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With Collaborative Governance towards Sustainable Development Goal 14?

- Dutch Actors in the
Caribbean

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Abstract

The Dutch overseas territories in the Caribbean face many challenges when it comes to conservation and protection of the coast and ocean, such as marine pollution, invasive species and tourism additionally puts pressure on the fragile ecosystems. This highlights the relevance of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14, which concerns life under the sea. To move towards these goals, collaborative partnerships are seen as crucial due to the complexity and interconnectedness of today's problems. This qualitative study explores how collaborative governance can help to reach SDG 14. It is focused on Dutch actors collaborating in the Caribbean overseas territory and their motivations to engage in these collaborations, advantages, challenges as well as recommendations for improvements are explored. Eleven semi-structured interviews were conducted and the Nature Policy Plan The Caribbean Netherlands as well as the Report on the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals of the Kingdom of the Netherlands were analysed to arrive with the findings. The study indicates that collaborative governance can enhance marine conservation through enabling and creating joint learning processes, sharing of new information and an enhanced understanding of the situation when different actors with varying resources are brought together. A variety of actors are included in the collaborative arrangements, ranging from research institutions, to NGOs and ministries. However, issues such as a lack of trust towards the Dutch mainland stakeholders or cultural difference create challenges in these collaborative arrangements.

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1. Introduction

The Netherlands and Caribbean Islands States – how can this be? The actual Kingdom of the Netherlands does not only consist out of the part which is located on the European mainland but also encompasses three overseas countries and three Dutch municipalities located in the sunny Caribbean. Since the dissolution of the so called Netherlands Antilles on the memorable date 10th June 2010, the three islands of Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba (BES-Islands) are recognized as special municipalities of the Netherlands. The added word ‘special’ marks the missing administrative province overarching the three islands. The three islands Aruba, Curacao as well as St Maarten form the so called Caribbean part of the Kingdom. These three Caribbean islands are autonomous countries but not sovereign as foreign policies, defence as well as citizenship matters are regulated by the Dutch mainland (Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2013).



Image 1 . The Kingdom of the Netherlands

When hearing the words Caribbean, coral reefs and beach, mostly likely pictures like this come to our mind. Thoughts of white sand, a colourful underwater world and a rich biodiversity make us dream to escape for our next holiday, one can already taste the saltiness of the sea.



Image 2. Beach Curacao



Image 3. A diver takes a picture of a turtle around Bonaire

However, the following two pictures (image 4 and 5) show a different side of reality. Beach clean-ups are organised on the islands to remove debris such as washed up plastic. A high concentration of marine

waste on the Caribbean Islands of Curacao, Bonaire and Aruba were found for instance located near litter dump sites located along the coast line. The occurrence of glass, plastic, food items and abandoned fishing or boating equipment was especially high (Debrot et al., 2014). Siung-Chang (1997) points out relating to the Caribbean, that “within the last 10 to 25 years, marine pollution and coastal degradation have become serious and important issues” (p.45), a statement which was already made more than ten years ago. As reasons, an insufficient political will to govern human activities, a shortage of legislation to tackle the marine pollution problem as well as deficient investments for an effective sewage infrastructure, are presented (Siung-Chang, 1997).



Image 4. Beach clean-up on Klein Bonaire



Image 5. Crowded Beach on St. Maarten

Furthermore, the United Nations Environmental Programme (2005) state a number of factors which threaten the marine environment in the Caribbean overseas territory but also impact the surrounding islands. Tourism for instance puts especially high pressure on local ecosystems. High water consuming tourist accommodations, to provide a certain degree of luxury for visitors, as well as activities such as golfing enhance the water scarcity on islands. Large cruise ships as well as tankers generate additional oil and sewage pollution (see 2.1). Insufficient sewage systems on the islands itself lead contaminated water into the ocean. Another issue the Caribbean faces are (accidentally) imported invasive species which put pressure or endanger the unique local biodiversity (United Nations Environmental Programme, 2005).

These issues are experienced by several of the so called Small Island Developing States under which Aruba, Curacao and St. Maarten fall (Division for Sustainable Development Goals, n.d.). Often, SIDS fall under the category of “most vulnerable countries” (Scandurra et al., 2017, p.390), especially referring to their economic sector and rich biodiversity which is threatened by human practices such as tourism or resource extraction. Characteristics which many islands states have in common are a small geographical size, sparse population, isolated location and unique but vulnerable ecosystems. The problems caused by these characteristics are therefore similar as well and encompass difficulties in politics and trade due to long distances, only a few resources available or a limited institutional capacity which additionally aggregate the ability to deal with these challenges.

Additionally, the difficult conditions are pronounced by the effects of climate change such as the rising sea level and more frequent and disastrous natural catastrophes which are a major threat to the islands (de Águeda Corneloup & Mol, 2014; Hay, 2013; Scandurra et al., 2018).

This emphasizes the need of environmental regulations and sectoral cooperation on a regional or international level in order to strengthen the islands capability to cope with the challenges. However, island ministries often consists of only a few people which have limited resources at hand to deal with today's complex problem and to make their voice heard in the international political and economic arena.

These issues experienced by the Caribbean oversea territory islands as well as many of the SIDS are also recognized in international soft law such as in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs). Soft laws can be defined as non-binding commitments but scholars disagree on the definition of the term itself as well as on its usefulness (Karlsson-Vinkhuyzen, 2011). The overarching Agenda 2030 which targets sustainable development includes the Sustainable Development Goals (Transforming Tourism Project, 2017). These goals were based on the eight Millennium Development Goals from 2000-2015, and were set up to further eradicate poverty and, as the name already says, to especially promote sustainable development (European Commission, n.d.). The goals do not only address the environmental status quo but correspond to the 'triple bottom line model' which argues that the inclusion of the economic as well as social dimension is crucial to reach sustainable development (Bowen et al., 2017). Different from previous agendas is the holistic and universal scope of actors and countries which are addressed to change their practices as 'industrial' states have been included in this agenda as well. In 2015, 17 goals which encompass 169 targets were created. The topics include for instance climate change, education, peace and gender equality.

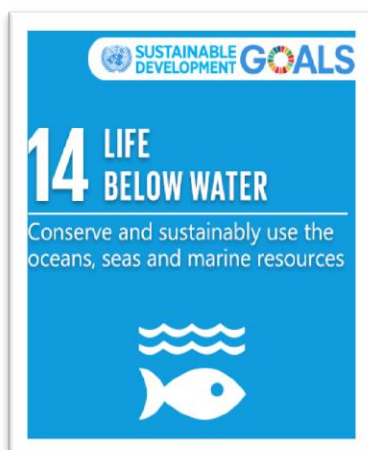


Image 6. SDG 14

In view of tourism, it can be said that it can influence all goals directly as well as indirectly. Moreover, tourism is explicitly stated in three of the goals, namely in number 8 (Decent work and economic growth), number 12 (responsible consumption and production) and number 14 (see image 5). The latter goal with the name 'Life below water' includes themes like (over) fishing, acidification, pollution, resource protection, economic benefits and tourism and is predominantly discussed in this research due to the environmental threats the coast and ocean surrounding the Caribbean islands faces (UNWTO & United Nations Global Compact Network Spain, 2016).

Tourism is an important part of the Caribbean islands' economy as the coast and ocean are the main pull factors for tourist as established earlier but also puts pressure on the coast and ocean as illustrated previously. Therefore, goal 14 "Life under the Sea" is especially relevant in the SIDS context and therefore also when it comes to the Caribbean islands.

Considering the SDGs, there is a gap when it comes to goal 14. Current scientific and government reports (Pradhan et al., 2017; *Rep. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2017*) stress that there is a need of more research to create a zero-base measurement for the goal's implementation. Next to this, the goal's trade-offs and synergies to other goals are under researched yet which makes it an interesting goal to look further in to. Because of this, as well as, the goals relevance in the Caribbean context, it is chosen to be investigated in this research.

In order to thrive towards this goal, but also to enhance sustainable development in general, it is emphasized that this "can be achieved only with a broad alliance of people, governments, civil society and

the private sector all working together” (United Nations, 2014, Article 1) in “genuine and durable partnerships at the national, regional and international levels” (Article 98). This was stated in the Samoa Pathway framework, an outcome of the Third International Conference on SIDS which took place in 2014 on the island of Samoa. Following up on the document, the so called SIDS action platform was set up which includes more than 300 partnerships which were entered during or after the conference. The platform offers an overview over the partnerships deliverables, resources and coordination mechanisms as well as monitors the progress (SIDS Action Platform, 2015).

