



Regulations

Sint Maarten Dive Sites and MPA

The Nature Foundation of Sint Maarten (NFSXM) maintains all the dive site moorings on Sint Maarten, both within and outside of the Man of War Shoal Park, a designated marine protected area (MPA) off the coast of Philipsburg. The regulations outlined in this document apply to all dive sites on St. Maarten, but the MPA has additional regulations, shown in bold, which must be followed.

All listed regulations apply within the marked MPA boundaries, as well as 150 feet (50 meters) from any dive sites outside the MPA. These boundaries extend centrifugally from the seafloor mooring.

Vessels

1. Vessels utilize dive moorings at **their own risk!** Nature Foundation Sint Maarten (NFSXM) cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage to vessels, or personal injuries through the use of dive moorings. We strongly recommend all vessels have surface support in the event of a mooring failure to maneuver the boat safely.
2. Vessels that use the dive moorings must abide by the following guidelines:
 - 2.1. Anchoring is strictly prohibited in the MPA, and within 150 feet (50 meters) of non-MPA sites.
 - 2.2. Dive moorings may only be used by vessels weighing fewer than 30 tons (27.2 tonnes) and measuring less than 45 feet (13.7 meters) in overall length.
 - 2.3. Only one boat is allowed on each mooring at a time, for a maximum stay of 2 hours.
 - 2.4. Mooring use is on a first-come, first-served basis.
 - 2.5. Vessels must be tied using a bowline that is fed through the loop of the yellow floating line on the mooring and tied back onto your boat. Do not tie the yellow floating line directly onto your boat. The boat's bow line must be *at least as long as your vessel or longer*.
 - 2.6. Boats must display the 'alpha' flag at all times when divers or snorkelers are in the water.
3. Refrain from repeatedly using the same dive mooring if the site is popular with other vessels.
4. All boats must adhere to applicable regulations and codes of conduct for boats operating in St. Maarten with appropriate safety equipment.
5. **To enter the MPA, vessels must be registered with NFSXM and re-registered each calendar year.**
 - 5.1. **A mooring fee of USD 250 per year per vessel must be paid to NFSXM in order to enter the MPA and/or use its dive site moorings.**



Visitors

1. It is not permitted to touch, harass, damage, or remove any marine life, dead or alive.
2. The feeding of marine life is prohibited.
3. Any type of fishing is prohibited.
4. Weapons or fishing equipment of any kind are banned from dive sites.
 - 4.1. There is no exception for legal sling and pole spears, or spearguns with a permit.
 - 4.2. There is no exception for lionfish or invasive species hunting.
5. Divers are expected to:
 - 5.1. Avoid using gloves, except for holding onto mooring lines or entering wrecks.
 - 5.2. Maintain buoyancy control and avoid kneeling or standing on the bottom.
 - 5.3. Secure all gauges so that they cannot get caught on or drag along the bottom.
 - 5.4. Pass seaward of mooring buoys, and always steer clear of dive vessels.
6. The removal of any historical or cultural artifacts from St. Maarten waters is prohibited without written permission from official entities; please contact NFSXM for more information.
7. **Snorkelers are prohibited from entering the MPA; only scuba divers may enter its waters.**
8. **To enter the MPA, visitors to the island must purchase dive tags at sintmaarten.reefsupport.org.**
 - 8.1. **Day tags are 3 USD and (calendar) year tags are 15 USD.**
 - 8.2. **Dive schools may purchase day tags in bulk for their customers by contacting NFSXM.**

Additional

9. All visitors to dive sites should expect NFSXM staff to approach them at a safe distance at any time.
10. **It is prohibited to place, remove, or move buoys or moorings anywhere within the MPA.**
11. You may not sink vessels or other objects without written permission from the authorities.

Funds generated through the sales of entry tags and mooring fees are used for the management and maintenance of the dive site mooring and protection of the MPA. **Please pay for your vessel registration or dive tags by check or wire transfer to WIB Bank Acc # 21899303, Foundation for the Management and Conservation of Nature on SXM.**

Remember: If you ever see a damaged or missing mooring, please contact NFSXM by email or phone so the necessary repairs can be done as quickly as possible.



Vessel Registration

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I understand and respect these dive site regulations and MPA rules, and I use the dive moorings at my own risk. I will not hold the Nature Foundation St. Maarten (NFSXM) responsible for any loss or damage to vessels, or personal injuries to humans. I, along with my customers and staff, pledge to be responsible visitors who will respect the marine environment and cause no harm. I also commit to clearly instructing my customers, staff, and anyone on board to adhere to the abovementioned regulations. I understand that failure to follow these rules can result in a ban or penalty from the Man of War Shoal Marine Park.

Company: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Boat 1

Boat name: _____ Color: _____

Boat/tender type: _____ Docked at: _____

Registration number: _____

Boat 2

Boat name: _____ Color: _____

Boat/tender type: _____ Docked at: _____

Registration number: _____