



MICUH&T DIVE TOURISM POLICY

Ministry of Infrastructure,
Communication, Utilities,
Housing and Tourism

‘A Holistic Approach for Anguilla’

2024-2034

Ministry of Infrastructure, Communication, Utilities, Housing and Tourism



Message from the Honourable Minister of Infrastructure, Communication, Utilities, Housing and Tourism – Mr. Haydn Hughes

It is with great pleasure and anticipation that we present this comprehensive Dive Tourism Policy for Anguilla.

A focus on dive tourism will showcase the natural wonders of our ocean, with the power to boost the economy and foster a deeper appreciation for the beauty and fragility of our marine environment.

This policy is a testament to our commitment to responsible and sustainable tourism practices that prioritise conservation, community engagement, and economic development with focus on the underwater landscapes surrounding Anguilla vibrant coral reefs and historic shipwrecks. This demands a thoughtful and strategic approach. Our goal is to create an environment where divers can explore the wonders of our marine world while ensuring the long-term health of our ecosystems.

This policy emphasizes the importance of conservation efforts, including the establishment of marine protected areas (MPAs) and the promotion of responsible diving practices. Community involvement is at the heart of this policy and strategic partnerships are necessary in order to grow sustainably.

Education and awareness are key components of this holistic approach, and it is our vision to instill a sense of responsibility and respect for our underwater world, so that Anguilla remains a sustainable and sought-after destination for divers worldwide.

As we embark on this journey towards a more sustainable and responsible dive tourism sector, I extend my gratitude to all those who have contributed to the development of this policy.

Mr. Haydn Hughes

Hon. Minister of Infrastructure, Communication, Utilities, Housing and Tourism (MICUH & T)



Acknowledgements

The Ministry of Infrastructure and Tourism extends its deepest gratitude to all those involved in the successful development of Anguilla's **Dive Tourism Policy**. This policy marks an important milestone in positioning Anguilla as a premier sustainable dive tourism destination, and it is the result of collective efforts, collaboration, and shared commitment from numerous stakeholders.

Special recognition is given to the valuable contributions of the Government of Anguilla - Ministry of Tourism, for their unwavering support throughout the policy's development. Their commitment to sustainable tourism and the growth of the dive tourism sector in Anguilla has been crucial. The Anguilla Tourist Board, through their dedicated marketing and promotional efforts, has played an essential role in positioning Anguilla as a leading dive tourism destination, helping to amplify our visibility within the international dive community.

A heartfelt thank you is extended to the Anguilla Hotel and Tourism Association and all industry partners, local dive operators including the recreational divers, the Anguilla National Trust, regional and international organisations, whose engagement, feedback, and collaborative approach have been vital in shaping the policy. Your diverse expertise, insights, and shared commitment to sustainable tourism practices are reflected in every aspect of this policy.

The Ministry of Infrastructure and Tourism is confident that, with the continued support and collective dedication of all involved, this policy will be implemented effectively, ensuring that Anguilla's dive tourism sector grows in a sustainable and responsible manner. Together, we look forward to seeing the positive impact this policy will have, not only on our economy but also on the protection of our marine environment for generations to come.

As we move forward with the policy's execution, we remain committed to the spirit of collaboration and shared purpose that brought this important document to fruition. Thank you to each and every one of you for your contributions in making this a reality.



Tourism Vision

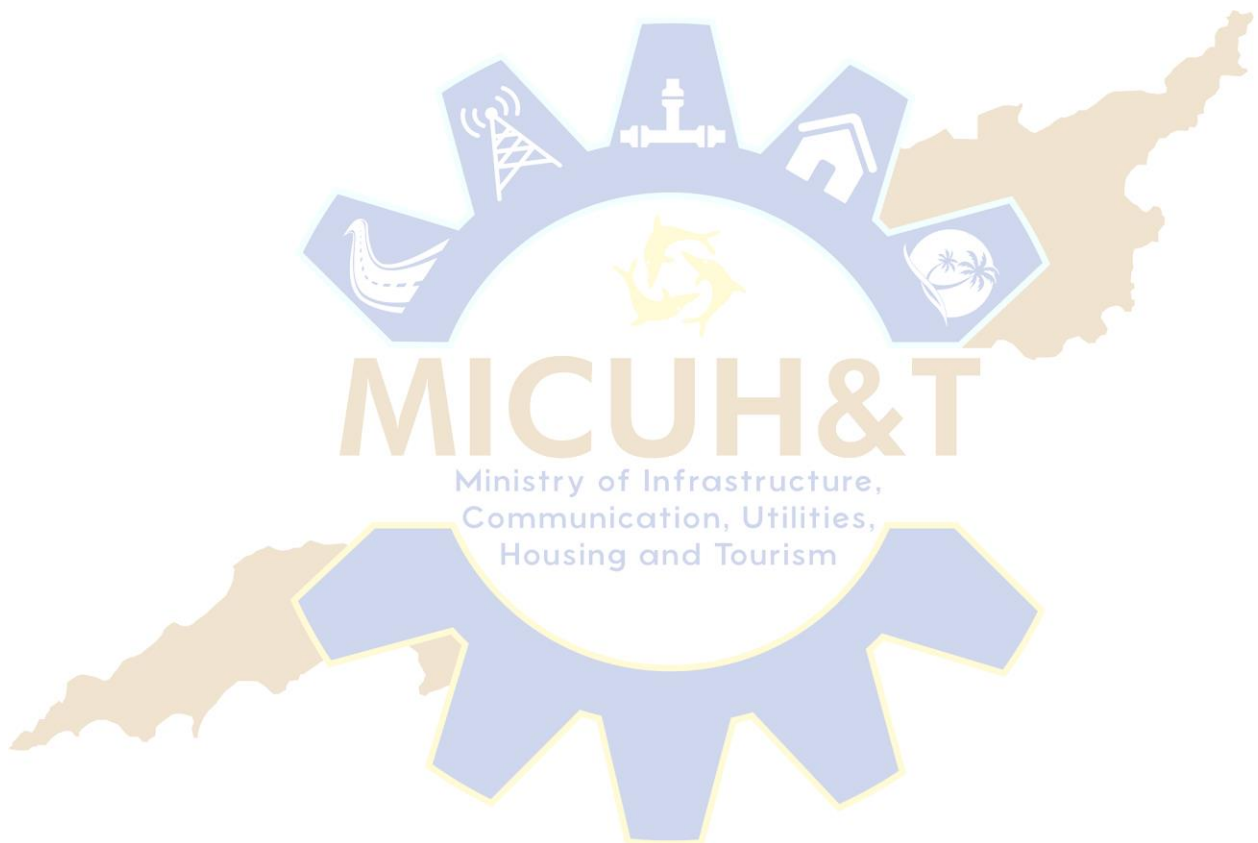
'We are a premier Caribbean destination known for our world class beaches, pristine azure waters,; top class resorts and restaurants; relaxed ambience; sense of place, peace and tranquility in a safe setting among a friendly and hospitable people that take pride in their identity, cultural heritage and environment'

Sustainable Tourism Master Plan 2010 – 2020



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ACRONYMS

B.W.I	British West Indies
GoA	Government of Anguilla
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MICUH & T	Ministry of Infrastructure, Communication, Utilities, Housing and Tourism
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
PADI	Professional Association of Diving Instructors
PESTLE	Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental
QoL	Quality of Life
SCUBA	Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus
SSI	Scuba Schools International
STMP	Sustainable Tourism Master Plan
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
UNTWO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
U.S.A	United States of America



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ministry of Infrastructure, Utilities, Housing and Tourism (MICUH & T) Tourism, is located in The Valley - Anguilla, British West Indies (B.W.I). Historically, the island of Anguilla, long before the arrival of Christopher Columbus in the Caribbean, had been settled by Arawakan-speaking Indians known as Malliouhana. The island of Anguilla is fundamentally dependent on its main industry which is tourism. Tourism is the cornerstone of many families, providing various opportunities such as employment, business ownership and other industry services. Anguilla, with its breathtaking marine landscapes, crystal clear waters and rich biodiversity, stands poised to become a premier destination for dive tourism. The Dive Tourism Policy outlines a holistic approach as the foundation for sustainable development through the blue economy where individuals engage in exploration of the underwater.

FIG 1.1 (MAP OF ANGUILLA)





INTRODUCTION

The main objective of this Anguilla dive tourism policy is to control, promote, and maintain dive related activities. Consistent with the Sustainable Tourism Master Plan (2010-2020) the policy framework aims to direct the growth, administration, oversight, and enduring viability of Anguilla's tourism industry throughout several decades.

The Government of Anguilla (GoA) has a formal 10 year plan for strategic decision making, with the STMP acting as the lodestar. It offers detailed guidance on key areas for the growth of tourism, sustainability and the effects on the environment, product creation, marketing campaigns and funding options.