One factor which is crucial for achieving these effective partnerships is collaboration. More effective solutions can be found when actors come together, share their resources and create policies or jointly make decisions, which is expressed by the concept collaborative governance (Huxham., 2000; Roberts, 2000). The Kingdom of the Netherlands emphasizes the need of these collaborative arrangements in order increase sustainable actions and to implement the Sustainable Development Goals more effectively. Currently, it is a trend among Dutch organizations to form coalitions in order work towards the Sustainable Development Goals more efficiently (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, 2017, p.7). These collaborations include a wide range of different stakeholders, namely local as well as the national government, the private sector, the broader society, knowledge generating institutions and youth organizations (Rep. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, 2017). This does not only include actors situated on the European mainland but the whole Kingdom of the Netherlands ascribes value to collaborative partnerships across sectors and borders (Rep. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, 2017). In the Report on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals it is for instance stated that “All parts of the Kingdom of the Netherlands have a long history of building partnerships for development, and our pursuit of the SDGs builds on that tradition” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, 2017, p.7). Therefore, it is expected that many Dutch stakeholders engage in collaborative arrangements in order to move towards reaching the SDGs. Furthermore, the Kingdom of the Netherlands provides an interesting research case as the mainland faces very different challenges to the Caribbean oversea territory due to their geographical location and size compared to the mainland (Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2013).

However, there is a lack of research when it comes to assessing how different institutions and organisations within the kingdom work together on achieving these development goals. Information can be only obtained from official government reports such as the Nature Policy Plan The Caribbean Netherlands (Ministry of Economics, 2013) or the Report on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2017). Mostly, only the general need for collaboration is emphasized and only a handful of partnerships are elucidated on. Furthermore, the actual contribution of Dutch mainland actors and the advantage of the collaborations come up short. No previous research was found which investigates how collaborative governance arrangements between mainland actors and island actors related to sustainable development goals work.

In order to narrow down the partnerships to look at, it is concentrated on SDG 14 due to the relevance of the goal in the Caribbean oversea territory, as many factors such as invasive species or pollution threaten coastal and marine ecosystems, and due to the lack of research related to this goal. The geographical, cultural and environmental differences between the countries of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and its ambition to create partnerships to jointly work towards the SDGs, makes it an interesting case

As collaborative arrangements are emphasized to be crucial in order to target the SDGs. Collaborative governance encompasses stakeholders’ collaborative efforts of policy generation, decision making and resource sharing and is therefore chosen to be the main theoretical concept of this research. Furthermore, it was not yet researched how collaborations between mainland and island stakeholders can help to reach the goals. Collaborations related to SDG 14 are chosen to be investigated in this thesis as it is particularly relevant for the Caribbean oversea territories as several facts such as waste or invasive species threaten the

coast and ocean. Therefore, the main research questions this study explores ‘How can collaborative governance help to reach the SDG 14?’

After providing an insight into this study’s problem, first knowledge gaps and the study’s objective, a section about the case context is presented which provides a deeper insight into nature protection and its relation to tourism in the Caribbean overseas territory as well as elaborates the targets of SDG 14. It follows an extensive literature review which synthesises the main concept of this research, collaborative governance as well as its components collaboration and governance and related concepts. It follows a section where the research question is stated with its sub-research questions resulting out of the literature review. A method section in the next chapter provides information about the research design, the data collection methods and it is stated how the obtained data is analysed. The results are presented structured per sub-research questions and tables as well as a schematic diagram are created to visualize the findings. Consequently, the results are discussed and compared to the literature review. Here, overlaps and deviations are outlined and unexpected findings are pointed out. At the end of the discussion section, possible weaknesses of this research are identified and weighted. The research sums up with concluding remarks on each question and recommendations for further research are presented.

2. Case context

In this section, additional information is provided to get a better insight into the context of this study. First, the relation between nature and tourism in the Caribbean overseas territory is illustrated which emphasizes the importance to engage in sustainable management of (marine) nature. Secondly, complementary information for SDG 14 is presented in order to understand SDG 14 and its targets more holistically.

2.1 The Caribbean overseas territory – Nature protection & tourism

The islands’ nature is closely tied to the population’s economic practices due to local fishing activities or resource export of, for example, aloe vera or salt. Therefore, protection of precious ecosystems is also of economic relevance. Moreover, tourism is an important economic sector and therefore a crucial income source (Croes, 2007). In 2015, for instance, a total number of 1.22 million tourists decided to spend their holiday on Aruba (Aruba Tourism Authority, 2016).

The main pull-factor for people to visit the Caribbean islands is the coastal area, especially for beach tourism, diving and other water (sport) related activities. Thus, the coast of islands and the surrounding ocean are not only impacted by challenges in face of climate change but also suffer from pollution and unsustainable resource management which is often further intensified by tourism practices. Tourism puts more pressure on local ecosystems due to a higher presence of people which generate more waste as well as grey and blackwater (Transforming Tourism Project, 2017). Moreover, tourists’ activities such as snorkelling, jet skiing, crowding beaches, and increased (seafood) consumption to name a few actions disturb local fishing businesses and (nesting) habitats of animals. These effects are pronounced by the absence of sustainable coastal management which pronounces the negative impacts tourism has on the coast. Therefore, initiatives are needed to improve the environmental management of coastal zones of the Caribbean islands as well as other small island developing states. To provide an example of responsible actors for nature protection in the Caribbean overseas territory, which includes for instance marine parks, the two organisations St Eustatius National Parks Foundation (STENAPA) as well as the Stitching

Nationale Parken Bonair (STINAPA) protect the local environment. Furthermore, a mandate was handed over to both foundations by local governments to enforce nature policies in protected areas (STENAPA, n.d.; STINAPA, n.d.). These two foundations can enhance coastal management but other stakeholders can further support or collaborate with these organisations. Hay (2013) states for instances that environmental management can be improved through training and increasing knowledge about hazards as well as more institutions engaging in community integration and in enhancing the sustainable use of resources (Hay, 2013).

2.2. Sustainable Development Goal 14

To provide a better understanding of the SDG 14, its targets are illustrated in the following paragraph. The aim to stop or reduce all forms of contamination and debris entering the ocean to a large extent is one part of SDG14. A more sustainable fishery shall also be established and coastal as well as marine ecosystems are targeted to be restored and continuously protected. It is aimed to decrease the reasons for ocean acidification and to use marine resources more sustainably while providing SIDS with the chance to create a sustainable economic benefit out of their resources. Furthermore, it is desired to increasingly comply with international legislation related to marine conservation and protection. Last but not least, it is aimed to increase cooperation between scientists in order to arrive with more research projects related to investigate factors which threaten the health of the coast and ocean. These targets of SDG 14 are aimed to be reached by either 2020 or 2025.

However, it needs to be taken into consideration that all sustainable development goals cannot be seen as independent from each other but rather have a complex interaction. Pradhan et al. (2017) put this into the following words “the goals should not be seen as an additive structure but as a system of synergistic reinforcement“(p.1177).

3. Literature Review

3.1 Today's complex and wicked Problems

The contemporary issues humanity faces such as climate change, global warming and sustainable development are so called ‘wicked’ problems. These kinds of problems have the characteristics to involve conflicting interests and opinions among stakeholders and no mutual consent on solutions (Roberts 2000). Changing conditions exacerbate the situation additionally as they need to be apprehended on. Moreover, previously established ways of solving problems are no longer functioning as there is no coherent definition of these wicked problems. This is a result of actor's multiplicity of perceptions as different levels of knowledge, cultural backgrounds, personal and professional interest, create different views and attitudes toward a problem. Another characteristic to consider is that the process of understanding and solving of an issue are explored hand in hand. This means that with increasing comprehension of a problem, the solutions possibilities change. Moreover, every decision and implemented solution has wide-ranging consequences because of the scale of today's problems due to the interconnected nature of the world's social, economic and environmental systems (Rittel & Webber, 1973; Roberts, 2000; Kovacic & Sousa-Poza, 2013).

Overarching, global problems such as climate change resulting in global warming are affecting the local level and more and more pressure is put onto local ecosystems. The connectivity and complexity of environmental issues calls for a collaborative strategy to find the best possible solutions to today's problems (Roberts, 2000). Instead of acting solely with their own agenda in mind without understanding the complexity and intersection of actions, opening a dialogue between different actors can bring parties closer together to deal with a problem more effectively. Desired is a win-win situation in which resources and information can be shared to arrive collectively with a better informed and more effective decision for the greater whole (Roberts, 2000). This objective is part of the concept collaborative governance which is elaborated in the following sections. The wickedness and interconnectedness of today's problems require collaborative governance arrangements in order to mitigate today's problems, which links both concepts and supports the relevance of the latter on to be the main concept of this research. In the next section, the components, advantages as well as struggles collaborative governance can entail are synthesised.

3.2 Collaboration

Wood & Gray (1991) come up with the following definition of collaboration after merging as well as revising previously made definitions and extending these with elements not taken into consideration. The resulting definition argues that a collaboration is evident when "a group of autonomous stakeholder of a problem domain engage in an interactive process, using shared rules, norms, and structures, to act or decide in issues related to the domain" (p.146). This hints to the first component of a collaboration constituted by Gray & Purdy (2018), the interdependence of actors in a situation. For instance, government institutions, conservation organisations, hotels and other facilities close to the coast need to work together to effectively protect coral reefs. Knowledge, the authority to generate policies as well as actions by hotels such as waste water treatment need to be combined in order to achieve the desired aim. The actors are in need of each other's willingness to tackle the issue. Related to this, Ansell & Gash (2017) note that collaborations entail that the stakeholder involved are becoming more interlinked. At the same time however, the actors' autonomy is kept.

