



SAINT LUCIA NATIONAL TRUST

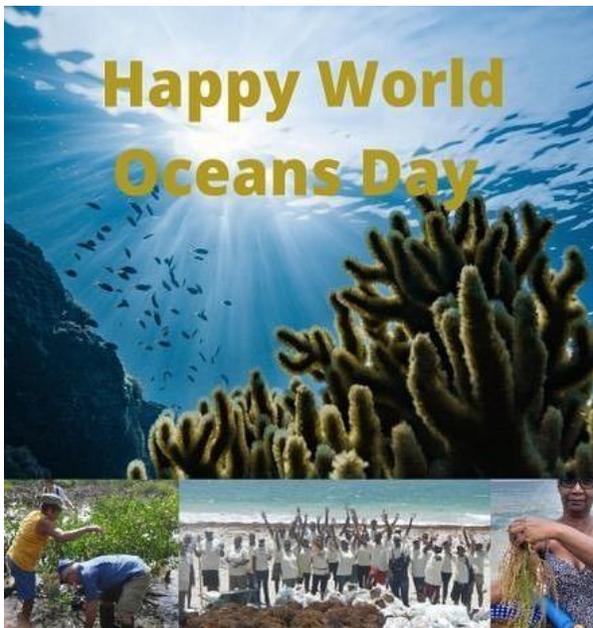
TEL: (758) 452-5005/31495 P.O. BOX 595 CASTRIES, ST. LUCIA WEST INDIES
FAX NO: (758) 453-2791 Email: natrust@candw.lc Website: www.slunatrust.org

Patron: Her Excellency Dame Pearlette Louisy

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Let's Celebrate the Importance of Our Oceans Through Painting

**By Jessie Mayers
SLNT Programme Assistant- Membership**



The Saint Lucia National Trust in collaboration with Massy Stores Saint Lucia and Saint Lucia Distillers will be staging two virtual art sessions in observance of World Oceans Day, which is celebrated annually on June 8th. We hope these sessions, slated for June 8th for children and June 14th for adults, will help to engender a greater sense of appreciation for our oceans. Please visit our [Facebook page](#) for more information on how you can participate in these exciting sessions.

We tend to think of oceans and seas as bodies of water that separate us from each other. However, oceans and seas are what actually connect us. We in the Caribbean rely on the ocean for the transportation of goods and people, tourism, food and climate regulation.

Our individual actions have a large impact on the health of the ocean; wind carries garbage left on beaches into the sea, resulting in the deaths of many marine creatures. It was found that 80% of litter in the sea resulted from land-based activities. This is not restricted to poor disposal of garbage along the coastline but even garbage disposed of inland finds its way into the ocean via rivers, floods and wind.

Even our farming practices result in damage to ocean life. The chemicals we use such as pesticides, fertilizers and weed killers are toxic to fish and birds. As we strive to achieve the

World Ocean Day 2020 theme - *Innovation for a Sustainable Ocean*, greater emphasis must be placed on the implementation of alternative pest control measures such as biocontrol; using the natural enemy of a pest to combat it and polyculture, also known as companion planting, to avoid compromising marine life.

Due to our continued harmful actions, many marine species have become extinct or endangered; this is why it is important to take note of your seafood consumption. Familiarize yourself with the various seasons in which it is legal to consume certain species, as this can reduce the risk of overfishing and ensuring that marine species' populations are kept at a sustainable level.

The oceans offer us a means of employment, food and leisurely enjoyment but we must be considerate of marine life. Refrain from removing corals or animals from their habitats, be mindful of nesting grounds and ensure that your movements are not destructive.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic many human activities have stopped or slowed down, resulting in less water traffic. We have observed an increase in encounters of seabirds, such as pelicans, close to the shores. These birds are a welcome sight and we hope that our new visitors remain with us when things return to normal.

Advocating for ocean conservation is crucial as our health, security, economy and survival depend on healthy oceans. No matter where you live on the planet, be it in a landlocked country or on a small island, oceans are integral to our way of life. Just like our bodies need water to survive, the Earth needs its oceans.



Point Sable Environmental Protection Area.
Ocean Health is vital for the health of the coastal environment here

Please do what you can to protect and keep our oceans clean, because healthy oceans are achieved by the choices you make today. Follow us on social media - Facebook: Saint Lucia National Trust, Instagram: saint_lucia_national_trust and Twitter: NationalTrustLC, and please like and share our posts about World Oceans Day to raise awareness and appreciation for our oceans.

Happy World Oceans Day!