Dive Tourism, often referred to as scuba diving or underwater tourism is a vibrant and dynamic segment within the local and global tourism industry, offering individuals the opportunity to explore the underwater world and witness the marvels of marine ecosystems. The policy seeks to adopt a holistic approach, embracing a comprehensive and integrated strategy, considering ecological, socio-economic aspects, sustainable practices, conservation, community engagement, and responsible tourism management.

The policy places a strong emphasis on the necessity of strategic cooperation between the public and private sectors in light of the maritime economy's critical relevance. In order to support the ideas and tactics that advance the sustainability of dive tourism, financial investments are essential. Marine conservation, education, waste management, low-impact tourism, sustainable infrastructure, legislation, research, conservation initiatives, eco-certification, and sustainable marketing are important factors to take into account.

According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), investments are essential to the rehabilitation and expansion of tourism in the future. Marine ecotourism frequently lags behind the growth of marine and coastal tourism. By offering a framework for organising and elevating marine ecotourism within national and international conversations, our strategy aims to rectify this imbalance.

This sector offers a unique opportunity for tourists, visitors, and locals to immerse themselves in the underwater realm, explore marine life, coral reefs, and geological formations.



AIM

The Dive Tourism Policy - 'A Holistic Approach for Anguilla' aims to ensure the effective management and oversight of diving in Anguilla through the enforcement of relevant regulations in alignment with global industry best practices.

OBJECTIVES:

- i. To fortify the preservation and conservation of Anguilla's marine ecosystem by implementing a sustainable dive tourism policy.
- ii. To cultivate and uphold sustainable diving practices, prioritizing the safety of divers while ensuring robust regulatory frameworks.
- iii. To advance the marine infrastructure, enhancing the overall diving experience through improved facilities and infrastructure.
- iv. To cultivate positive relationships and ensure the fair and equitable distribution of benefits among the local population, fostering community well-being and involvement.



1. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

SDG 14 – LIFE BELOW WATER

In the context of Anguilla's Dive Tourism policy, the objectives harmoniously correspond to advancing the overarching goals of sustainable development. Through targeted investments in underwater infrastructure within the tourism sector, the aim is to make substantial contributions to realizing the 2030 agenda, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), aligning seamlessly with Goal 14 - Life below Water. This commitment underscores our efforts to promote responsible and eco-friendly practices in dive tourism, contributing to the broader vision of a sustainable and thriving future for Anguilla.

Despite Anguilla's longstanding promotion as a dive tourism destination, the absence of a comprehensive policy has underscored the necessity for regularisation and sustainability in our economic pursuits.

Extensive public consultations have revealed a consistent growth in dive tourism development. In prioritising the blue economy, the Government of Anguilla, in collaboration with its stakeholders, aims to intensify focus and advocate for sustainable practices within the tourism and maritime sectors.

Fig.1.2



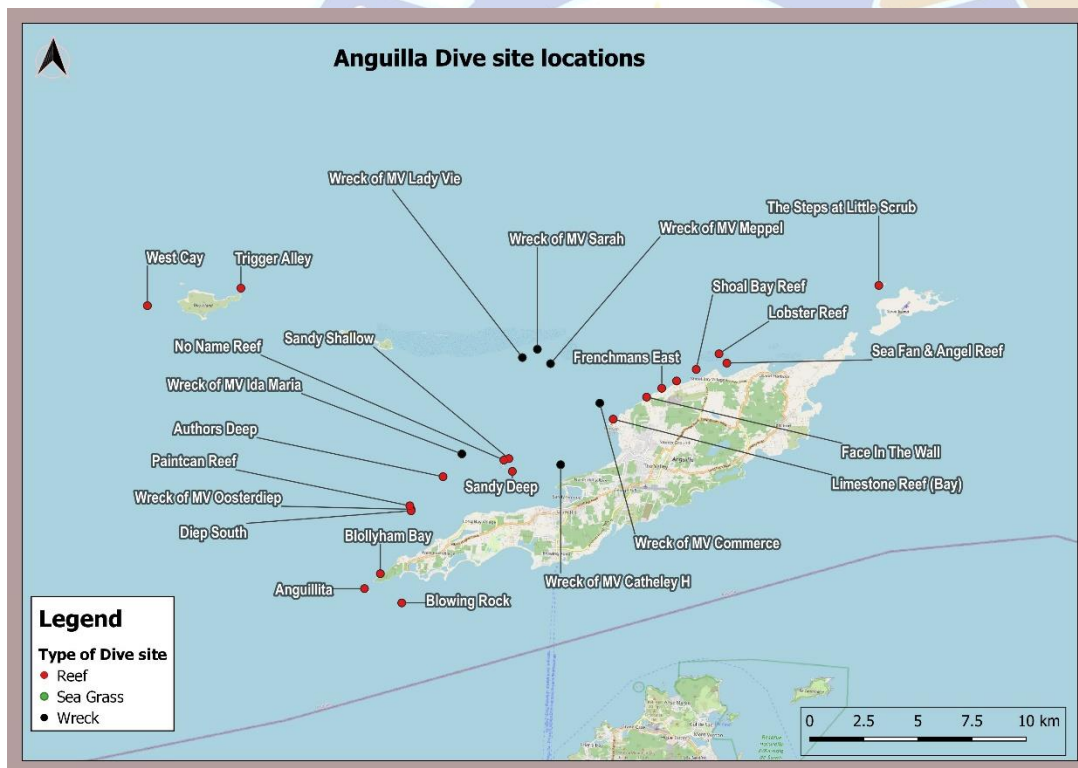
Photo Credit – UNESCO



2. THE DIVE TOURISM MARKET

The accompanying map identifies a minimum of 25 dive site locations across diverse bodies of water in Anguilla. These recreational dive sites are celebrated for various attributes, such as accessibility, bio-diversity, impressive topography, historical or cultural importance, and the existence of artefacts like shipwrecks.

Elements such as safety, ease of access, prevailing currents, and underwater points of interest intricately link to the excellence of a dive site. The enactment and enforcement of relevant legislation reinforce the paramount responsibility of ensuring the ongoing accessibility and proper upkeep of these dive sites.





Listed below are the degrees decimal of the dive sites, featuring their latitude, longitude, location, dive type, expertise level, and depth range:

Latitude	Longitude	Location	Dive Type	Expertise	Depth Range
18.241167	-63.077183	Wreck of MV Commerce	WR	Experienced	40-80ft
18.213733	-63.0933	Wreck of MV Catholey H	WR	Experienced	35-60ft
18.216917	-63.13655	Wreck of MV Ida Maria	WR	Experienced	50-60ft
18.2637	-63.105217	Wreck of MV Sarah	WR	Experienced	40-80ft
18.192017	-63.157883	Wreck of MV Oosterdiep	WR	Experienced	50-80ft
18.257633	-63.099267	Wreck of MV Meppel	WR	Experienced	60-80ft
18.259867	-63.111617	Wreck of MV Lady Vie	WR	n/a	60-80ft
		Wreck of El Buen Consejo	WR	Experienced	10-20ft
18.244517	-63.05685	Face In The Wall	RF	Experienced	30-80ft



		Hole In The Wall	RF	Novice	30-80ft
18.2156	-63.115983	Sandy Shallow	RF	Novice	15-70ft
18.210083	-63.114267	Sandy Deep	RF	Novice	15-60ft
18.19135	-63.1578	Diep South	RF	Moderate	40-70ft
18.193517	-63.158433	Paintcan Reef	RF	Moderate	50-70ft
18.206717	-63.1444	Authors Deep	RF	Experienced	80-110ft
18.156717	-63.17695	Anguillita	RF	Moderate	15-60ft
18.296733	-62.9573	The Steps at Little Scrub	RF	Experienced	20-90ft
		Rams Head/Rock and Roll	RF	Experienced	20-90ft
18.151067	-63.160467	Blowing Rock	RF	Novice	Max 40ft
18.214883	-63.11813	No Name Reef	RF	Novice	40-60ft
18.285833	-63.2354	Trigger Alley	RF	Experienced	40-65ft
		Devils Wall	RF	Experienced	Max 90ft
18.276783	-63.2759	West Cay	RF	Experienced	Max 90ft
18.26055	-63.022383	Sea Fan & Angel Reef	RF	Novice	20-60ft
18.264483	-63.02595	Lobster Reef	RF	Novice	20-60ft



