applied to salaries of employees who served between 2018 and 2021 to partly offset cumulative inflation and support retention and financial wellbeing. In July 2025, ACF introduced supplementary health insurance covering dental, vision, medication, and other services. Collective Labor Agreement (CLA) negotiations with the union continued through 2025; the agreement was not finalized and negotiations will resume in 2026.

Employee Uniforms

The uniform redesign initiated in 2024 was completed in 2025. Associates received new, role-specific uniforms aligned with updated branding. Rangers were issued two uniform types (dry and wet) for field duties, and administrative staff received an office uniform, improving functionality and professional identity.

PEOPLE & ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

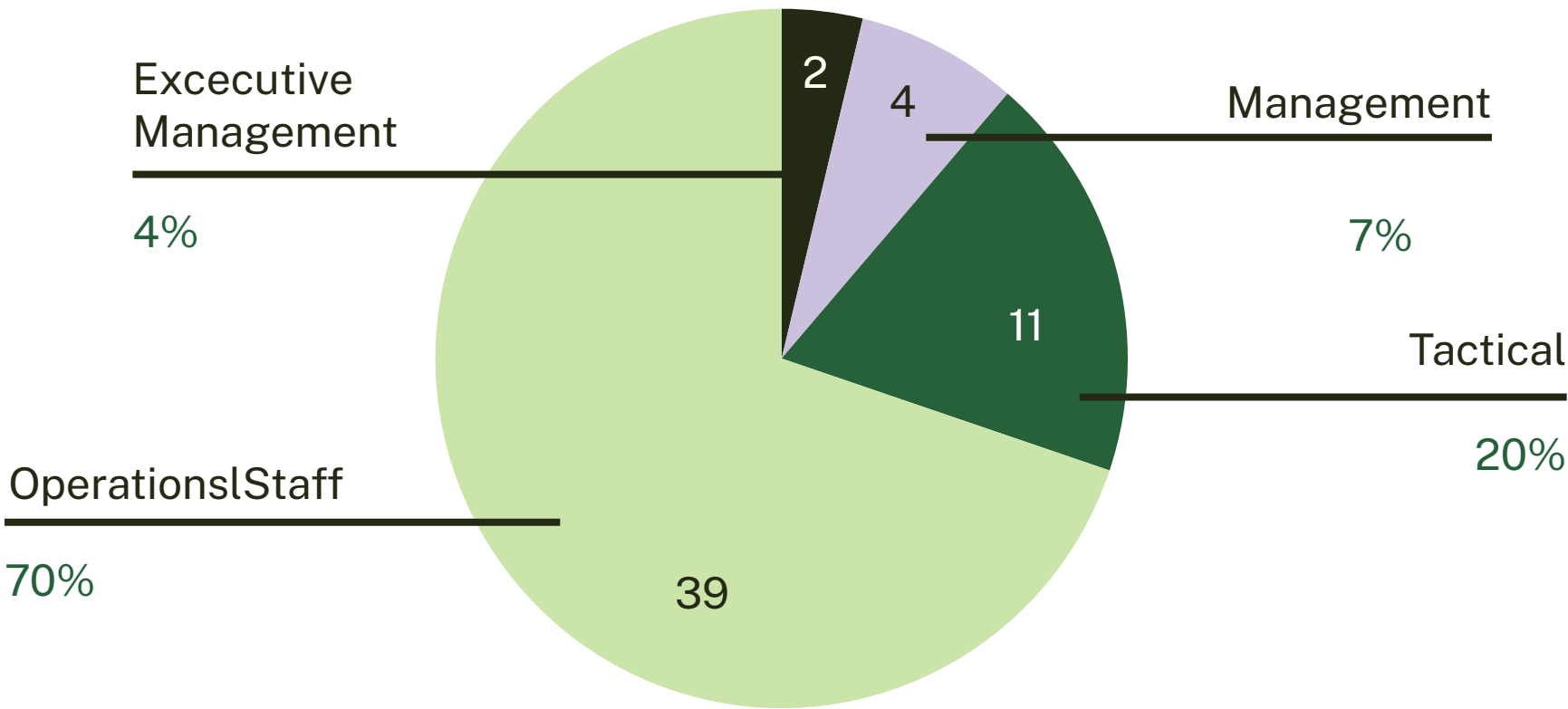
Employee Snapshot 2025

Management Team

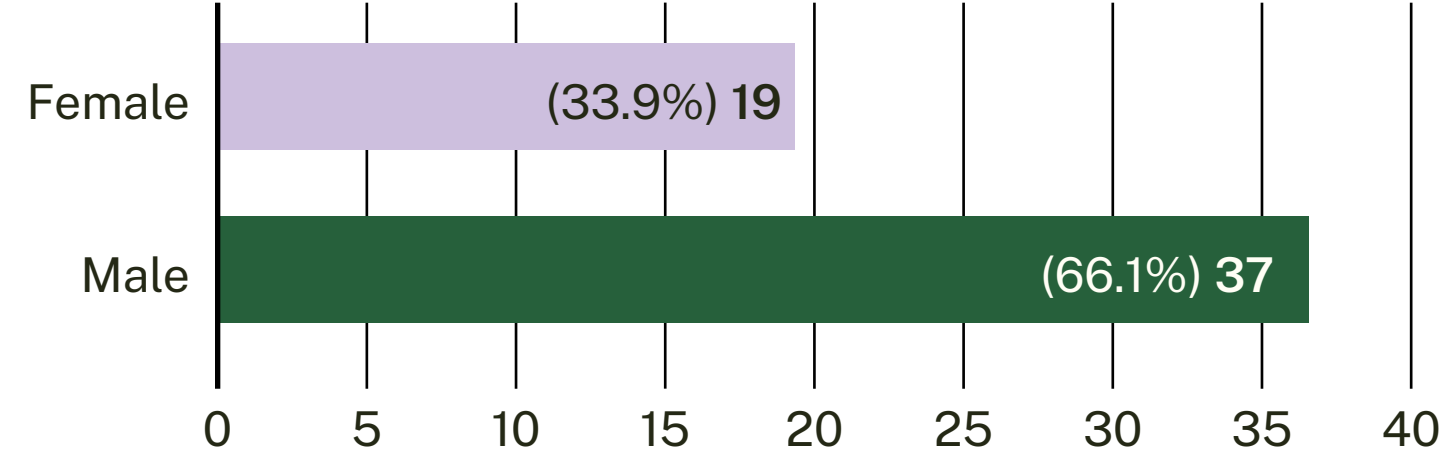
Person	Position
Tyson Lopez	Chief Executive Officer
Natasha Silva	Chief Conservation Officer
Randolph Ponson	Finance Manager
Edeline Berg	Business Development, Marketing & Communications
Armand Kelly	Conservation Operations Manager
Janine De Mey	Transformational Nature Experience Operations
Vacant*	People & Organizational Culture Manager