A second component of collaboration is shared regulations, which structure the joint work and increases constructive interactions (Gray & Purdy, 2018). Moreover, it is not advisable to ignore differences between stakeholders but to explore them, which can reveal underlying worries, explanations for stakeholders' actions and commonalities. Another component of collaboration is that stakeholders have different resources and skills and need to learn how to combine these in order to solve or mitigate the respective issue. An additional feature is that stakeholders are aware of the responsibility their role implicates such as the duty to implement the action plan (Gray & Purdy, 2018).

Gray & Purdy (2018) point out that the two terms collaboration and partnership are often confused with each other which increases the fuzziness of the term collaboration. Not all partnerships are actual collaborative arrangements and only fall under the category when the collaboration components elaborated previously are evident.

To make it explicit, the term (collaborative) partnership is used in this paper as a synonym to collaboration and does not mark a different type of joint work. This is justified as the arrangements referred to as partnerships in this paper entail the reviewed components of collaborations.

Gray (2007) structures a collaboration of stakeholders into three different phases, namely the problem-setting, the direction-setting and the implementation phase.

The problem-setting phase is constituted of exploring an issue and to come up with a problem definition all stakeholders agree on as well as to get actors obligated to work. Furthermore, resources which are needed to mitigate or solve a problem need to be identified, such as money, knowledge or political authority. The actors inheriting these aspects need to be brought together. A convenor, for instance an individual or organisation who brings different stakeholders together, needs to be found if one is not already present (Grey, 2007).

The direction setting phase involves procedures such as agreeing on the decision making process and creating certain ground rules, for example, how to handle disagreements. The problem agenda is set and different possibilities for working on the issue are investigated. Eventually, all actors involved in the collaboration reach an agreement (Gray, 2007). Monitoring the outcome and the compliance are features of the implementation phase. Furthermore, support from external actors and commitment from stakeholders related to the problem needs to be created to ensure the effectiveness of the agreement reached (Gray, 2007).

3.3 Governance

Governance is a vague term which lacks consensus on its definition (Jordan, 2007). Ruggie (2014) defines this concept as “the systems of authoritative norms, rules, institutions, and practices by means of which any collectivity, from the local to the global, manages its common affairs” (p.5). Next to this, it has to be noted that government and governance are not the same. The term government comprises top down actions undertaken by the state and does not involve other actors from the private sector or NGOs (Jordan, 2007; Arts, 2006). In turn, governance also includes governmental institutions next to many other actors of different sectors and can therefore be used across various scales (Jordan, 2007). However, arrangements without the participation of a government are also evident, such as partnerships between the civil society and the private sector. These forms of arrangements are termed as governance without government (Arts, 2006). More than 10 years ago, Jordan (2007) already pointed out that literature involving the concept of governance is growing vastly. Related to this, Hall (2008) and Vodden (2014) notice an increase in number as well as a rising importance of inter-organisational networks, which was visible in the last decades. A stronger position for the private sector and non-governmental organisations is evident and actors increasingly cooperate with each other due to the interconnectedness of today’s problems (see 2.1). A more recent approach related to the concept is depicted with the term multi-level governance, which highlights these connections between actors ranging from domestic to international level (Marquardt, 2017). Decision making processes are shared among these involved organisations, institutions or private sector stakeholders (Marquardt, 2017; Dvorakova Liskova et al, 2018). Especially when it comes to environmental issues, multi-level governance is evident as international and local events and decision have an impact or aim to influence national efforts. Lobbying efforts of NGOs, knowledge exchange on an international level as well as local policy plans to mitigate climate change emphasize the multi-level scale of governance issues (Marquardt, 2017).

Both of these terms reviewed in the previous sections are now combined in the concept collaborative governance illustrated in the following paragraph.

3.4 Collaborative Governance

This section starts off with bringing together traditional definitions of collaborative governance and an alternative understanding of the concept. This is followed by a presentation of possible motivations why actors engage in these governance arrangements and an illustration of dynamics and drivers are reviewed which are necessary in order to work together and to implement actions. Hereafter, a section about collaborative advantages and a paragraph about collaborative obstacles are presented. A table visualizes the main gains and obstacles of collaborative arrangements which were discussed in the literature reviewed.

Collaborative governance especially emphasizes a synergy between the government and non-state-stakeholders such as the community, non-governmental organizations or businesses and is therefore cross-boundary in nature (Huxham, 2000). A broader definition of collaborative governance is proposed by Emerson et al. (2011) which explain that the concept encompasses “the processes and structures of public policy decision making and management that engage people constructively across the boundaries of public agencies, levels of government, and/or the public, private and civic spheres in order to carry out a public purpose that could not otherwise be accomplished” (p.2). Huxham (2000) emphasizes the wide conception of the term collaborative governance, which is marked by the incongruity of what is included and what is not.

A more alternative definition of collaborative governance is contemplated in this paper which is broader than the previously mentioned conceptions, as it does not assume that the government needs to commence the collaboration. Instead, the process can be more informal and result out of the “joint efforts by public and private actors, each wielding a degree of discretion, to advance a goal that is conventionally considered governmental” (Donahue, 2010, p. 151).

Regardless of how big the degree of government involvement is, in this form of governance, actors jointly work on reaching effective win-win outcomes. Policies are created and problems are tackled while power is shared among the stakeholders (Huxham, 2000).

The motivation to engage in a collaborative partnership varies from case to case. Sometimes the interdependence between actors simply points towards a collaboration as individual actors cannot effectively manage a problem on an individual basis (Emerson et al., 2011; Gray & Purdy, 2018). A lack of knowledge and financial or material resources make joint work an attractive concept. Furthermore, collaborations can be called into being by the government itself or by other institutions which have a mandate to do so. External circumstances such as environmental disasters, a change of people responsible, new regulations or challenges created by climate change generate a necessity or a new possibility to work together (Gray & Purdy, 2018). The uncertainty of a situation can also be a motivation to work together as risks are shared between actors involved (Huxham, 2000; Emerson et al., 2011). Furthermore, it can be desired to include more people into a policy or decision making process to represent shared information and to learn together and to include more opinions or to empower certain stakeholder groups (Huxham, 2000). Incentives, such as of financial nature, can further motivate stakeholders to engage in a collaborative arrangement (Huxham, 2000; Emerson et al., 2011). Huxham (2000) adds that the motivation itself also influences how a stakeholder is perceived or in which role the actor sees himself, for example as a facilitator or convenor (see Table 1).

Table 1. Stakeholders stated motivations to engage in collaborative arrangements

Motivation
Interdependency of actors
Lack of (knowledge, financial, material) resources
Presence of a leading initiator
External circumstances (e.g. disasters, elections)
Engage more people in decision-making processes
Uncertainty
Generation of collaborative advantage
Shared learning
(Financial) incentives
Sharing risks + costs
Empowering self or others

Emerson et al. (2011) propose three iterative developing dynamics which need to be met in collaborative governance, so that the initial drivers of jointly working together transform into actions. Firstly, principled engagement which includes social joint learning while exploring the problem and each other's interests is one of the dynamics. Inclusiveness of participants in discussions and their fair treatment lead to a more sustainable and successful outcome of the negotiations. Secondly, a shared motivation is crucial as trust, appreciation and dedication create an inner forward-thriving climate with a respectful atmosphere and bonds between stakeholders. Thirdly, collaboration can improve resources and capacities available to tackle an issue. This collaborative advantage needs to be created to commit actors in the joint work over a long period of time. Resources which are needed to create capacities are institutional arrangements, which provide structures and interaction rules. Moreover, a leader, which can be for instance a convener or a representative, is needed in case conflicts occur, as presented in the review of the concept of collaboration (Emerson et al., 2011).

Knowledge is expressed to be the “currency of collaboration” (Emerson et al., 2011, p.16) which highlights that knowledge is no longer held back but actively shared among stakeholders and grows as inputs from other participants provide new information. Lastly, resources such as power, time or money need to be available and distributed where special attention needs to be paid to occurring disparity (Emerson et al., 2011).

Advantages and also a motivation to engage in this form of governance are the joint and shared learning process as new actors bring in new information and institutions can learn from each other's practices. Moreover, possible risks as well as costs are shared which makes the collaboration even more convenient. Furthermore, actors which were previously unheard due to their small organizational size and lack of authority or legal power can be empowered when they are included in the participation process which makes their voices noticed. This increases the fairness of the whole process. Efficiency can be increased as actors gather around a table and negotiation instead of being addressed individually (Huxham, 2000; Roberts, 2000). Human potential as well as material resources are combined when different individuals, groups or institutions convene to work together. This includes skills, information and contact networks which are accumulated and therefore higher than when each actor would operate on a separate basis (Kanter, 1994; Lasker et al., 2011). Moreover, these resources do not simply add up but their synergy creates new value, one plus one makes three in this case (Vangen & Huxham, 2006). Not only resources involved in a partnership but also collaborative arrangements itself can create new value as they can lead to spin-of where new collaborations are formed (Ansell & Gash, 2017).