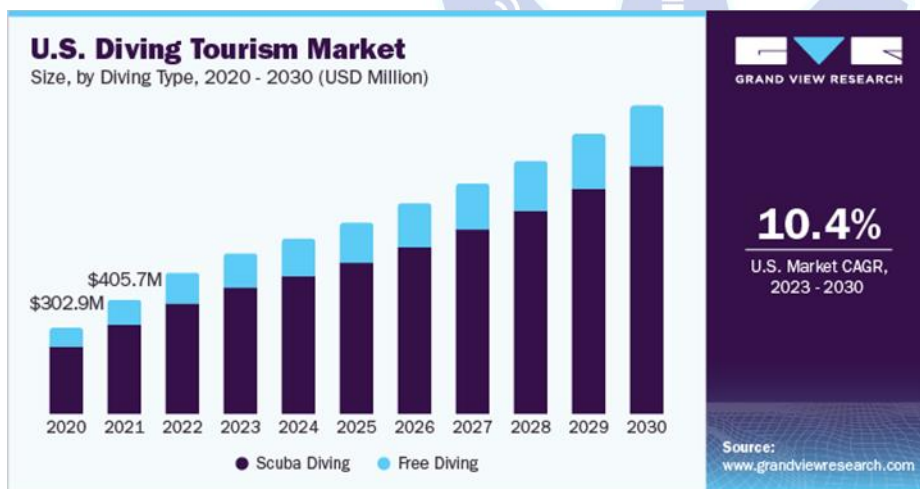
18.25735	-63.03565	Shoal Bay Reef	RF	Novice	20-60ft
18.252	-63.044033	Crystal Reef	RF	novice	15-75ft
18.248583	-63.050383	Frenchmans East	RF	Novice	15-80ft
18.234383	-63.0711	Limestone Reef (Bay)	RF	Novice	15-60ft
	-63.072167	The Garden	RF	Moderate	30-110ft
		Eel Garden	RF	Novice	15-50ft
18.163467	-63.17025	Blollyham Bay	RF	Novice	15-40ft
		Shoal Bay Shallows	RF	Beginner	0-15ft
		Little Bay	SG	Beginner	15ft
		Sandy Ground	SG	Beginner	0-10ft
		Meads Bay (Coral Ridge)	RF	Beginner	0-20ft
		Maundays Bay	RF	Beginner	0-20ft



3. BOOST TO THE LOCAL ECONOMY

In 2022, the global dive tourism market size was valued at **USD 3,993.7 million**, it is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 10.4% from 2023 to 2030. The rise in disposable income and the growth of the middle class in emerging markets has led to an increase in demand for leisure activities, including diving (Diving Tourism Market Size, Share and Trends Analysis Report By Diving Type (Scuba Diving and Free Diving), By Tourist Type, By Age Group, By Gender, By Region, And Segment Forecasts, 2023 - 2030, 2018-2021).

Fig 1.3 – Graph of the US Dive Tourism Market



Credit: Grand View Research

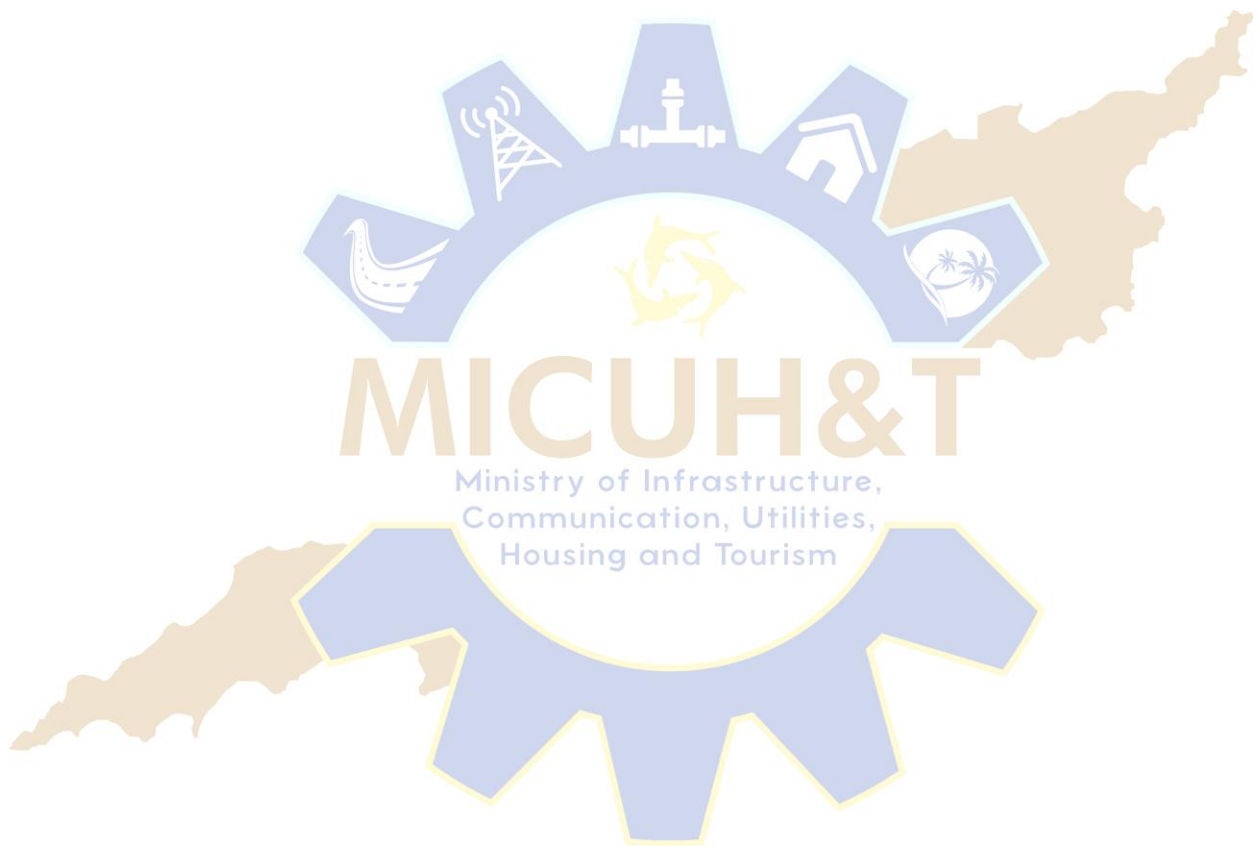
Globally, the scuba diving segment held the largest market share of 77.8% in 2022, with an expectation to increase CAGR to 10.8% over the forecast period 2023-2030.

To facilitate the efficient administration and enforcement of Anguilla's dive tourism policy, the implementation of the following legislations are essential:

- i. Biodiversity Heritage Conservation Act (2010 edition)
- ii. Fisheries Protection Act (2000 edition)
- iii. Wreck Inquiries Act (2000)
- iv. Fisheries Protection Act (2010 edition)



These laws collectively form a solid foundation for informed decision-making processes in ensuring the proper management and enforcement of the dive tourism policy.





4. THE FUTURE OF DIVE TOURISM - ANGUILLA AS A BLUE ECONOMY DESTINATION

Anguilla possesses the potential to establish itself as a foremost blue economy destination for dive tourism, leveraging its abundant marine biodiversity and adopting sustainable practices. However, it is critical to categorise Anguilla as a blue small island destination to align with the principles of blue growth. Recognising Anguilla as such will facilitate the promotion of blue growth, a concept that has garnered interest from entities like the European Union (EU) and the World Bank. This classification as a blue economy holds strategic importance, enabling the government to:

- i. Harness the potential benefits of sustainable dive tourism.
- ii. Implement comprehensive ocean plans and zoning processes to ensure responsible and organise use of marine resources.

By embracing these measures, Anguilla cannot only position itself as a sustainable dive tourism hotspot but also contribute to the global discourse on responsible blue economy practices.





5. A POLICY-BASED APPROACH TO THE DIVE TOURISM INDUSTRY

Recognising the importance of this sector and the need for responsible stewardship, the Government of Anguilla aims to formulate a comprehensive policy framework for sustainable dive tourism development. This policy seeks to balance economic growth with environmental conservation, ensuring the long-term viability of our underwater assets by underscoring these critical aspects through a policy-based approach:

1. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

- a) Preservation of the Marine Ecosystems.
- b) Implementation and enforcement of guidelines, standards and policies to protect the underwater ecosystems and habitats.
- c) Enforcement of designated MPA's to safeguard critical ecosystems.
- d) Guidelines on waste management.
- e) Regular assessment and accreditation of the underwater.
- f) Enforcement of legislation surrounding the use of eco-friendly materials.

2. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- a) Increased access to education, training and public awareness of diving.

3. ECONOMIC GROWTH

- a) Prioritisation of financial allocations towards the maintenance and development of the dive sector.

4. SAFETY AND REGULATION

- a) Development, implementation and enforcement of dive industry Standards.
- b) Monitoring, evaluation and review of regulations.

5. MARKETING AND PROMOTION

- a) Integration of dive tourism into the overall marketing strategy for Anguilla.