Types of Employees

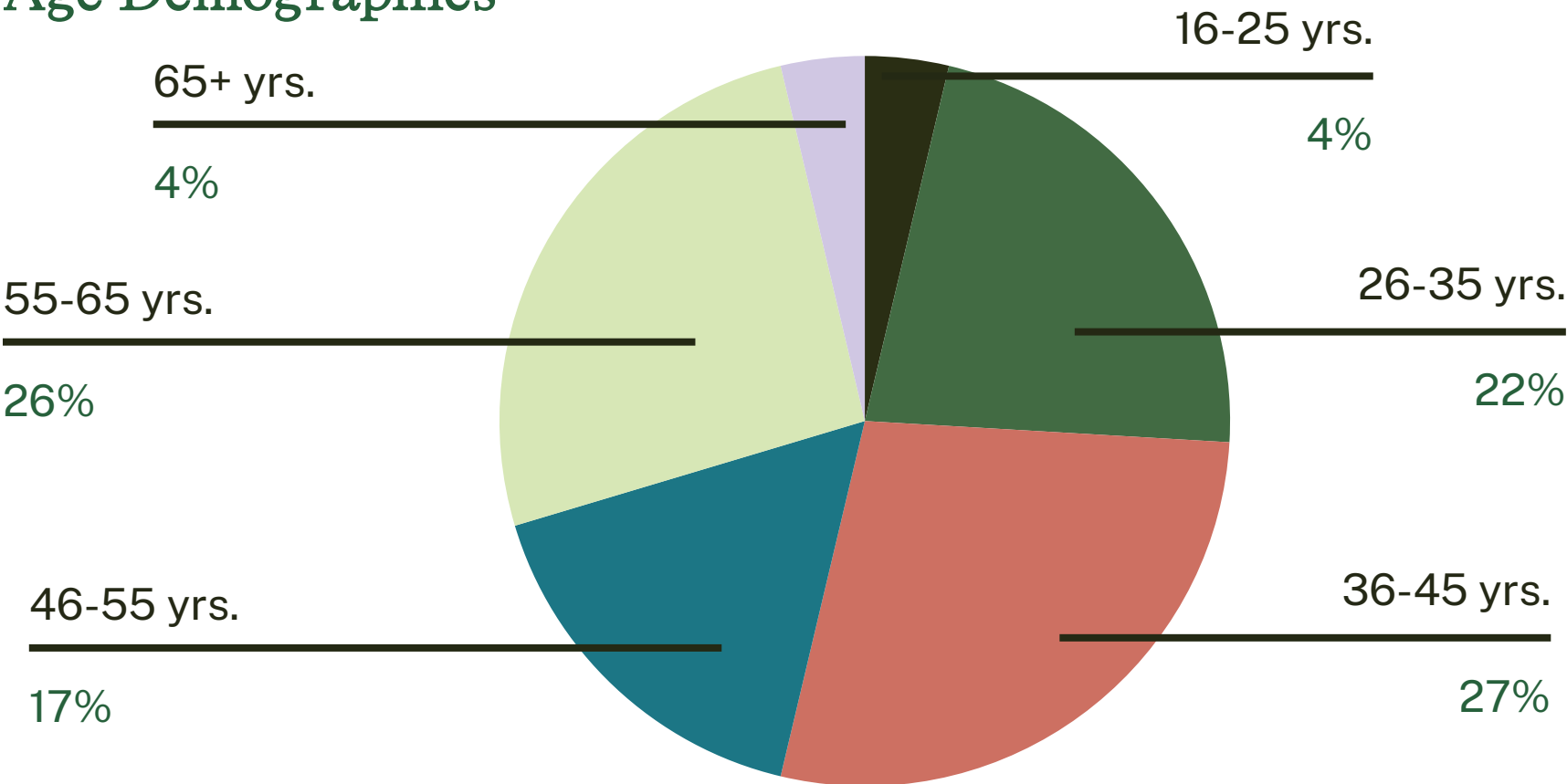
	Start 2025	End 2025	+/-
Executive Management	2	2	-
Management	6	4	-2
Tactical Staff	10	11	1
Operational Staff	37	39	2
Total	55	56	1



Gender of Employees



Age Demographics



*Vacant as per year-end December 31st, 2025

*Graph: Type of Employees in 2025



Biodiversity loss is difficult to see, but *impossible to miss*.



CHAPTER 9

Corporate Support Services

CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES

Overview

The core responsibility of the Corporate Support Services unit is to manage, service, and maintain the organization's assets and infrastructure to ensure optimal functionality, safety, and long-term use. As a supporting unit, it plays a critical role in keeping operations running smoothly, enabling the organization to effectively deliver on its overall conservation objectives. These improvements are essential not only to ensure safe and enriching experiences for all park visitors, but also to support the long-term sustainability and resilience of Aruba's natural and cultural heritage.

Master Plan — Visitor Amenities and Infrastructure, Arikok

The Visitor Amenities and Infrastructure Master Plan for Parque Nacional Arikok is part of ACF's Multi-Annual Corporate Strategy 2023–2032. The plan outlines targeted upgrades to key facilities to improve accessibility, comfort, sustainability, and responsible tourism while preserving the park's natural character. It comprises several projects to be implemented over two years.



CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES

Management

Infrastructure Management

Vader Piet Entrance

The renovation and expansion project of the entrance facility at Parke Nacional Arikok, located at Vader Piet, commenced in 2024 and was completed in 2025. The original structure, built in 2010, had not undergone any major maintenance or renovation prior to this project. The project involved a comprehensive renovation and expansion of the control booth to modernize the facility and meet current operational needs. The internal layout was redesigned to improve visibility for associates operating from the building, including the installation of larger windows, a new kitchen, and an external toilet for visitor use.

Although the building was originally designed to receive electricity, it had never been connected. As part of this renovation, electricity was provided to support kitchen appliances, air conditioning, and an exterior powered boom barrier. Due to the remote location and lack of access to the national grid, the facility became the park's first fully off-grid, solar-powered building. In addition, pavers were installed around the building and parking area to improve accessibility and enhance the visitor experience. Native vegetation was planted by the Conservation Operations Department to further integrate the site into the surrounding landscape.

Throughout the year, routine first-line maintenance was conducted across all Foundation buildings. This included applying fresh coats of paint to most office spaces, pressure washing building decks, and thoroughly cleaning roofs to remove mold buildup. Minor repairs were also completed at both the Visitor Center and Administration Building to maintain their condition. Main projects completed in 2024 was the full renovation of the Van Der Piet and San Fuego booth, the employee pantry, and the welcome wall.

Railing & Stairs Projects

The railing and stairs renovation project at Fuente, Dos Playa, Boca Prins, the Quadirikiri lookout, Quadirikiri Caves, and Conchi is an integrated initiative aimed at improving accessibility and visitor safety within Parque Nacional Arikok.

At Fuente, the project focused on removing the existing railing and installing a new hardwood railing designed for long-term durability and low maintenance, providing a clear safety barrier for visitors. Similar principles were applied at Dos Playa and Boca Prins, where stairs were renovated to ensure even, standardized steps and new railings were installed to reduce the risk of falls and provide support when ascending and descending. These projects were implemented with a strong emphasis on safety, durability, and minimal maintenance, while guiding visitors to remain on designated infrastructure in order to preserve the natural integrity of the sites.

The projects at the Quadirikiri lookout and Quadirikiri Caves followed the same design and safety principles. The stairs and railing project at Conchi will be implemented in 2026, applying the same standards and approach.

Management

Infrastructure Management - Continued

Parking Lot Visitor Center

For many years, there was discussion about the placement of a parking lot in front of the Visitor Center at Arikok National Park. This open terrain was used for both events and visitor parking; however, because it was unpaved, vehicle use created dust clouds that settled on the Visitor Center deck. To improve the use of this space, a paved parking lot was designed to accommodate 18 parking spots while remaining flexible for future events. The design also includes provisions for a podium and potential grandstand seating. This project was essential to reduce erosion, minimize dust, and enhance the use of the area in front of the Visitor Center for planned activities related to the Mondri Conservation Café.

Construction of Conservation Building and Workshop

As ACF transitions into a conservation management organization, the need for additional office space to accommodate the core conservation team has become essential. For this reason, ACF initiated the construction of a new Conservation Building and a Workshop at Parke Nacional Arikok. This investment demonstrates ACF's commitment to strengthening the island's conservation work. This project was initiated in 2025 and will be finalized at the beginning of Q3 2026.

The Conservation Building will comprise six office spaces accommodating up to twelve associates, as well as a small meeting room. The departments of Research & Consultancy, Conservation Operations, and Learning & Outreach will be housed in this building, together with the Chief Conservation Officer.

The building integrates the restoration of an old traditional cunucu house, which will be returned to its former character, along with an additional newly constructed structure that complements the original design.

The Workshop will provide both covered and uncovered work areas to support a wide range of operational activities. It will also include a large storage area for tools and equipment essential to ongoing maintenance and fieldwork. The Corporate Support Services unit will be based in the Workshop. In addition, parking space for 16 vehicles will be provided for staff working in these facilities.