Lasker et al. (2001) stress four more collaborative advantages which can result out of a joint working process. Firstly, creativity is likely to increase as different experiences and working techniques meet each other which can create new, more inspired and innovative ways to approach a problem. Secondly, a gathering of policy makers or more theoretical actors with people who are engaged in the field increases practical thinking. Due to the multiplicity of actors, the situation which is discussed can be understood more comprehensively as different backgrounds and knowledge cause a more holistic point of view. Fourthly, the creative thinking and better understanding of a problem can cause transformations as stakeholders might consider changing their established ways of reasoning or practices (Lasker et al, 2001).

However, it needs to be acknowledged that the diversity of people engaged in the collaborative process can also lead to conflicts (Huxham, 2000). Especially varying languages or decision-making styles and different reporting proceedings can harm the potential for collaborative advantage.

Possible drawbacks and obstacles resulting out of collaborative partnerships might be an increased amount of time which is needed for the discussions between actors as more opinions are on the table which could lengthen or even hinder the decision-making process (Roberts, 2000; Ansell & Gash, 2017). Therefore, efficiency could be decreased as processes take longer and more bureaucracy is involved. A lack of trust can generate far reaching consequences as information might not be shared openly and fully which harms the effectiveness of the collaboration and can lead to conflicts (Huxham, 2000). Gray & Purdi (2018) stress another difficulty for cross-level partnerships. When collaborating, actors are for instance located at different geographical positions or within different levels of authority (Gray & Purdi, 2018; Vodden, 2014). This can have the implication that decisions which are sometimes related to a specific setting and context can make sense in place A but not in place B. In these situations, a translation of an agreement needs to be created in order to make it fit to another level or varying circumstances resulting out of geographical or cultural differences. Special attention needs to be paid to the latter as other cultures involve different norms, values, daily routines or meanings (Huxham, 2000). Next to this, different languages can lead to additional conflicts due to misunderstandings or unintended rudeness. A long list of cultural differences, historic backgrounds, languages, different organisational structures, motivations as well as different roles in society can all lead to a different framing of a problem. In this case, an issue is interpreted in a different way and a different position towards the problem results. Especially when different solutions to a problem are on hand or when the near future is hard to predict, different framings become evident. A common ground needs to be created here in order to thrive forward together instead of getting stuck in unfruitful discussions and a web of misunderstandings. Therefore, parties involved in the collaboration need to be aware of their own interpretation and have to make their respective standpoint towards the issue explicit which requires open and respectful communication (Roberts, 2000; Gray & Purdi, 2018).

Next to this, an inconsistent participation of a stakeholder can additionally hinder the effectiveness of the joint working process as other actors might have to wait for their part of the collaboration be fulfilled, such as added information or a necessary part of budget. This can create distrust and might also decrease the motivation of actors to engage in the partnership. This emphasizes that commitment towards the problem needs to be evident on every actors side in order to make the collaboration work (Huxham, 2000). Another obstacle to collaborations is that interpersonal relationships can influence the list of stakeholders which are invited to collaborate which each other (Huxham, 2000).

Table 2. Advantages and challenges of collaborative governance arrangements discussed in the reviewed literature

Collaborative Advantage	Collaborative challenges
Joint learning process among stakeholders	Different language, culture, values, historic background
Sharing of information	Different organisational structures
Sharing of risks and cost	Increased amount of time and bureaucracy
Empowerment of actors	Lack of respect, trust or openness
Increased fairness and inclusiveness of decision making	Multiplicity of opinions can hinder decision making
Increased efficiency	Decreased efficiency
Increased creativity, inspiration, innovation	Influence of interpersonal relationships (on e.g. inclusion of stakeholders)
Enhanced understanding of the situation or problem	Different interpretation of the problem
Change of established reasoning	Power differences
Synergy – new value creation through the combination of human potential and material resources within a collaboration + spin-offs	Inconsistent participation

3.5. Multiple Streams Approach & Window of Opportunity

In order for a collaborative governance arrangement to succeed it is not only important to work towards a desired end but several factors need to come together in order to reach a momentum of change. Here the conditions necessary for a policy change or negotiated agreement are satisfied, such as stakeholder availability, interest in the respective problem, a legal basis or financial resources need to come together in order to make a change or agreement happen.

This links to the concept 'Multiple Streams Approach' (MSA) illustrated by Kingdon in his *work Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies* published in 1984. In a nutshell, the approach emphasizes that three independent streams need to congregate simultaneously to create a so called Window of Opportunity (Cairney & Jones, 2015). The latter concept marks a short amount of time where all conditions are in favour for achieving a mean or tackling a problem.

In MSA, the three streams which need to converge are called problem stream, where attention is directed to the existence of a certain problem, the policy stream, the back and forth process of developing a solution on time, and the politics stream. The letter describes the situation where a variety of factors come together such as the general mood in society, the engagement of interest groups and their lobbying as well as changes in government compositions. Here, problem recognition and policy opportunity meet to make the desired outcome happen (Cairney & Jones, 2015).

To add to the concept of window of opportunity, the opening of this window is crucial in order to move from one phase in a (collaborative) governance arrangement to the next one, to reach a change in policies or to detect an issue (Olsson et al., 2006). Furthermore, there are two types of openings, the predictable window and the unpredictable window. If a cyclic pattern can be detected, it is spoken of a predictable window, such as an annual funding or upcoming elections which give stakeholder the chance to voice concerns or to prepare proposals in time (Kingdon, 2014). The unpredictable window of opportunity can occur after a crisis or less dramatically when simply all conditions fit together in the right place at the right time. Furthermore, Kingdon (2014) states "The appearance of a window for one subject often increases the probability that a window will open for another similar subject" (p.190) which he addresses with the term spillovers.

The concept of windows of opportunity can also be found in research concerning adaptive governance arrangements and is explicitly stated in Olssen et al. (2006). However, this concept as well as MSE are not apprehended in the literature of collaborative governance reviewed. The only link which can be drawn is to Gray's (2007) three phases of stakeholder collaborations as the three phases encompass the identification of necessary resources and the convening of actors or receiving external support.

4. Relevance & Research Questions

The Kingdom of the Netherlands provides an interesting case research (see Introduction) as the Caribbean oversea territory faces very different challenges due to their different geographical location and size compared to the mainland (Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties, 2013). Each oversea island is situated in a different phase of implementing the Sustainable Development Goals which includes other starting point and diverging priorities (Rep. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, 2017). Overall, the Kingdom of the Netherlands emphasizes the need of partnerships in order to implement the goals more effectively but there is a lack of research when it comes to assessing the countries collaboration for sustainable development. Information can be only obtained from official government reports such as the *Voluntary National Review of the Kingdom of the Netherlands on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2017) or the *Nature Policy Plan The Caribbean Netherlands* (Ministry of Economics, 2013) Mostly, only the general need for collaboration is emphasized and only a handful of partnerships are elucidated such as Aruba's collaboration with the Dutch government, the Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research (TNO) as well as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for setting up a Centre of Excellence especially for collaborations between SIDS and to enhance sustainable development. Furthermore, the actual contribution of Dutch mainland actors and the advantage of the collaborations come up short.

To bridge the theoretical relevance and implication for the field, Huxham (2000) argues that it is important to comprehend how collaborative governance creates value in order to grasp current principles of governance such as underlying themes or guidelines for decision making processes. It needs to be understood to what extent a collaborative advantage is generated through joint work instead of separated problem solving approaches. However, very different circumstances depending on geographical location, institutional capacities, and different actors

The introduction already provides an illustration of the main reasoning which led to the development of the research question (RQ). With the knowledge about the composition of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, issues and characteristics of Small Developing Island States, gaps and relevance of Sustainable Goal 14 as well as the literature in mind, the subsequent research question is created. The literature reviewed in the previous section (see chapter 3) provides the basis for the following five sub-research questions (SQs).

RQ:

How does collaborative governance help to reach the UN SDG 14? - A case study of Dutch actors in the Caribbean oversea territories

SQs:

1. Which Dutch actors, including the government, NGOs, companies and knowledge institutions, are involved in collaborative governance arrangements with the oversea territories?
2. What is the motivation of actors to join the governance arrangements relating to the SDG 14?
3. Which advantages do the stakeholders see with a collaborative governance approach in these partnerships?
4. What are the challenges resulting out of these collaborations the stakeholders perceive ?
5. How can the collaborative partnerships be improved to be more effective according to the interviewed actors?

5. Methods

5.1 Research Design

The aim of this Bachelor thesis is to investigate how the concept collaborative governance helps to move forward to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 14. In order to inquire this, it is especially looked at collaborative arrangements related to the protection and conservation of coastal areas and life under the sea. This research aims to especially understand the role Dutch actors play in collaborative partnerships with other stakeholders in the Caribbean oversea territories Aruba, Curacao, St. Maarten and the Caribbean Netherlands.