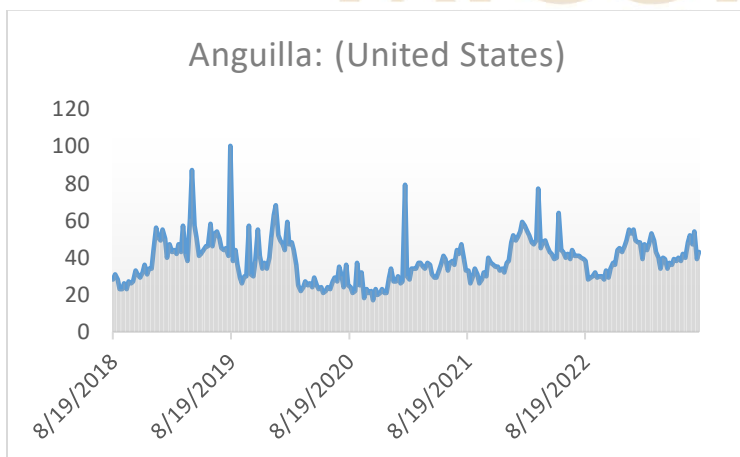
6. STATISTICS

Despite the buoyancy of the dive tourism sector, Anguilla faces ongoing economic challenges and other factors that may pose obstacles to the effective implementation of policies and laws.

A recent public consultation highlighted several concerns from individuals involved in recreational diving. One diver discussed the challenges faced during the pandemic, mentioning operational difficulties and the suspension of regular business due to travel restrictions imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Another diver expressed concerns about the lack of government incentives to offset financial losses resulting from national decisions, such as cancellations and the need to provide full refunds, all of which impacted the financial stability of their business.

Given the opportunities that dive tourism may offer to Anguilla, a Google Trend Analysis was conducted in order to determine the frequency of which Anguilla is searched by potential travelers on Google and also Anguilla Dive. The analysis included Google searches with keywords such as 'Anguilla', 'Anguilla Dive' for the years 2018 – 2023.

The search was done for the United States of America (USA), Canada and Europe. The search revealed the following:

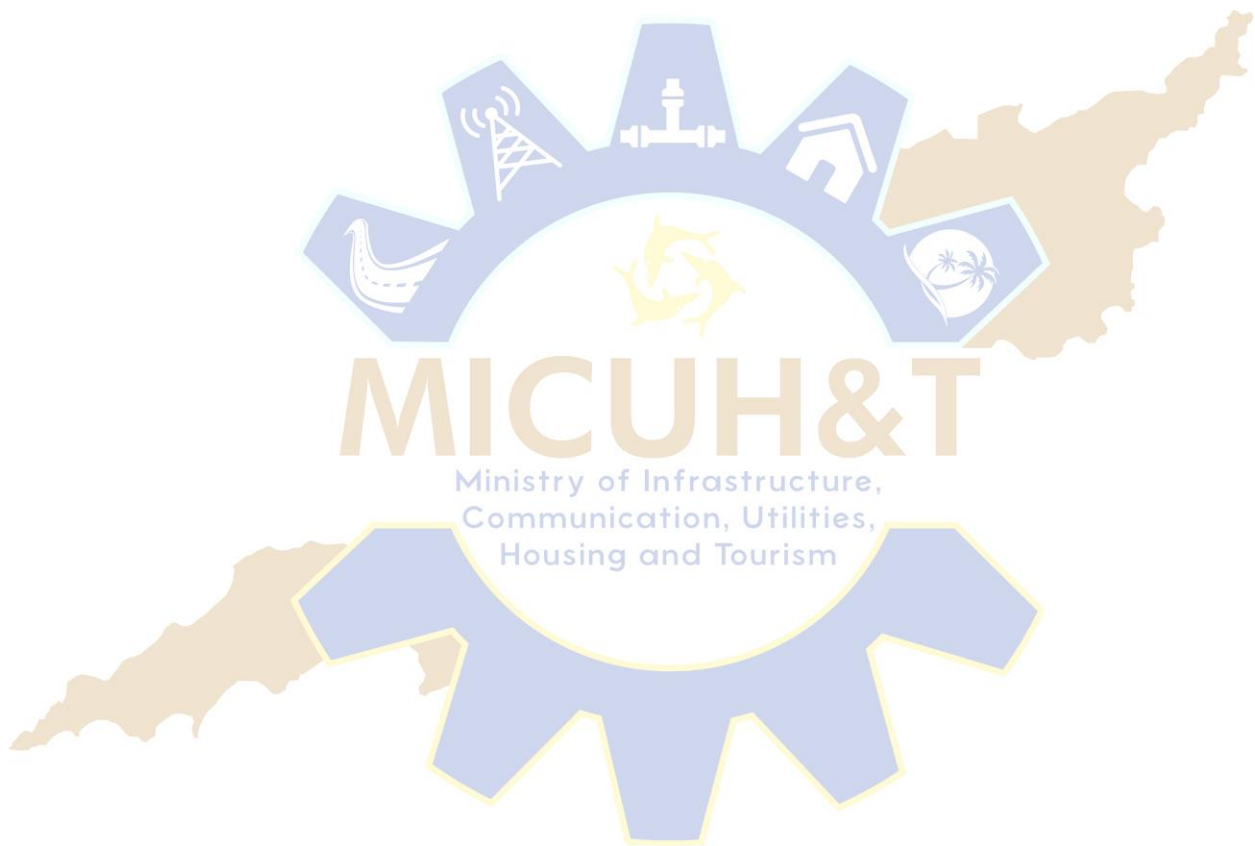


'Anguilla' was searched quite often by persons in the USA as seen in the representation above, however, when 'Anguilla Dive or Dive Anguilla' was searched, but, there was not enough data for representation. In order to determine if this trend was exclusive only to Anguilla or the Caribbean, the same analysis was performed on neighboring islands such as St. Maarten, Bonaire and Curacao. For example, the following phrases were entered into the Google trends: St. Maarten Dive, Bonaire Dive and Curacao Dive. The results revealed that the most hits were made on Curacao Dive from persons in the US Market.



From this analysis it is important to carefully research the current market and ensure that plans are put into place to support a long-term market segment so that Anguilla is seen as a highly competitive destination for divers. This can be achieved through the following:

- a. Immediate actions to secure increased productivity from the industry
- b. Partnerships with national, regional and international stakeholders
- c. Allocation of finances for promotion and marketing of the dive tourism product
- d. Divers achieving accreditation statuses through non-governmental organisations (NGOs)





7. CHALLENGES

1. CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change has had several notable impacts on dive tourism in Anguilla, affecting both the marine environment and the overall experience for divers:

- a) Coral Bleaching;
- b) Changing Ocean Currents;
- c) Sea Level Rise;
- d) Extreme Weather Events;
- e) Impact on Marine Life;
- f) Reduced Visibility; and
- g) Ocean Acidification.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION

Anguilla, despite its relatively small population, relies heavily on the fishing industry and has been actively promoting itself as a dive tourism destination. While these activities are economically beneficial, they can pose significant risks to the delicate marine ecosystem if not managed sustainably. These include:

- a) Loss of Biodiversity;
- b) Decline in Marine Life;
- c) Poor Water Quality;
- d) Loss of Unique Features;
- e) Impact on Ecosystem Services; and
- f) Decreased Attractiveness of Dive Sites.