Visitor Center Enhancements

Food & Beverage Proposition Infrastructure – Mondri Conservation Café

As part of ACF's Multi-Annual Corporate Strategy 2023–2032, the Visitor Center at Parke Nacional Arikok will be expanded to include a new café. In alignment with ACF's mission, the Mondri Conservation Café is designed with multiple layers of impact, integrating design, education, and food and beverage offerings.

In 2025, the space designated for the future Mondri Conservation Café was renovated, with the interior specifically designed to reflect the surrounding xeric landscape of the Visitor Center. The café is planned to open in the first half of 2026, with operations outsourced to an external operator.

Merchandise Proposition Infrastructure – Mondri Conservation Gift Shop

In addition to the Mondri Conservation Café, ACF intends to develop a Mondri Conservation Gift Shop at the Visitor Center of Arikok National Park. This initiative is part of the Multi-Annual Corporate Strategy and a key effort to generate sustainable revenue for ACF. In 2025, the gift shop concept was developed, and preparatory work was completed to enable renovation of the space in the second half of 2026. Both the gift shop and the café are planned to open by the end of Q2 2026.

Facility & Asset Management

Throughout 2025, various first-line maintenance activities were carried out to ensure that ACF's facilities and assets were properly maintained and fully functional, enabling associates to perform their duties effectively. Key projects delivered during 2025 include the renovation of the Adobe House in Cunucu Arikok, the renovation of palapas at Mangel Halto, and the placement of a temporary office container to support the Marine Conservation Unit and the Learning & Outreach Department. In addition, as part of the Turning the Tide coral restoration project, ACF acquired an air tank, which was installed in a dedicated container at Parke Nacional Arikok.

Fleet Management

Vehicles are essential to ACF's day-to-day operations, serving as critical resources that enable associates to mobilize and perform their respective tasks. To minimize downtime and ensure operational continuity, a structured vehicle servicing schedule is required.

Due to the expanding scope of ACF's work, the vehicle fleet was expanded in 2025 with the addition of two pickup trucks, bringing the total fleet to nine pickups. In addition, body repairs and undercoating were initiated for several vehicles to extend their service life. One pickup truck also underwent a complete overhaul to ensure it could remain operational and continue supporting daily activities.

As part of the Turning the Tide project, ACF acquired a small boat designed for use in shallow waters to support conservation activities.

Waste Management

Waste management remains a challenge for ACF, as increasing visitation to protected areas and ongoing illegal dumping place growing pressure on protected area maintenance. During 2025, ACF encountered several situations in which additional attention was required at multiple locations to ensure that all waste was properly collected. Despite having a dedicated team removing trash daily throughout the protected areas, waste management continues to be an ongoing challenge.



Biodiversity loss is difficult to see, but *impossible to miss*.



CHAPTER 10

Funding & Engagement



FUNDING & ENGAGEMENT

Collaborators

Funding is fundamental to ACF's ability to effectively carry out its conservation initiatives, sustain ongoing operations, and expand its positive impact across Aruba. Adequate financial resources enable the organization to implement critical projects, maintain and improve conservation areas, support research and environmental education programs, and respond to emerging environmental challenges. Without secure funding, it would be difficult to achieve long-term objectives or ensure the durability of conservation efforts. Equally vital are collaborations and stakeholder engagement, which allow ACF to build strong partnerships with government agencies, the private sector, local communities, and other environmental organizations. International stakeholders also play a crucial role by providing additional funding, knowledge, and expertise, further

strengthening conservation efforts. These collaborations not only help leverage supplementary resources but also foster a sense of shared responsibility and ownership for environmental stewardship. Engagement with stakeholders ensures that conservation initiatives are aligned with local needs and priorities, fostering broader awareness, support, and participation. This collective approach enhances the resilience and sustainability of conservation efforts, making them more effective and ensuring that they benefit both the environment and the communities that depend on it for years to come.