To achieve this objective, a qualitative research design is chosen because of the relevance to understand the value creation of collaborative governance and to better understand the context of each partnership. It is not desired to quantify data but rather to explore how the participation of certain actors creates a collaborative advantage which is different from partnership to partnership. Moreover, the study requires flexibility as the questions which need to be asked to gather the needed information evolve during the contact with the actors, and cannot be set in advance without the possibility of adjustments at a later stage. According to the Centre for Innovative Research and Teaching (n.d.) the flexibility and exploratory nature of the research questions point strongly towards the use of a qualitative research design. Furthermore, Adler & Clark (2011) it can be spoken of an explanatory study when “the investigator works on a relatively unstudied topic or in a new area, to become familiar with this area, to develop some general ideas about it” (p.13). This definition of explorative research fits to the objective of this study, the lack of collaborative governance research in the oversea territory including Dutch actors, and therefore denotes an exploratory study.

The particular design type of this research is a case study because it enables to answer the general research question with the illustration of a real-life example. As the research questions shows, the chosen case in this study encompasses Dutch actors engaging in a collaborative partnership in the Caribbean oversea territories. Here, Caribbean based organisations which were either set up with the support of a Dutch stakeholder or have ties to a mother organisation based in the Netherlands have been also considered. In order to reduce bias in the answer of the RQ, it was aimed to not only interview Dutch stakeholders who would create a one side picture of the collaborative advantages and challenges. Therefore, it was decided to include also Caribbean based actors in the sample in order to create a more holistic picture of the collaborative governance arrangements.

5.2 Data collection

Several steps were undertaken in order to achieve the objective and two methods of data collection were used in this in this research.

First, an extensive literature review was conducted to explore the concepts of this research and to develop the research and sub-research questions for the semi-structured interviews. The need for a rather flexible interview, emphasized in section 4.1, was a motivation to create a semi-structured interview. Furthermore, Adler & Clark (2011) states that “less structured interviews can be especially useful for exploratory (...) work” (p.287) as peoples’ perceptions and experiences can be explored better than in structured interviews. An example interview template to get a better impression of the questions asked in this research can be found in the appendix (Appendix A).

The sampling method of this study is non-probability sampling which means that not all individuals of the stakeholder groups had the same chance of being contacted for an interview. Furthermore, the sampling

was convenient which addresses the selection of a respondent due to availability, for instance the mail address of some interviewees were stated on a website of an organisation (Adler & Clark, 2011). Additionally, snowball sampling was used which refers to the process when a participant of a research identifies further possible respondents (Adler & Clark, 2011). In the scope of this study, an official of the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (see Table 1) provided a list with contacts to other relevant stakeholder which enabled the interviews with NATURALIS and the ANEMOON Foundation (see Table 3).

The sample in this study consists out of eleven respondents (Table 1) which were either interviewed via skype, during a phone call or a face-to face meeting. It has to be noted that it is only spoken of ten stakeholders in this research, as once two volunteers from the same organisation, the ANEMOON Foundation, were interviewed. This was due to the availability of two respondents and differences in knowledge about the foundations work. Furthermore, the Wolfs Company was recommended as a stakeholder to be interviewed for this study by another contact person. The other stakeholders were identified while reviewing the so called SIDS action platform which provides the public with information concerning partnerships which were set up in order to work towards achieving the sustainability goals. Here, one filter was used in the search of the extensive database, the aim to support SDG 14, when looking for Dutch actors involved. This search identified the stakeholders Royal Netherlands Institute of Sea Research (NIOZ), Wereld Natuur Fonds (WNF), Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research (TNO) in the Caribbean, the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA), the Institute for Marine Resources and Ecosystem Studies (IMARES) and the Ministry of Economic Affairs (which led to the contact to the Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland). Initially, the respondents were contacted via mail and a date for an interview was set. As a preparation for the interviews, the homepages of each respective stakeholder were reviewed in order to gain knowledge about their work to be able to ask more relevant follow up questions.

Table 3. Introduction of interviewed stakeholders' names, types, bases, interview dates as well as interview location / medium

Name	Type	Base	Interview date	Interview location/ medium
PhD researcher of Royal Netherlands Institute of Sea Research (NIOZ)	Research Institution	Texel	14.05.2018	Via skype
Representative from Wereld Natuur Fonds (WNF)	Non-governmental conservation organisation (NGO)	Zeist, Netherlands	15.05.2018	At the office in Zeist
Representative of Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research (TNO) Caribbean	Research Institution	Aruba	16.05.2018	Via skype
Official of the Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland (RCN)	Overseas office and representation of the Dutch government	Bonaire	17.05.2018	Via skype
Volunteer one from ANEMOON Foundation	Volunteer data management Foundation	Bennebroek	18.05.2018	Phone interview
Representative of the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA)	Network	Bonaire	21.05.2018	Via skype
Representative of Wolfs Company	Consultancy	Amsterdam,	22.05.2018	At the office

	organisation	Netherlands with branch office on Bonaire		in Amsterdam
Volunteer two from ANEMOON Foundation	Volunteer data management Foundation	Bennebroek	23.05.2018	Via skype
Researcher of the Institute for Marine Resources and Ecosystem Studies (IMARES)	Research Institution	Different locations in the Netherlands	24.05.2018	Via skype
Researcher from Naturalis	Museum and research institution	Leiden	25.05.2018	Phone interview
Representative of the Centre of Excellence for the Sustainable Development of SIDS (COE)	Partnership between United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the governments of the Netherlands and Aruba	Aruba	28.05.2018	Via skype

*The two people interviewed from the ANEMOON foundation are treated as one stakeholder as they represent the same organisation. They are distinguished with volunteer one and volunteer two in the following sections

As a second, complementary method, two documents were analysed in order to obtain additional information. *The Nature Policy Plan The Caribbean Netherlands 2013-2017* (Ministry of Economics, 2013) was reviewed in order to obtain more information about roles and responsibilities of stakeholders as well as strategic goals for nature protection in the future. The *Report on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2017) was examined to further increase and complements the knowledge about the perceived importance of forming collaborative arrangements to reach the SDGs.

To summarize, the main data collection method of this research are semi-structured interviews whose resulting information are complemented by the analysis of the two stated documents. The data collection period took place between the 14th of May and the 28th of May 2018. All interviews were conducted in English

5.3 Data Analysis

After the data collection period, all interviews were transcribed in order to secure the data and to analyse the information more easily. On the basis of the literature review and the formulated research and sub-research questions the following codes were generated to organize the acquired data. However, the coding was both, closed and open. First, the data was scanned through the lenses of the codes generated beforehand. In a second reading, attention was payed to receptively occurring patters which lead to the creation of new codes (table 2).

Table 2. Pre-set codes resulting out of the literature reviewed and new emerging codes and their explanation (if necessary)

Pre-set codes	Explanation	Emergent Codes	Explanation
Work	In which projects and partnerships is the stakeholder engaging in?	Politics	Factors which impact the collaborations and are related to politics
Motivation	What is the actor's motivation to engage in the respective collaboration?	External environment	Factors which impact the collaborations
SDG 14	Relation of work/partnership/collaboration to UN SDG 14 'Life under water'	Future Engagement	Do actors plan to engage in a collaborative arrangement in the future?
Engagement	How did the actor get involved in the collaboration?	Changes	In topics, or actors included
Dutch mainland stakeholders			
Caribbean Stakeholders			
Collaboration Process	More information about how the partnership looks like, e.g. face-to-face visits		
Collaborative Advantages			
Collaborative Challenges			
Improvements	Improvements which lead to a more effective collaboration between the stakeholders involved in the project		
Leadership	Initiators or leaders of collaboration		
Information / Knowledge sharing	How are information, knowledge and results shared among actors related to the project?		
Policy generation / decision making	The extent to which the actor is engaged in policy generation or decision making processes		
Island differences	In the Caribbean oversea territory		
Other	For all information not fitting into a code but which might be considered in the findings or discussion		

Afterwards, the data was sorted in the coding categories differences and similarities between interviews were highlighted and collaborative governance arrangements were identified. The findings were visualised in tables were also frequencies and ranking of information were indicated.

5.4 Ethical considerations

The following considerations were made in order to protect the sample from any possible negative implications resulting out of their participation in this research.

The interviewees remain anonymous in this research as their name is not stated. Only terms such as representatives, researchers, officials or volunteers are used as an alternative. All interviews were conducted in a room without the presence of another person.

Furthermore, the respondents' information was treated confidential as no third party knows the respective identity of the sample.

Next to this, it was asked for a permission to record the skype or face to face conversations before the interviews started. All recordings were deleted after the thesis was submitted. The phone interviews were not recorded due to technical issues but extensive notes were taken.

5.5 Other considerations

The information portrayed in the findings and discussion are the perceptions or experiences of the respondent and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the overall institution or organisation. This is another reason why terms such as 'researcher from IMARES' or 'representative of the WNF' are used in this research. A list of all acronyms occurring in this research can be found in the appendix (see Appendix B).