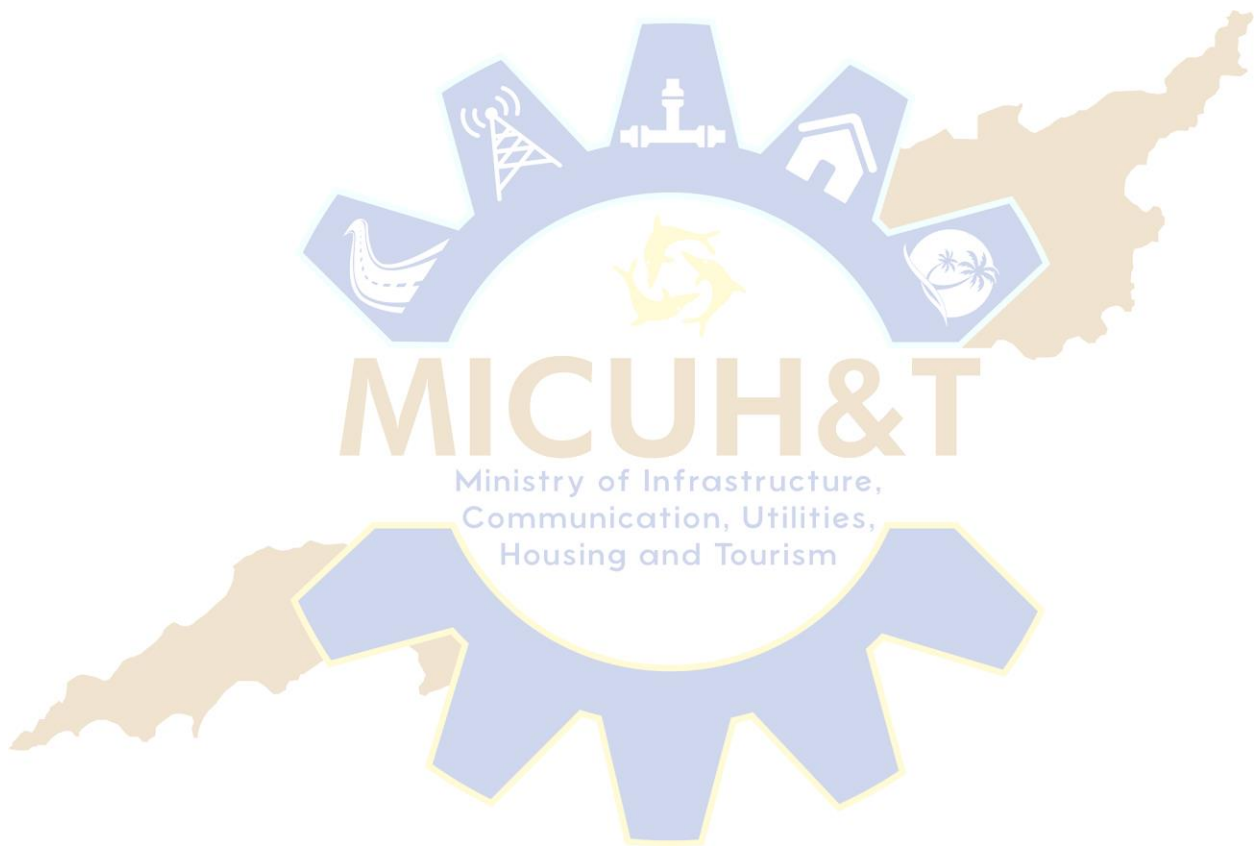
3. Regulatory Compliance

Inadequate regulatory compliance has had several negative effects on Anguilla's dive tourism industry, impacting both the environment and the quality of the diving experience. Here are some key ways in which this issue has manifested:

- a) Health and safety concerns;
- b) Economic impact;
- c) Pollution and water quality issues; and
- d) Erosion of reputation.



4. The dive tourism industry in Anguilla, like many niche tourism sectors, is susceptible to various economic instabilities that can hinder its growth, profitability, and long-term sustainability. Some of the key challenges include
 - a) Seasonal fluctuations in tourism;
 - b) Impact of global economic conditions;
 - c) Competitions from other destinations;
 - d) Dependence on narrow market segment; and
 - e) Limited infrastructure.





ACCESS TO MEDICAL SERVICES (HYPERBARIC OXYGEN THERAPY CHAMBER)

A hyperbaric oxygen therapy chamber is a critical safety equipment for divers, particularly in areas like Anguilla where diving is a popular activity.

Importance of a Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy Chamber in Anguilla:

- 1. Treatment of Decompression Sickness (DCS):**
 - Hyperbaric oxygen therapy chambers are essential for treating divers who suffer from decompression sickness, also known as ‘the bends’. This condition can occur when a diver ascends too quickly, causing nitrogen bubbles to form in the bloodstream, which can lead to joint pain, paralysis, and even death if not treated promptly. Without a hyperbaric oxygen therapy chamber on the island, divers must be transported to nearby islands or countries, losing critical time that could worsen their condition.
- 2. Increased Safety for Divers:**
 - The presence of a hyperbaric oxygen therapy chamber reassures divers that their safety is prioritised. This can attract more tourists, as they are likely to feel safer knowing that immediate medical assistance is available in case of an emergency. It also provides peace of mind to dive operators and local authorities, ensuring that they can handle medical emergencies effectively.
- 3. Boosting the Local Dive Industry:**
 - A hyperbaric oxygen therapy chamber can enhance the reputation of Anguilla as a safe diving destination, attracting more diving enthusiasts and increasing tourism revenue. It can also serve as a marketing tool, differentiating Anguilla from other Caribbean destinations that may lack such facilities.
- 4. Support for Local Medical Services:**
 - Beyond diving, hyperbaric oxygen therapy chambers can be used to treat other medical conditions, such as carbon monoxide poisoning, certain infections, and wounds that require hyperbaric oxygen therapy. This can contribute significantly to the development of medical tourism on island.

Development of a Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy Chamber in Anguilla:

- 1. Government and Private Sector Collaboration:**
 - Secure funding through a public-private partnership (PPP), where both the government and private sector (e.g., dive operators, hotels, and tour companies) contribute to the development costs.
 - Explore grants or loans from international organisations, such as the World Bank or regional development banks that focus on tourism or healthcare improvements.



2. Site Selection and Infrastructure Development:

- Identify a suitable location for the hyperbaric oxygen therapy chamber, preferably near popular dive sites and accessible to the main healthcare facilities on the island.
- Ensure that the site has the necessary infrastructure, such as reliable power supply, water, and easy access for emergency vehicles.

3. Training and Staffing:

- Invest in training for local medical professionals and dive operators to operate the hyperbaric oxygen therapy chamber and provide appropriate care for divers with DCS.
- Consider partnerships with international dive safety organisations to provide training and certification.

4. Maintenance and Sustainability:

- Develop a long-term maintenance plan to ensure the hyperbaric oxygen therapy chamber remains operational and is regularly serviced.
- Create a sustainable funding model, perhaps through the introduction of small levy on dive operators or tourist fees, to cover ongoing operational costs.

5. Awareness and Promotion:

- Promote the availability of the hyperbaric oxygen therapy chamber.
- Highlight the presence of this facility in marketing materials to attract safety-conscious divers and tourists.

6. Emergency Protocols and Collaboration:

- Establish clear protocols for emergencies, including MoU between dive operators and the Department of Health.
- Establish MoUs with neighbouring islands can also access the chamber if needed.



8. POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIO-CULTURAL, TECHNOLOGICAL, LEGAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL (PESTLE) - ANALYSIS

POLITICAL

Anguilla is known to have some of the most iconic diving infrastructure, wrecks and underwater scenery however, there have been concerns about the maintenance of the infrastructure and the promotion of eco-tourism with current issues that are in need of the enforcement of stronger regulations. It is imperative that the marine economy is prioritised throughout various Government departments to ensure its development and sustainability.

The following key priority areas are recommended:

- Creation and enforcement of updated legislation
- Establishment and enforcements of diving standards through internationally accredited organisations.
- Management and frequent policing of borders in collaboration with the relevant public sectors.
- Enhanced strategic partnership between local, regional and international counterparts.
- Reduction in government taxes as incentives to encourage Dive Operators to further diversify their product offerings and update technological equipment.

ECONOMIC

Eco-tourism is an opportunity to provide equitable benefits for local communities and stakeholders. Marine eco-tourism sectors are extremely important for the thriving of local economies, however, their aggregate economic benefits are often overlooked. Globally, the impact of diving is experiencing a steady increase, there are over 11,500 SCUBA divers across the world, and research has showed that an estimated 0.9 – 3.2 billion is predicted across the globe from the diving related tourism activities, supporting an approximated 124, 000 job creation with 8.9 – 13.6 million dive tourist (Schuhbauer A. T.-O.-M., 2023).

Tourism is a main income for divers however, the tourism sector exposes persons to vulnerabilities as a result of the demand and shifts in the global economy. This was evidently



seen during the COVID-19 pandemic. Regional statistics have quoted that scuba diving tourist spends around US\$1,200 per day in The Bahamas, the World Tourism Organization (WTO) reported an average spending per tourist per day of around US\$500.00 and in Columbia \$1,500 per trip (Haas, 2017).

To consider sustainable practices in achieving the economic factors, the following indicators must be considered:

- Incentives to increase the number of dive operators and business on island (snorkel and scuba businesses, diving schools, diving charter businesses, dive trips, gear rentals);
- Partnerships with financial Institutions to offer incentives towards the increase of businesses in the blue economy;
- Government leadership with the implementation of legislation and policies to guide the revenue generated from Dive Tourism which can be used to boost local economies
- To empower financial institutions to support the transition to the blue economy with clear investment principles.

SOCIO-CULTURAL

The socio-cultural factors of the Dive Tourism Policy will influence the perceptions, behaviors, attitudes and preferences of the stakeholders and beneficiaries within the community and those that utilises the services. It is imperative that the community understands the linkages among dive tourism and the benefits to the local community. In Anguilla, understanding the quality of life (QoL), is important to determine the impact of new products and offerings on residents. An improvement in the residents' QoL will enhance and sustain tourism development.

TECHNOLOGICAL

The technological factors will be used to ensure that the local market is equipped and up to date with modern technological advancement, in order to deliver the expected results.



LEGAL

Legislation for this policy is important as it can impact the operation and management.