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Donations

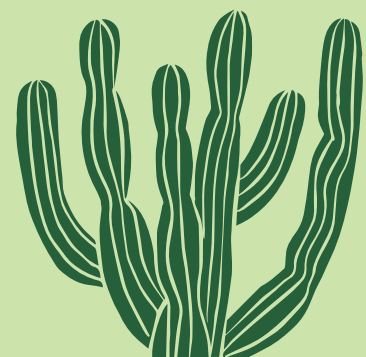
Donations sent to the special purpose reserve were Afl 0.927M in 2025 and Afl 1.034M in 2024. Special funds released to cover earmarked projects totaled Afl 420K in 2025 and Afl 412K in 2024

Donations *Overview* 2025

INSTITUTION	Amount
Tourism Product Enhancement Fund	330,732
Aruba Tourism Authority	290,786
DCNA	133,269
Aruba Bank	100,000
Centrale Bank van Aruba	32,000
Vogel Bescherming Nederland	30,301
Wageningen Environment Research	10,315
Park Visitors and other	2,526
NorthStar	1,780
Kiwanis	1,000
Grand Total	932,707



The *mouthpiece* of mother nature.



CHAPTER 10

Financial Overview



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Overview

The primary goal of our Finance Department is to ensure the Foundation’s ongoing fiscal health and sustainability, both now and in the future. This is achieved through the development of realistic Operational Expenditure (OpEx) and Capital Expenditure (CapEx) budgets, and through diligent adherence to these financial plans. While profit is not the main focus of the ACF, it remains essential for the Finance Department to foster positive financial outcomes, enabling the Foundation to build reserves that support its long-term mission and initiatives.

An essential aspect of our responsibilities involves meticulous tracking and reporting of the Foundation’s financial activities. This includes maintaining accurate and transparent financial records, as well as preparing comprehensive reports. Additionally, financial documentation related to earmarked projects must be maintained in accordance with donor requirements and specific reporting formats, ensuring compliance and accountability at all levels.

Financial Planning & Future Projects

The Cas Corra Enhancement Project, which includes the development of new office and workspaces as well as the construction of additional parking facilities, has commenced and is scheduled for completion in 2026.

Several other initiatives have been fully funded by the ACF Capex reserves, including the renovation and electrical upgrade of Booth Vader Piet, the remodeling of the Mondri Conservation Café, and comprehensive repairs and maintenance of Cas di Cunucu Arikok. The meeting room used for internal and stakeholder meetings has also been upgraded, including new equipment and window replacements.

To support the growing team, additional office equipment, furniture, and an office container have been acquired. Furthermore, two new vehicles (pick-ups) and 70 signs have been procured and installed throughout the protected areas, with the signage production costs covered by the Aruba Tourism Authority (ATA). Forthcoming capital expenditures are focused on marine conservation, such as essential equipment and the potential establishment of a Marine Conservation Centre. This significant project requires the accumulation of ACF reserves, an increased management fee budgeted for 2026, and additional third-party funding.

Financial Results 2025

Financial Statement (x Afl. 1000) *							
	2025	% of Rev		2024	% of Rev		VAR % incr/-decr
Management Fee	3,574	35.1%		3,496	37.6%		78 2.2%
Donations	933	9.2%		947	10.2%		(14) -1.5%
Inhouse generated	6,192	60.8%		5,464	58.9%		728 13.3%
Donation send to spec.fund, -/- Used funds	(507)	-5.0%		(622)	-6.7%		115 -18.5%
TOTAL REVENUE	10,192	100.0%		9,285	100.0%		907 9.8%
Payroll & personnel (Admin & Oper.)	3,417	33.5%		2,773	29.9%		644 23.2%
Administration & Operating	1,776	17.4%		1,568	16.9%		208 13.2%
TOTAL OPERATING EXP.	5,193	50.9%		4,341	46.8%		852 19.6%
Payroll & personnel (Conservation)	998	9.8%		810	8.7%		188 23.2%
Contr. & Mnt. Conserv. Areas	634	6.2%		579	6.2%		55 9.5%
Conservation & Research	357	3.5%		288	3.1%		70 24.2%
Learning & Outreach	28	0.3%		3	0.0%		25 933.8%
TTL CONSERVATION RELATED	2,018	19.8%		1,680	18.1%		338 20.1%
							- -
EBITDA	2,982	29.3%		3,264	35.2%		(282) -8.7%
TOTAL NON-OPERATING EXPENSES	138	1.3%		144	1.5%		(6) -4.4%
RESULTS BEFORE TAX	2,844	27.9%		3,120	33.6%		(276) -8.9%

Revenues

Overall revenue reached Afl 10.19 million in 2025, reflecting a 9.8% increase (Afl 0.907 million) over the previous year. This growth was driven primarily by an increase in internally generated revenues.