All information in the findings is outcomes of the interviews unless stated otherwise, such as with a reference to the analysed document or extra sources.

The following chapters of this thesis presents the results of the conducted interviews and two documents reviewed. The interviewees and their work as well as their motivation are illustrated which is followed by visualisations and elaborations concerning collaborative advantages and challenges as well as recommendations on how to improve the joint work. After this, the results are discussed and compared to the reviewed literature. A conclusion is drawn which answers the sub-, as well as the general research question, and the main limitation of the study are specified. Lastly, recommendations for further research are illustrated.

6. Results

To answer the general research question of this thesis 'How does collaborative governance reach the UN SDG 14?', the results of the interviews and complementary document analysis are portrayed in this section. The following paragraphs are structured after sub-research questions. First, actors which are involved in a collaborative arrangement and their work related to achieve SDG 14 are introduced. It follows schematic diagram 1, which visualises connections between actors in a simplified way. Secondly, motivations of stakeholders to join the governance arrangements are stated and are illustrated by table 2 (SECTION), which indicates the frequency of how many stakeholders interviewed mentioned the motivations. Thirdly, Table 3 (SECTION) visualises collaborative advantages and challenges experienced by the stakeholders of this research. Two texts follow where each gain and obstacle is set into context and elaborated on. Fourthly, suggested improvements of collaborative arrangements made by then interviewees are listed and

are elucidated before the discussion section starts. Last but not least, it is returned to the general research question with illustrating the relationship between SDG 14 and the collaborative governance arrangements stakeholder engage in.

6.1 Actors involved in collaborative governance arrangements

The following section relates to the first sub research question ‘Which Dutch actors are involved in collaborative governance arrangements with the overseas territory?’. The work of the ten actors related to marine conservation and protection in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom is illustrated. Then, in each paragraph, the collaborative projects they engage in are elucidated and the stakeholder they cooperate with are mentioned.

After this, seven additional stakeholders are mentioned to be either related to or part of collaborative governance arrangements in the Caribbean and are introduced as well.

Wereld Natuur Fonds

The Wereld Natuur Fonds (WNF) is the Dutch branch of the international World Wide Fund for nature. The charity foundation has a long history working in the Caribbean and was a driving force behind the Bonaire Marine Park and supported the two foundations STENAPA and STINAPA already before 10th June 2010. Local park rangers were trained, rangers were financed and sustainable financing programmes were set up. Lately, the foundation has also people on the island who work on a programme aiming to prevent harmful chemicals of sunscreen to enter the ocean, a sustainability initiative with local tourism stakeholders as well as set up local fisherman cooperation and to increase sustainable fishing practices.

The WNF is currently trying to engage in a recent update on fisherman legislation. Here, the foundation assists the Dutch ministry in setting up appropriate laws. The foundation senses a hesitation on the side of the Dutch government as the latter is concerned to impose rules on local fisherman. However, the WNF points out that they have a good relationship to this stakeholder and can assist. The foundation argues that an inclusion of the fisherman in the legislation development would favour the outcome as the local stakeholder will understand the reasoning behind the legislation and are less likely to oppose it. The WNF points out the “need to create the momentum by getting people on board” (Representative of WNF, 15.05.2018), in order to create change when they show successful alternatives.

Wolfs Company

Most of the work of the Wolfs Company is related to nature conservation and the research of how nature and ecosystem services generate benefits for humans and how decisions society makes impact these advantages. To summarise their actions, the company supports civil as well as private systems in their decision making, sets up sustainable financing workshops, runs cost and benefits analysis, such as cruise tourism on Bonaire and they are currently assisting the Caribbean in nomination to become an UNESCO Heritage site. For the case the nomination application gets granted, stakeholder groups are explored and interests as well as benefits are collected. It is aimed to establish a committee on Bonaire as well as Curacao and to mobilize local stakeholders which continue to work on the UNESCO Heritage establishment if the vow gets granted. The company is described as fulfilling the position of a “bridging organisation” (Representative of Wolfs Company) on Bonaire between the local government and the government in the Netherlands. However, this role is only bound to this specific context.

IMARES

The research institute conducts research in tropical ecology and biodiversity related projects and generate advice to improve coastal management as well as arguments for environmental protection. For instances, IMARES provided advice for the Yarari Marine Mammal and Shark Sanctuary in the Caribbean and engaged in coral reef research on the Saba Bank, together with local stakeholders such as local park managers. Their function is summarised with the involvement to “help the islands and the Netherlands in fulfilling their responsibilities in terms of nature (Representative of IMARES; 24.05.2018)” Moreover, the knowledge institution jointly developed a project with STINAPA on Bonaire, concerning the Ecological rehabilitation of Mangroves. IMARES also collaborates with other stakeholders in the Caribbean such as representatives of the Dutch government as well as local governments, Sea Turtle Organisation Bonaire and other local NGOs. On the side of the Dutch mainland, the knowledge institution is collaborating in projects related to the Caribbean with for instance the NIOZ and WNF. Previously, IMARES was part of the Dutch ministry but due to the government’s wish for independent research, the privatisation of a cluster of institutes was decided and IMARES was called into being. The government funds the knowledge institution and a contract with the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation regulates that all research the government commissioned and all scientific knowledge desired is conducted by IMARES. Since the 10th June 2010 the so called BSE-islands fall under the responsibility of the Dutch government due to their new municipality status and therefore are part of IMARES work and supporting the mainland and islands achieving their obligations in nature management

Royal NIOZ

The institution aims to understand how climate change affects the ocean and to manage our water more responsibly. As an institute of the Netherlands Organisation of Scientific Research (NWO), the NIOZ focuses on programmes on for instances on St. Maarten, where the dynamics of bays and responses of seagrass and algae to climate change are researched. It is aimed to understand consequences of changes in the climate system better and to also empower local rangers’ argumentation to increase coastal protection. The NIOZ set up the Caribbean Netherlands Science Institute (CNSI) on St. Eustatius which has he function to increase knowledge generation concerning locally relevant issues on the BSE-islands and to facilitate research as well as to host incoming scientists. Moreover, the NIOZ was engaged in the Saba Bank research together with IMARES and the which aimed to collect data related to the carrying capacity of the coral reefs and marine wildlife generate inputs for policy generation.

ANEMOON Foundation

The ANEMOON Foundation studies the marine biodiversity in the Netherlands as well as lately in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom. The foundation builds on the concept of citizen science, where interested volunteers with diving skills contribute to new knowledge generation as they report new species and therefore enhance species mapping. In the Caribbean context, ANEMOON’s aim is to monitor underwater banks due to lacking or old data on biodiversity. Furthermore, a baseline measurement is in work which helps to create a picture of the current marine wildlife and makes it possible to track changes over time. In 2015, an expedition to the island of St Eustatius was organised by Naturalis where seven volunteers from the ANEMOON foundation were invited to take part in along with other scientists. During this field work, species were monitored and newly discovered. In the course of this excursion, all equipment was flown into the island and a collaboration with local volunteers could not be established due to lacking interest and diving skills. However, it is strongly desired to improve collaborations with

local stakeholder and citizens as well as to engage more tourists in future work which not only creates more data but also raises awareness of the precious underwater world which needs to be conserved.

Caribbean stakeholders the ANEMOON Foundation collaborates with are for example the DCNA or STENAPA. The DCNA provided maps of St Eustatius, financial support, published the results of the excursions in their newsletter BioNews and has a network function as they can establish contacts to relevant people and are aware of other projects going on the islands.

Dutch stakeholders are Naturalis and the Foundation Netherlands Diving Centre, which shares knowledge about the expedition results in their bulletin.

The foundation faces scepticism towards the concept of citizen science as it is based on work of volunteers rather than professional scientists. However, due to the success of the 2015 excursion, other Caribbean stakeholders such as STINAPA are interested to collaborate in the future. Another big challenge the ANEMOON foundation faces resulted out of the last devastating hurricane in summer 2017 which especially hit St Maarten. The foundation currently faces a lack of volunteers on the islands, as tourist feel unsafe to travel and are not aware that other islands got hit less severe.

Naturalis

Naturalis set up expedition to St Eustatius with the ANEMOON foundation. A similar excursion to the St Eustatius one in 2015 is planned for the island of Bonaire but funding is not provided yet. However, STINAPA is interested in working with Naturalis and the ANEMOON Foundation in the future due to the success of the project back in 2015. Naturalis got in contact with STENAPA and the National Office for the Caribbean Netherlands in order to collaboratively arrange a workshop about invasive species with local participants. The DCNA reported in the BioNews newsletter about the workshop, the CSNI was responsible for the logistics plus host the activity and Naturalis created the content. Next to this, Naturalis was involved on the side of IMARES and the NIOZ in the Saba Bank research.