- Environmental regulations;
- Restrictions;
- Limitations;
- Diving depths;
- Safety and protocols to preserve marine life;
- Licensing and permits;
- Certifications;
- Compliance with local and international safety standards and regulations;
- Liabilities and insurance;
- Safety regulations;
- Employment and labor laws; and
- International regulations.

ENVIROMENTAL

To curb the destruction and increase the preservation and conservation:

- a. Establishment and effective management of MPAs;
- b. Coastal developments; and
- c. Sustainable practices.

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MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

Anguilla has seven officially recognised marine protected areas, six of which form the Marine Park System that has been established to conserve ecologically important areas around the island:

- Little Bay houses extensive seagrass beds, and
- Dog Island, Prickly Pear, Sandy Island, and Shoal Bay-Island Harbour possess valuable coral reef ecosystems.

The seventh area, Sombrero Island, is a land-sea reserve with rich marine life and of terrestrial heritage value.

Anchoring is restricted in all these areas in an effort to reduce physical damage to their habitats.

To facilitate compliance with this regulation the Department of Fisheries and Marine Resources have installed and maintained mooring fields at Little Bay, Sandy Island and Prickly Pear.

To ensure the longevity of these moorings, users are expected to treat these moorings in an appropriate manner and contribute to their maintenance by paying the appropriate user fee.

1. Enforcement Mechanisms for MPAs

A. MONITORING AND SURVEILLANCE

- The implementation of automated monitoring systems such as satellite surveillance, underwater cameras, and drones to continuously monitor MPA boundaries for illegal activities such as unauthorised fishing, anchoring, or unregulated diving.
- Conduct regular policing by marine enforcement officers, using boats equipped with tracking devices and communication tools to ensure rapid response to violations.
- The Officers should also be trained in this area to identify the risks associated with illegal activities.
- Engage local communities and dive operators in monitoring efforts. Establish a reporting system for community members and tourists to report violations.



B. PERMIT AND LICENSING SYSTEMS

All dive operators (recreational and professional) must obtain permits for diving in MPAs.

Operators are subjected to random inspection to ensure that licenses are contingent on adherence to eco-friendly practices and regular compliance.

C. PENALTIES AND FINES

Develop a graduated system of penalties for violations, ranging from fines for minor infractions to the revocation of licenses for repeat offenders or serious breaches. A set of dive standards must be developed in collaboration with stakeholders.

Implement a policy of publicly disclosing violations by dive operators or individuals, including details of the penalties imposed, to serve as a deterrent.

D. EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES

Mandatory training for all dive operators to undergo annual training/ refreshers on MPA regulations, eco-friendly diving practices, and the importance of marine conservation.

2. Eco-Friendly Technologies and Practices for Dive Operators

A. ECO-FRIENDLY BOATS AND EQUIPMENT

- Encourage or mandate the use of electric or hybrid-powered boats to reduce carbon emissions and minimize noise pollution.
- Encourage boat builders to use non-toxic, eco-friendly anti-fouling coatings on boat hulls to prevent the spread of invasive species without harming marine ecosystems.
- Replace single-use plastics and other non-biodegradable materials used on boats with biodegradable alternatives.

B. SUSTAINABLE DIVE PRACTICES

- Train divers extensively in buoyancy control to avoid contact with the seabed and coral reefs, reducing physical damage to these fragile ecosystems.
- Enforce a strict no-touch policy for all marine life and coral during dives to prevent unintentional damage and stress to marine organisms.
- Install and use eco-mooring systems that prevent anchors from damaging the seabed. These moorings should be strategically placed in popular dive sites within MPAs.



C. WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT

- Ensure that all dive boats are equipped with systems to treat grey water before discharge, preventing pollution in sensitive marine areas.
- Implement strict waste management protocols on dive boats, ensuring all waste is properly stored and disposed of on land, rather than being dumped at sea.

D. ECO-FRIENDLY DIVE GEAR

- Promote the use of dive gear made from sustainable materials and certified by recognised environmental standards. Encourage divers to use reef-safe sunscreens and eco-friendly wetsuits.

3. Community Engagement

To ensure widespread adoption of these guidelines, it is important to engage the community at a national level for implementation and to be a part of the decision making process. Governments can offer a variety of incentives to dive operators to promote sustainable tourism, economic growth, and environmental conservation. Here are some potential incentives:

1. Tax Incentives and Deductions:

- Reduced or waived taxes on income, equipment purchases, or operational costs.

2. Subsidies and Grants:

- Financial support for initiatives that protect marine ecosystems, such as coral restoration or waste management.
- Subsidies for training programs that improve staff qualifications or safety standards.
- Support for marketing efforts that promote sustainable dive tourism, including participation in international trade shows.

3. Low-Interest Loans and Financing:

- : Access to low-interest loans for purchasing environmentally friendly boats, dive gear, or energy-efficient equipment.



- Favourable financing terms for expanding operations.

4. **Licensing and Fee Reductions:**

- Streamlined procedures for obtaining necessary business licenses.

5. **Recognition and Certification Programmes:**

- Official recognition or certification programmes.

6. **Partnership Opportunities:**

- Opportunities to partner with government agencies or research institutions on marine conservation projects.

7. **Infrastructure and Logistical Support:**

- Investment in infrastructure, such as docks, roads, or waste disposal systems, to make dive operations more efficient and sustainable.
- Providing dive operators with access to government research data, environmental monitoring systems, or early warning systems for weather conditions.

8. **Education and Training Programmes:**

- Government-sponsored training on the latest sustainable practices, business management, or marketing strategies.
- : Scholarships or financial aid for staff to attend advanced training or certification courses.