Management Fee

The management fee increased modestly by 2.2% (Afl 78K), accounting for 35.1% of total revenue in 2025.

**To improve the accuracy of expense classification under Operations & Administration and Conservation, payroll and personnel costs were also separated. In 2024, the relocation of staff into the different departments was in its early stages; therefore, the payroll expense classification for this period is an estimate.*





FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Self-Generated Revenues

Compared to the previous year, entrance revenue increased by Afl 716K. The primary contributing factor was the change in the conservation daily pass fee. The price for tourists was increased in 2025 as follows: walk-in passes rose from \$20 to \$22, and passes for tour operators increased from \$14 to \$16. This price adjustment generated an additional income of Afl 631K.

Conservation *Day* Pass

Visitors	2025	2024	Increase	%’s
Tour Operators	2,801,316	2,334,009	467,307	20.0%
Walk-in’s	3,044,850	2,793,349	251,501	9.0%
TTL Tourist	5,846,166	5,127,358	718,808	14.0%
Local	70,385	66,370	4,015	6.0%
Total Day Pass Revenue	5,916,551	5,193,728	722,823	13.9%

Conservation *Annual* Pass

Visitors	2025	2024	Increase	%’s
Tourist Annual Pass	30,453	24,063	6,391	26.6%
Local Annual Pass	33,542	46,882	(13,340)	-28.5%
TTL Annual Pass Revenue	63,995	70,945	(6,950)	-9.8%
Overall Visitors Revenue	5,980,546	5,264,673	715,873	13.6%



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Self-Generated Revenues

The capture rate decreased from 7.7% in 2024 to 7.3% in 2025, a decline of 0.4 points. There are indications, based on visitor comments, that ACF is not capturing the growing Latin market. However, ACF does not currently have sufficient statistical information to support this assumption.

Visitors & Capture Rate 2025

Visitors	ACT-25	LY-24	ACT/LY	A/L-%
Tour Operators	103,011	98,279	4,732	4.8%
Walk-in's	79,087	79,811	(724)	-0.9%
Locals	13,993	13,258	735	5.5%
Total Visitors	196,091	191,348	4,743	2.5%

Arrivals	ACT-25	LY-24	ACT/LY	A/L-%
Stay Over Visitors	1,515,102	1,421,616	93,486	6.6%
Cruise ship	970,803	897,273	73,530	8.2%
Total Visitors	2,485,905	2,318,889	167,016	7.2%

Capture Rate	ACT-25	LY-24	ACT/LY	
Tour	4.1%	4.2%	0.09	pnt
Walk-ins	3.2%	3.4%	-0.26	pnt
Capture Rate Stay over	7.3%	7.7%	-0.35	pnt

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Expenses and Reserves

Operating Expenses

Payroll and personnel expenses increased by Afl 832K; average FTE went from 47.8 to 53.7; there was a cost-of-living adjustment for employees who inherited past benefits assimilated with those of Government workers. A new set of uniforms was purchased for all employees.

Administration and other operational expenses & costs are Afl 208K higher than in 2024; the largest impact was due to cost increases related to higher revenue, legal expenses for court cases, information, communication & events expenditures, and vehicle repair & maintenance.

Conservation-related expenses increased by Afl 150 K overall. Mostly due to the reactivation and finalization of the Turn the Tide project. And the increased learning & outreach activities

Capital Expenses

Approximately Afl 1.14M from ACF capex funds was spent on capital projects and equipment, and Afl 0.68M from earmarked funds. Equipment purchased from earmarked funds was mostly diving equipment. Ongoing large earmarked projects include the renovation and construction of stairs at Conchi, Fuente, and Dos Playa, as well as the Shelter project.

Reserves

The Business Interruption (Calamity) Reserve increased by Afl 1,126K to Afl 2,979K, which is equivalent to 83% of the targeted six months of essential operational cost coverage.