RCN

The Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland, or the National Office for the Caribbean Netherlands as it is called in English, was established in 2010 and implements the policies set by the ministry. Furthermore, it is responsible for example for education, immigration as well as environmental policies in the Caribbean Netherlands. The RCN office looks out for the compliance to international regulations and facilitates the collaboration between the Caribbean Netherlands, it “supports the Caribbean with participating in international agreements and is setting up local cooperative agreements between the islands” (Representative RCN, 17.05.2018), such as a memorandum of agreement between the BSE islands, Curacao and St Maarten. Otherwise, the islands manage the nature themselves and help is provided when asked for.

Law demands the ministry to set up a Nature Policy Plan in cooperation with local island governments. Firstly, they sketched a plan which was based on feedback from an older plan generated for the former Netherlands Antilles. Then, the PCR collaborated with the DCNA due to two reasons. As a regional network, the DCNA also spans over the autonomous countries of the Kingdom, Aruba, Curacao and St Maarten, which do not fall in the range of the ministry’s duty. Therefore, a more holistic view of stakeholders from all six islands was represented. This was of great importance as “biodiversity is not bound by borders”. Secondly, the DCNA also represents protected area management NGOs which could contribute with additional knowledge about local areas.

Furthermore, the business as well as the tourist sector and the ministry of the Interior and Kingdom relations as well as the Ministry for Infrastructure and the Environment were brought into the cooperation in order to increase support for the policy document. The outlined plan was then handed over to a range of stakeholder meetings where local actors created a thorough plan which then was debated by the ministry in the Netherlands. This led to the final version of the Nature Policy Plan, which was granted by the minister and now acts as a “non-binding roadmap” for actions between 2013-2017. The last policy plan has already been evaluated which included discussions with all stakeholders about outcomes and changes for the new plan which is now in progress.

DCNA

The regional network DCNA assists nature conservation organisations such as STINAPA or STENAPA and are promoting sustainable actions on the six islands. The DCNA supports strategies of conservation organisations and marine parks and aims to strengthen local capacities. The network leads or starts a projects when requested, and were involved in the Saba Shark Project together with the Dutch Elasmobranch Association and with IMARES as scientific knowledge and advice was desired. Other projects they engaged in related to marine conservation and protection was a Conch Restoration Project, as the shells are endangered due to overfishing, together with STINAPA and funding provided from the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). A Sea Turtle Conservation Project where the main aim was to strengthen the capacity of islands to engage in the conservation of these endangered animals as well as to spread education through trainings was set up with Sea Turtle Conservation Bonaire. Next to this, a memorandum with Dutch mainland conservation organisations was set up which marks a commitment towards supporting the regional network. Organisations such as Staatsbosbeheer, 12 Landschappen, IUCN Netherlands Natuurmonumenten support the DCNA in projects and funding, assists in lobbying and information can be exchanged freely.

TNO Caribbean

The research organisation is concerned with topics related to sustainability such as waste management, water management, energy and coastal protection. The TNO Caribbean also acts as a convenor to manage and to bring stakeholder together to work on projects. Furthermore, the research organisation is working on the establishment of a ‘SIDS knowledge hub’. The research organisation has ties with its mother organisation TNO Netherlands that can provide additional expertise in for example sustainable environmental problems or circular economy but not in the marine park context. In the latter case, not expertise but financial support comes from the mother organisations. There, the independent research organisation is working on providing additional scientific information which helps other stakeholders involved to come up with more effective management plans. Other Caribbean stakeholders the TNO Caribbean is collaborating with are local government departments related to the management of the islands’ marine parks, local utility providers and NGOs. Related to the issue of waste management, the TNO Caribbean is working on persuading the private sector as well as governments to establish a long-term vision for the matter which is currently still missing and to incorporate the concept of recycling and the model of circular economy.

COE for the Sustainable Development of SIDS

The COE was established by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the government of Aruba as well as the Dutch government in 2015. The letter provided resources for the incorporation of the centre and additional contributions in form of supporting outreach, their participation in events and communication to other actors. The main objective of the centre is to “offering a platform for SIDS-SIDS cooperation (Representative of COE)” and to “turn knowledge into impact” (Representative of COE). Insights into successful projects related to sustainability are collected and the resulting knowledge is shared. Knowledge exchange is promoted and facilitated through webinars, events and case studies which are reported on. An example for their actions is the event “Building back better” which took place on St Maarten. The CEO jointly organised this event with the professional service Ernst & Young (EY) in order to come up with ideas and actions to support St Maarten as well as other islands hit by the hurricane in 2017. The event took place in March 2018 and aimed to exchange knowledge and to learn from each other in order to speed up the rebuilding process of affected islands and to increase future resilience.

The following four organisations are mentioned in the scope of the interviews and either function as collaborative partners or supporters. To understand their role better, a short introduction into their work is given in the next paragraphs.

Nationale Postcode Loterij

The Loterij, whose English name is National Postcode Lottery, is a charity lottery on the Dutch mainland. Currently, the DCNA, which was given the status of a beneficiary by the lottery, is the only organisation in the Caribbean which is supported financially by the lottery (Representative of DCNA).

STENAPA

The NGO and NPO was established in 1988 promote and support nature protection and scientific research activities in order to increase environmental protection. The organisation has a mandate handed by the local government which allows STENAPA legally to enforce nature policies and to protect the island territory which is under protection. Partners of this foundation are the DCNA, the WNF and IMARES on project basis (STENAPA, n.d.).

STINAPA

As well as STENAPA, STINAPA received a mandate from the government to manage locally protected areas. Since 1962, STINAPA is engaged in environmental protection, education, especially for children, as well as awareness rising of the local population and visitors, the promotion of their natural resources and the governance of the area. Partners which collaborate with the non-governmental organisation are for instance the DCNA, IMARES on project basis and the WNF (STINAPA, n.d.).

Governments

The three islands Bonaire, Saba and St Eustatius, which form the Caribbean Netherlands are officially “Dutch oversea public entities” and their status as a special municipality due to the missing province administration requires an exclusive administration and governance arrangement. Some examples of the role division between different actors are presented in the following in the context of nature protection and life under the sea.

National Government

The so called Nature Conservation Framework Act BES determines which governance level is responsible for which range of tasks. The national government’s task is to oversee whether the islands comply with international and regional agreements such as the Inter-American Convention for the Protection and Conservation of Sea Turtles or the Protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW). Furthermore, the national government supports the islands in setting up joint projects with for example the surrounding territories of Venezuela, the UK, the US or France. An increased collaboration with the European Union for the future is currently explored.

Furthermore, an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) connects the Caribbean islands with each other and calls for a joint management of the sea zone. To achieve this, a management plan is implemented by the mainland as well as the BES islands and an inclusion of Aruba, Curacao and St Maarten is desired to develop in the for the future.