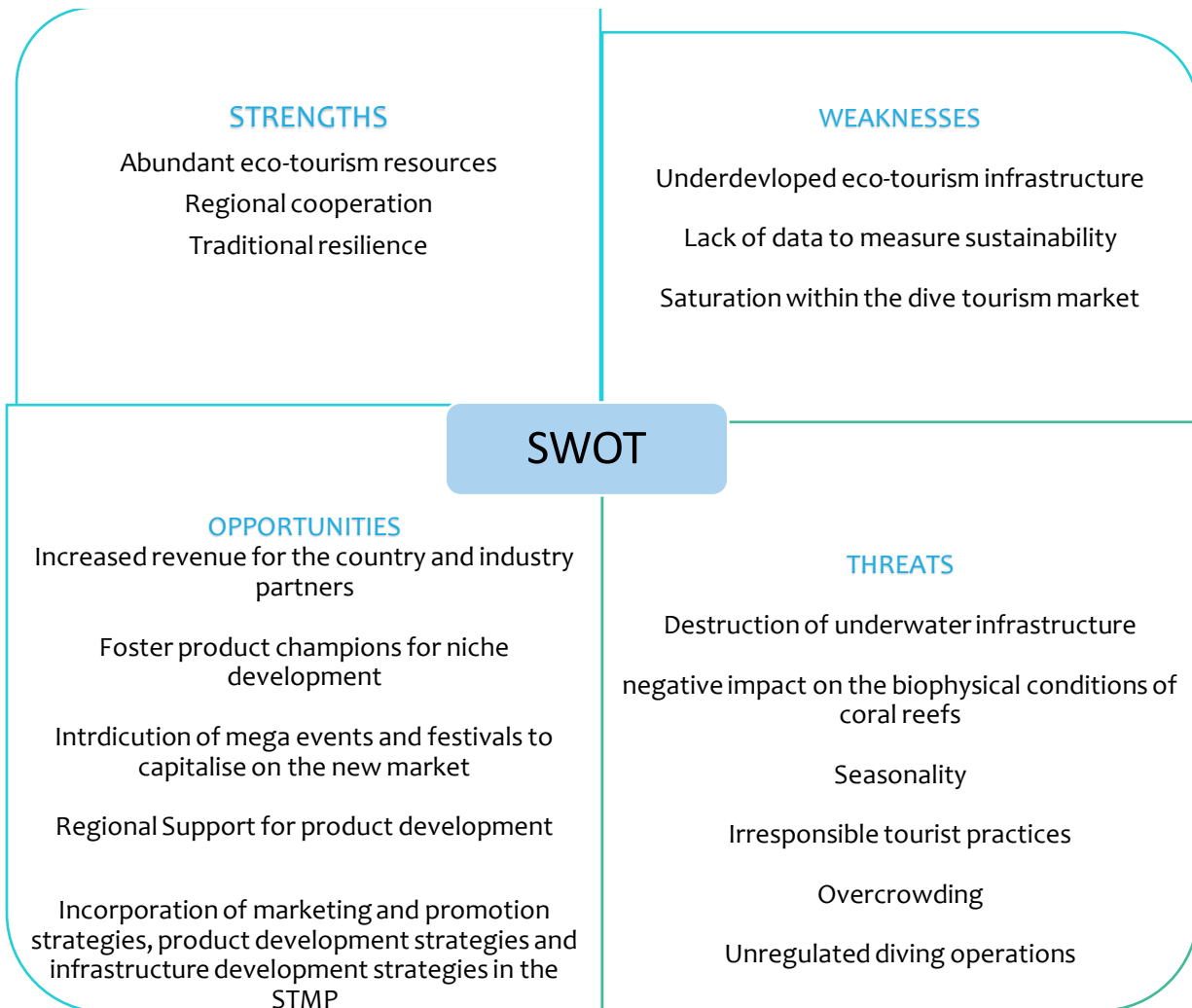
9. **Promotional Support:**

- Inclusion in national Campaigns





SWOT ANALYSIS OF DIVE TOURISM





9. STANDARDS FOR DIVE OPERATORS

- a. Any license fees required by the laws of Anguilla, B.W.I must be paid and kept up to date.
- b. All divers must wear appropriate gear before participating in any excursion.
- c. A rescue vessel must be readily available for immediate use if needed.
- d. Divers must remain within areas designated by the operator.
- e. A competent adult must always accompany divers who have purchased services from a reputable and legally operating dive shack.
- f. Emergency signals must be demonstrated to all participants.
- g. All diving participants must be given time to familiarise themselves with the water and the instructions provided by the Dive Master.
- h. A current emergency action plan must be documented and accessible at all times. This plan must outline the actions to be taken in the event of a water sports-related incident. Dive shop staff must be trained and thoroughly familiar with this emergency action plan.
- i. First-aid equipment must be readily available and easily accessible.
- j. All diving equipment provided for participants must be in good working condition, regularly maintained, with records kept and available for inspection by the relevant authority when necessary.
- k. All diving participants must receive a relevant safety briefing before using the facilities.



- l. Tour boats and authorised snorkel leaders/dive masters must give a briefing on marine environmental conservation to snorkelers before entering marine reserves.
- m. Wildlife must not be harassed; fish must not be fed; turtles must not be ridden, trapped, or collected. Dive operators should seek professional development on managing invasive species populations, including participation in workshops and training sessions.
- n. Tampering with or destroying fish pots is prohibited. Lost “ghost” traps or those damaging the reef shall be reported to the relevant authorities.

10. REQUIREMENTS FOR SNORKELLING

- a. Rental gears shall be kept in good condition.
- b. Snorkelers shall be advised of appropriate areas to snorkel.
- c. All participants engaged in snorkelling activities of water sports operators shall be issued a snorkel vest and be instructed in its use.
 - **Water Visibility:** Anguilla waters generally offers good visibility
 - **Currents and Depth:** If diving in areas with stronger currents or greater depths, a lower ratio, such as 1:4, is safer to ensure divers can be closely monitored.
 - **Dive Sites:** Anguilla is the home to some of the best dive sites, this can add complexity and warrant a lower ratio.
 - **Beginner Divers:** For groups with novice or less experienced divers, a ratio of 1:4 is more appropriate to ensure they receive adequate attention and guidance.
 - **Experienced Divers:** For more seasoned divers who are comfortable with local conditions, the ratio can be safely extended to 1:6.
 - **Emergency Preparedness:** In the event of an emergency, having a lower ratio allows the guide to more effectively manage and assist all divers.
- d. All operators shall instruct all snorkelers not to touch the reef or take corals and shells from the sea floor; and not to interfere with the property of fishermen.



11. REQUIREMENTS FOR SCUBA DIVING

- a. All diving shall be conducted in accordance with the dive conditions issued by the relevant authorities (including the use of dive flags and surface markers, adequate supervision, and the provision of dive statistics) so as to ensure diver safety and prevent negative impacts on the marine environment.
- b. All facilities providing scuba activities must possess approval from the relevant national authorities prior to offering such activities. Approval shall be renewed as deemed necessary.
- c. The training programme shall be under the instruction of trained person/s holding a current, recognised instructor qualification or equivalent. Copies of certificates of all instructors shall be kept on file.
- d. Diving within the Marine Reserve is to be carried out exclusively through local licensed dive operators, in the case of nationals through the Fisheries Division or the local dive authority.
- e. A qualified instructor or a certified dive master shall accompany divers during their diving expedition.
- f. Before entering the water there must be training for novice divers. Diver instructor(s) shall provide preliminary notice of the risks of diving with certain medical conditions (i.e. asthma, heart problems, lung/respiratory disorders, and epilepsy among others).
- g. A risk assessment of open water dive sites shall be used by service providers, noting any hazards or special considerations, which should be taken into account. This shall be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis and be available for inspection.
- h. All dive equipment and craft must be regularly and thoroughly checked for safety by qualified personnel.



- i. Novice divers, before entering open water, must indicate some level of competency in progressive open water skills including mask clearing, assisted ascents and clearing the regulator. These skills shall be re-learned in open water situations.
- j. If the dive is located away from the hotel/water sports facility location, there shall be a clearly established procedure for emergencies.
- k. The dive guide shall mark his submerged position with a Surface Marker Buoy (SMB) maintained directly overhead by the use of a line and reel. This should be only done for drift diving and training where there is boat traffic. Can be hazardous (getting tangled) on normal dives especially wreck dives.
- l. The qualifications of visiting divers shall be checked and recorded.
- m. Dive boats shall display a diver flag and shall at all times be equipped with the following:
 - emergency box which possesses flares, first aid kit, heat reflector sheets (space blankets) and diver recall signals;
 - VHF radio
 - Spare means of propulsion
 - Emergency oxygen cylinders
- n. Every dive operator must possess a current emergency evacuation development plan, which shall include first aid, transportation to the nearest medical facility, and arrangements for evacuation to the nearest recompression chamber.



12. REQUIREMENTS FOR FIRE SAFETY

- a. When spare petrol is carried on board in portable containers for any purpose, the containers shall be clearly marked and shall be stored on the weather deck where they can be readily jettisoned and where spillage will drain directly overboard. Except as approved by the relevant authorities, a portable container shall not exceed 27 litres (6 gallons) and the quantity of petrol and number of containers shall be kept to a minimum.
- b. Combustible materials not required for the operation and maintenance of machinery shall not be stored in the machinery space. Any materials stored in the machinery space shall be properly secured and cause no obstruction to access in or from the space.
- c. Machinery containing oil shall be provided with a readily accessible galvanised steel drip tray or other suitable means to collect and retain leakages containing oil.
- d. The machinery space shall be kept clean and tidy. Oily water and rags shall be collected and properly disposed of ashore.
- e. Insulating materials fitted in machinery space of new vessels, as stipulated in the regulations addressing small commercial vessel code, shall be non-combustible. Insulating material fitted in engine room space of existing vessels shall not be readily ignitable. Insulation shall be covered in a material impervious of oil and oil vapours.
- f. Machinery and fuel tank spaces shall be separated from accommodation spaces by boundaries, which prevent the passage of vapours.



13. REQUIREMENTS FOR MARINE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

- a. All users of the sea shall be environmentally conscious and comply with the national and international environmental protection laws and regulations.
- b. There shall be no littering or discharging of foreign substances into the water. If engaged in boating or coastal activities, trash shall be discarded in its proper place and not end up in the marine environment.
- c. There shall be no standing on, or touching of the coral reef.
- d. Divers shall use only waterproof sunscreen and lotion¹.
- e. Watercraft operators shall conduct environmental awareness briefings on each trip for tourists and other marine enthusiasts.
- f. There shall be no removal or destruction of any coral or shells dead or alive.
- g. A plan shall be developed for stress weather or other unforeseen circumstances, without compromising environmental conservation objectives.
- h. A “no-contact” policy shall be practiced. The no-contact policy shall not apply to marine animals held in captivity.
- i. Marine animals in the wild shall never be fed.

14. REQUIREMENTS FOR SNORKELLING AND DIVING

- a. Tour boats and authorised snorkel leaders shall give a briefing on marine environmental conservation to snorkelers before entry into marine reserves.
- b. A ‘no contact’ policy shall be implemented. Marine recreation providers and companies that rent and sell snorkel and dive gear shall promote a voluntary ‘no contact’ policy for recreational snorkelers and divers.
- c. When taking underwater photographs, one shall remain on the surface or just above the reef and shall not lean on, hold or grab the reef to get a better shot.
- d. When diving, one shall remain neutrally buoyant.
- e. Gears shall be kept closely attached to the body.
- f. Wildlife shall not be harassed; fish shall not be fed; turtles shall not be ridden nor collected.
- g. There shall be no littering.