Return to nature.



CHAPTER 11

Appendix

APPENDIX

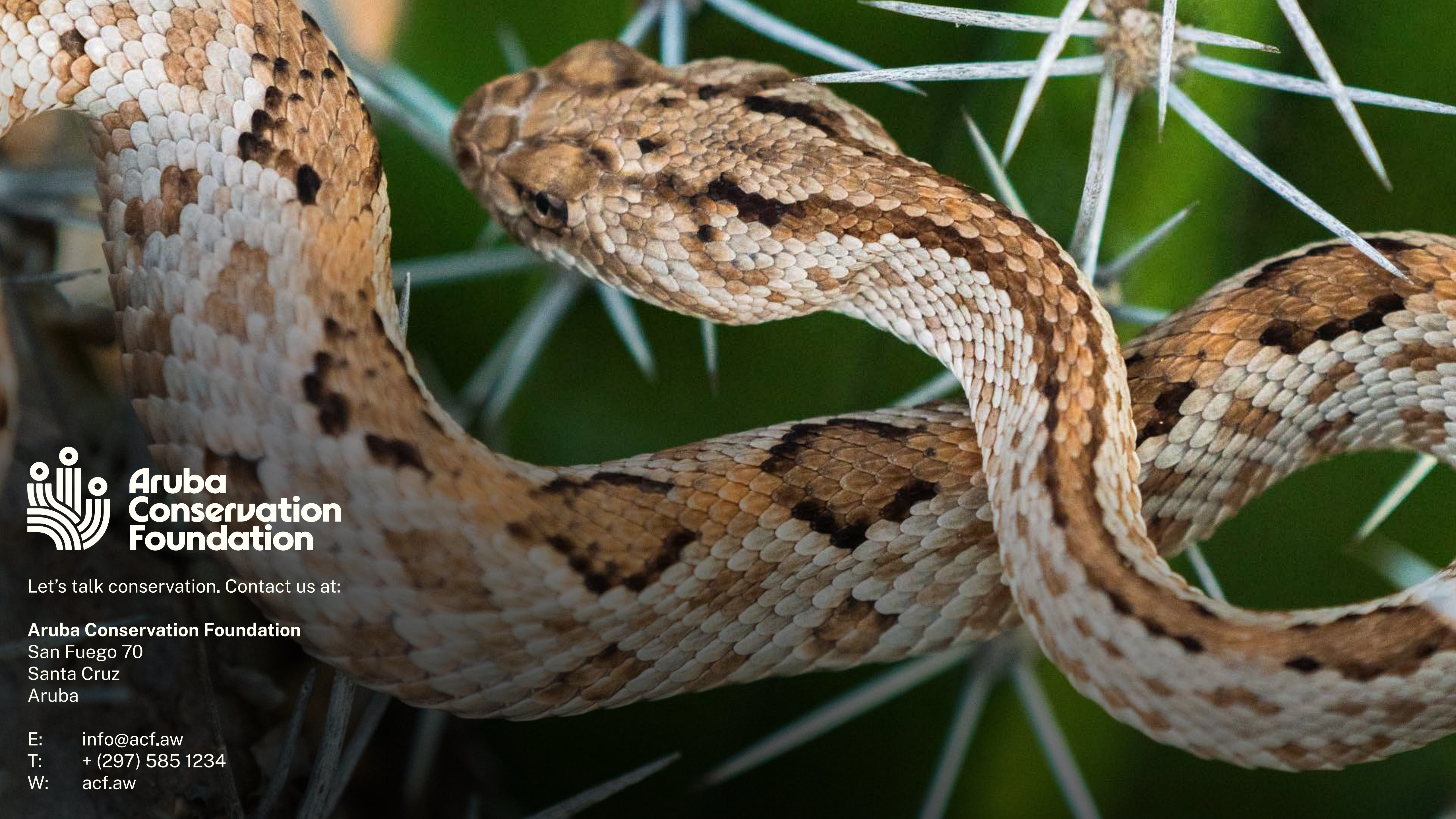
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APPENDIX

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