15. REQUIREMENTS FOR A MECHANICAL EMERGENCIES AT SEA

- a. To be considered sea-worthy, vessels must meet the following criteria -
 1. fitted with one or more outboard engines;
 - a) be certified to operate in coastal waters only;
 - b) the engines securely fastened to the hull;
 - c) the engines shall be provided with an effective safety chain or cable where the engines are not permanently secured;
 - d) have effective drained engine wells that are long enough for the engines to be tilted up; and
 - e) have an auxiliary outboard engine of sufficient power to enable the vessel to return to port or safe haven, where the vessel is fitted with a single outboard engine it shall, where it proceeds beyond protected waters.
 2. A primary and secondary anchor line shall be carried so vessels can be securely moored in emergency situations.

16. REQUIREMENTS FOR DISPOSAL OF GARBAGE

- a. Garbage shall be contained and the use of plastics and styrofoam shall be banned.
- b. Garbage bins on tour boats shall be contained or kept inside to minimise the chance of debris blowing overboard
- c. Vessels shall use paper instead of plastic and Styrofoam plates and cups and can provide information to tourists regarding the threat that improper garbage disposal poses to marine life.
- d. Disposal into the sea of the following is prohibited.

17. REQUIREMENTS FOR OPERATORS

- a) Be free of any disabling drug, such as alcohol, narcotics and any form of intoxicating
- d) No smoking on the vessel;
- f) Not use a horn or other instrument for the purpose of soliciting passengers;



CONCLUSION

The development and implementation of a comprehensive Dive Tourism Policy in Anguilla is a significant step towards achieving a sustainable and flourishing dive tourism industry. By embracing the principles of sustainability, safety, community engagement, and educational enrichment, this policy is not merely a set of regulations but a strategic framework designed to ensure the long-term viability of Anguilla's marine tourism sector.

Central to this policy is the recognition that Anguilla's marine ecosystems are its most valuable asset. The coral reefs, diverse marine life, and crystal-clear waters are the very essence of what makes Anguilla a sought-after destination for divers, however, these natural resources are fragile and vulnerable to over-exploitation, climate change, and environmental degradation. A sustainable approach to dive tourism ensures that the economic benefits derived from this sector do not come at the expense of environmental health. This means implementing measures that minimise the ecological footprint of diving activities, such as regulating the number of divers at popular sites, enforcing no-contact policies with marine species, and promoting eco-friendly practices among both operators and tourists. By prioritising sustainability, Anguilla can protect its marine environments for future generations while continuing to attract eco-conscious travelers.

Safety is another critical component of the Dive Tourism Policy. The inherent risks associated with diving require strict adherence to safety protocols to protect both the tourists and the operators. The policy mandates comprehensive safety briefings, the availability of well-maintained equipment, and the presence of qualified dive masters on every excursion. Additionally, the implementation of a current and well-documented emergency action plan ensures that any incidents are handled swiftly and effectively, minimising harm and maintaining the confidence of tourists in Anguilla as a safe diving destination. By embedding safety into every aspect of dive tourism operations, the policy not only protects individuals but also strengthens the overall reputation of Anguilla's dive industry.

The Dive Tourism Policy also underscores the importance of community involvement. Engaging local communities in the development and execution of the policy ensures that their voices are heard and their needs are met. This engagement is crucial because it fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility toward the marine environment. When local communities see the direct economic benefits of sustainable dive tourism—whether through employment opportunities, business development, or revenue sharing—they are more likely to support and actively participate in conservation efforts. Furthermore, by incorporating indigenous knowledge and traditional practices into the policy, Anguilla can



offer a more authentic and culturally rich experience to visitors, which enhances the overall appeal of the destination.

Education is a powerful tool in promoting sustainable tourism. The Dive Tourism Policy places a strong emphasis on educational initiatives aimed at both tourists and local communities. For tourists, this means providing opportunities to learn about marine biology, conservation efforts, and the cultural heritage of Anguilla. Educational programmes, whether through guided tours, workshops, or interpretive centers, can deepen visitors' appreciation of the marine environment and inspire them to become advocates for its protection. For the local population, educational programmes can enhance skills, provide new career opportunities, and increase awareness of the importance of preserving their natural heritage. This exchange of knowledge and culture not only enriches the experience of diving in Anguilla but also contributes to a more informed and responsible global diving community.

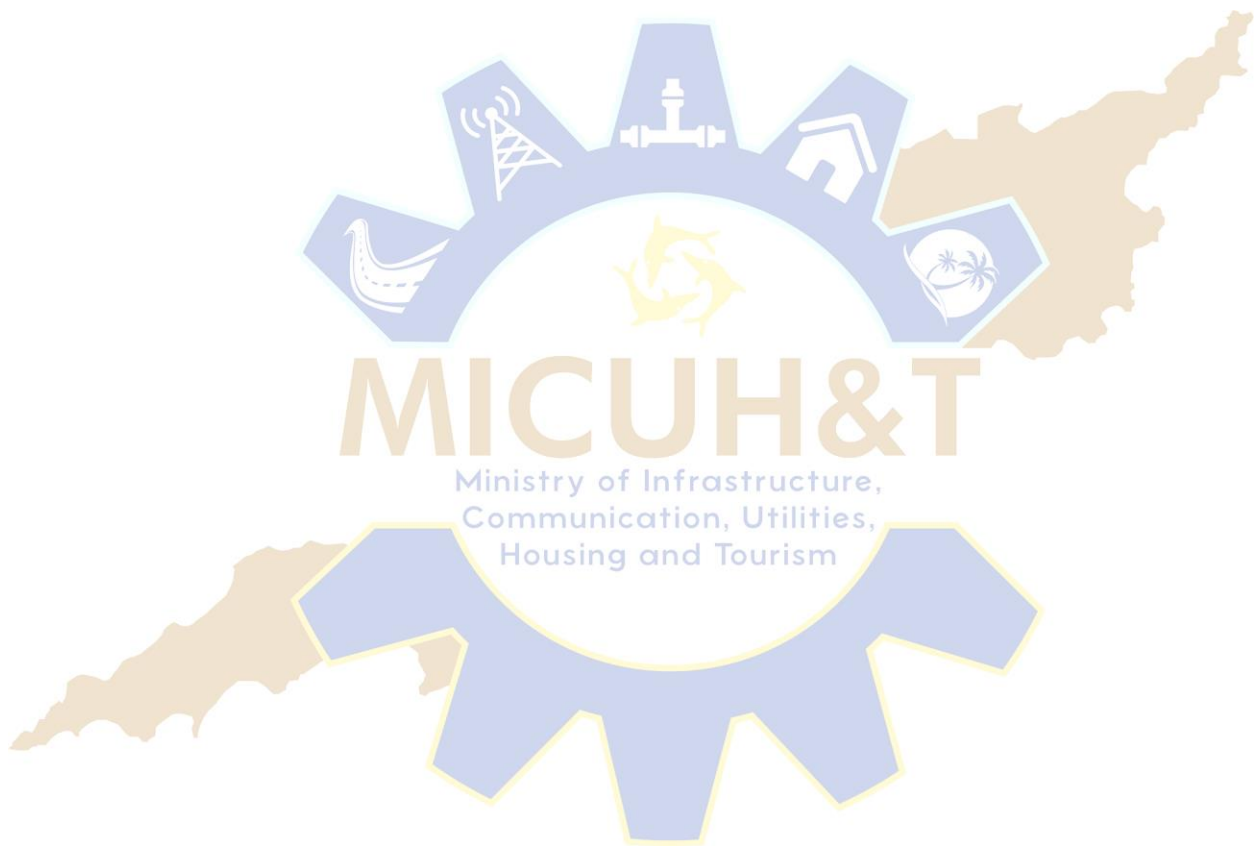
Ultimately, the Dive Tourism Policy seeks to create a thriving and enduring dive tourism industry that leaves a positive impact on both the environment and the people involved. By aligning the interests of tourists, operators, local communities, and the government, this policy ensures that all stakeholders benefit from a well-managed and sustainable dive tourism sector. The policy is designed to be adaptable, allowing for regular reviews and updates to address emerging challenges and opportunities. This flexibility is crucial in a rapidly changing world where environmental conditions, tourism trends, and economic factors can shift unexpectedly.

In conclusion, the Dive Tourism Policy for Anguilla represents a forward-thinking approach to tourism management. It recognises that the true value of Anguilla's dive tourism industry lies not only in its ability to generate revenue but also in its potential to foster a deep connection between people and the ocean. By embracing sustainability, prioritising safety, engaging the community, and promoting education, Anguilla is well-positioned to lead by example in the global dive tourism industry. The successful implementation of this policy will ensure that Anguilla remains a premier diving destination, celebrated not just for its natural beauty but also for its commitment to preserving and enhancing that beauty for generations to come.

The path forward is clear, with collaborative effort and unwavering dedication to these guiding principles, Anguilla can achieve a dive tourism industry that is not only profitable but also equitable, resilient, and a model of environmental stewardship. This holistic approach will ultimately result in a harmonious balance where tourism, community, and nature thrive



together, creating a legacy of sustainable development that will benefit Anguilla and its people for years to come.





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