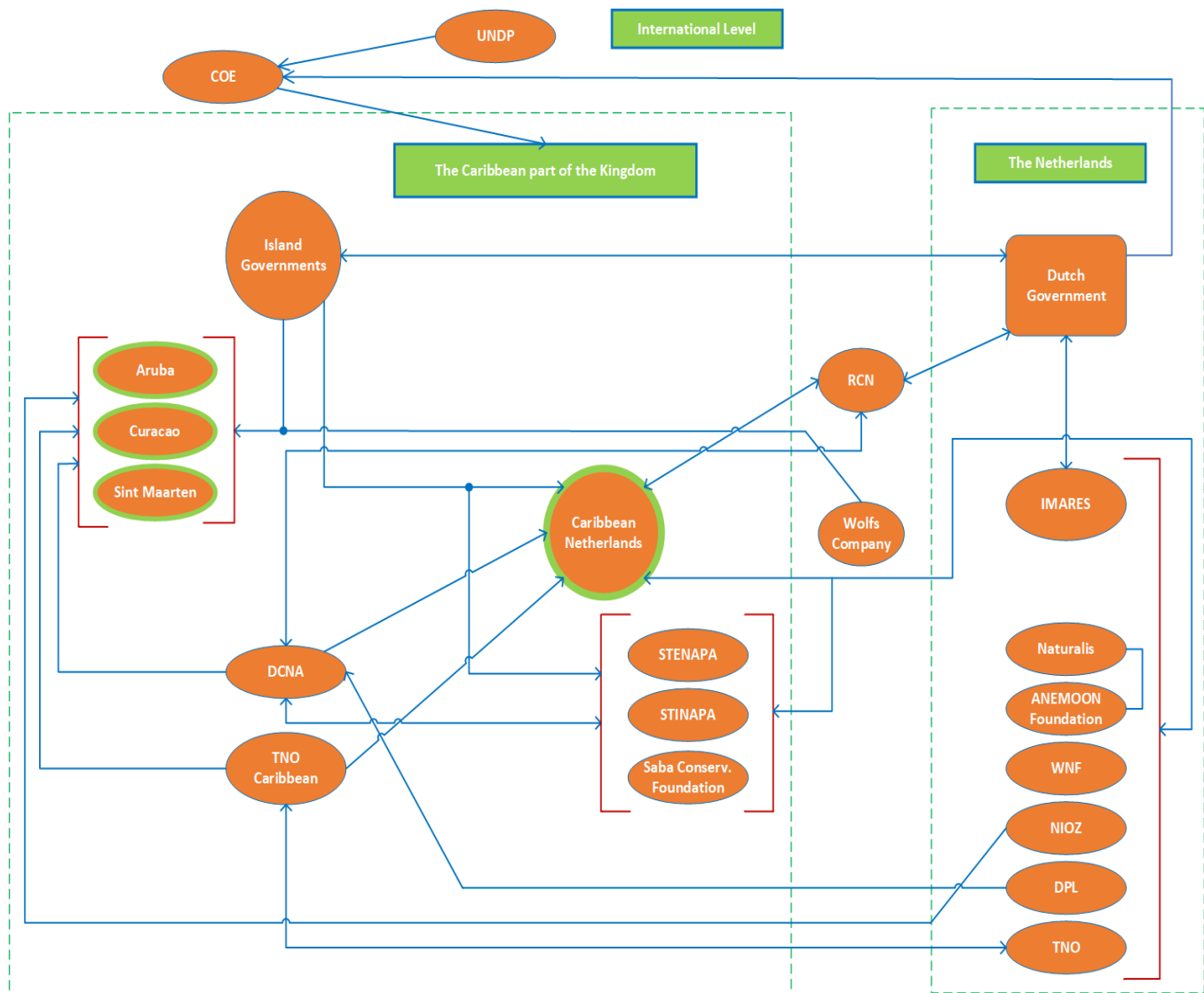
Ministry of Economic Affairs

This ministry was responsible for setting up the Nature Policy Plan Caribbean Netherlands 2013-2017 and made the decision to collaborate with a wide range of stakeholders. It additionally seeks to improve the collaboration between local Caribbean stakeholders and the mainland and therefore will establish a nature commission which provides local governments with advice related to Nature Conservation Framework ACT BES. The ministry is also responsible to manage the EEZ and the regions which lie within the Kingdom of the Netherlands but are not part of the islands authority. Another act which marks the different responsibilities of governance actors is the Financial Act BES. According to this regulation, the ministry is responsible for funding, monitoring and the making of decisions whether it is the local government's duty to actually implement the projects and to work on its development. Next to this, the ministry coordinates the nomination of three Caribbean places to become UNESCO Heritage sites which is further facilitated by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. As pronounced in a previous paragraph, the Wolfs Company is involved in the nomination next to a range of local stakeholders (Ministry of Economic Affairs, 2012)

Island governments

Next to the responsibilities of the island governing bodies discussed in the prior section, the actual management and protection of nature is their duty. It needs to be taken care that local policies are satisfactory and that enough funding reaches protected territories. Furthermore, the islands actions need to fit the standards imposed by international conventions. For more effective work, the local governments mandated execution power to STINAPA, STINAPA as well as the Saba Conservation Foundation.

Schematic diagram 1. Connections between stakeholders from the Netherlands, the Caribbean Part of the Kingdom and the international level



The arrows in the graph indicate collaborations between stakeholders. The three green boxes symbolise the geographical position and the orange ovals indicate a stakeholder. Caribbean Netherlands, Aruba, Curacao and St Maarten are both green and orange as they indicate a geographical location as well as encompass different stakeholder groups. Red brackets indicate that all of these actors have a tie to another stakeholder.

6.2 Stakeholders motivation to engage in collaborative arrangements

In this section, the findings related to the second sub-research question ‘What is the motivation of actors to join the governance arrangements relating to the SDG 14?’ are presented.

The following table presents the motivations indicated by the stakeholders in descending order. Furthermore, a ranking and the amount of how many stakeholders mentioned the respective motivation was indicated in descending order. The right column sorts the motivations into the five groups marking environmental, scientific, social, political and economic motives. This sorting does not come from the reviewed literature but was established during the data analysis.

Table 5. The ten interviewed stakeholders' motivation to engage in the collaborations including rank, frequency and grouping

Rank	Stakeholders stated motivation	Frequency	Grouping
1	Increase nature protection, conservation and awareness on sustainability issues	10	Environmental
2	Increase (local) knowledge	9	Scientific
3	More informed decision making	5	Scientific
3	Inclusion of local views	5	Social
5	Support local actors	4	Social
5	Convenor/facilitator - Enhance stakeholder/island collaboration	3	Social
5	Empowerment of locals	3	Social
5	Influencing the policy making process	3	Political
6	Recognition and improvement of outdated/incomplete information available (e.g. about marine species)	2	Scientific
6	Area for responsibility since 10.10.10 (Expansion of kingdom)	2	Political
7	Implement policies set by the ministry and compliance to international (environmental) regulations	1	Political
7	Preparation of UNESCO Heritage nomination	1	Environmental

7	Contract with government to conduct research	1	Political
7	Hobby (paired with interest)	1	Social
7	Long term vision/circular economy /reuse	1	Environmental / Economic
7	Compliance to international rules	1	Political

Table 2. indicates that every stakeholder interviewed expressed the desire to increase nature protection and conservation as a motivation to collaborate with another stakeholder through for example collaborative research projects, joint decision making or policy generation which was the only environmentally motivated reason to engage in a partnership. This is closely followed by the motivation to increase (local) knowledge which was for instance emphasized by the representative of the COE, which wants to foster knowledge exchange on sustainable development topics between SIDS, and the NIOZ which aims for instance to gather information about ecosystem changes due to climate change. This second and third ranking motives are scientifically motivated. Two more motivations were mentioned by half of the stakeholders and show the desire to include the local opinions and interests in their work and to generate more informed decisions making when collaborations between actors from the mainland and Caribbean come together and share their knowledge and resources. An example here are the ministry of economic affairs and Rijksdienst Caribbean Netherlands which collaborate with the DCNA in order to create the Nature Policy Plan The Caribbean Netherlands 2013-2017, to collect feedback from this document and to create a better plan for the next five years. These two politically motivated reasons to collaborate are closely followed by the desire to support local island actors with is stated by four stakeholders. The WNF for instance works together with local fisherman to set up a fisherman organisation or IMARES supports the work of the DCNA with the generation of scientific knowledge. Three motivations, mentioned by three stakeholders each, are the interest to influence policy making process on the islands to empower local actors and to enhance stakeholder collaborations on or between the islands. The official of the RCN for instance states, that it is aimed to “facilitate the cooperation between the islands” and the WNF looks at successfully implemented laws in other regions and points these out to the government.

IMARES and the RCN mention the dissolution of the Netherlands Antilles in 2010 as one of the political motivations or rather reasons to engage in collaborative governance arrangements, as the Caribbean Netherlands falls into their area of responsibility. The recognition and improvement of outdated or incomplete information is mentioned as a scientific motivation by Naturalis as well as the ANEMOON Foundation to engage in their work. The last six motivations displayed in the table are individual interests or reasons to engage in a collaborative arrangement. The TNO Caribbean for instance wants to convince local island governments and stakeholders of the private sector to develop a long-term vision when it comes to sustainability issues such as waste management. Hobby is explicitly stated to be a motivation by two of the volunteers of ANEMOON Foundation as they connect the leisure activity and passion of diving with conducting research. This motive is part of the social motivation cluster where three more motives are grouped. Five different political motivations occurred among the stakeholders which creates the biggest group, closely followed by social motivations with four and scientific motivations with two reasons to collaborate.

6.3 Collaborative Advantage & Challenges

In this chapter, the findings are presented which provide an answer to the following sub-research questions three and four ‘Which advantages do the stakeholders see with a collaborative governance approach in these partnerships?’ and ‘What are the challenges resulting out of these collaborations the stakeholders perceive?’ First, table 3 summarizes the obtained information about advantages and challenges in a table which also indicates in how many interviews these gains or obstacles were mentioned. Two sections follow which are divided by the sub-research questions and elaborate on either advantages or challenges as well as provide a better insight into the stakeholders with the provision of quotes.

Table 6. Collaborative advantages and challenges perceived by the stakeholders and the frequency of in how many interviews these occurred (italics indicate advantages and obstacles mentioned in reviewed literature)

Collaborative advantage	Frequency	Collaborative challenges	Frequency
<i>Joint learning process among stakeholders</i>	4	<i>Different language, culture, value, historic background</i>	6
<i>Creation / Sharing of new information</i>	7	<i>Different organisational structures</i>	2
<i>Empowerment of actors</i>	1	<i>Increased amount of time</i>	1
<i>Increased fairness and inclusiveness of decision making</i>	2	<i>Lack of trust and openness</i>	4
<i>Enhanced understanding of the situation or problem</i>	5	<i>Limited budget / funding issues</i>	5
<i>Increased resilience, inspiration and innovation</i>	1	<i>Multiplicity of opinions can hinder decision making/ clashing interests</i>	2
Facilitating or convening activities	4	Realisation of mutual benefit	1
Increased enjoyment	1	Distance between the islands and mainland	2
Spin-offs resulting out of collaborative arrangements	2	Inconsistent participation	3
Enhanced marine conservation and	10	Embedding work in community	1

protection and increased sustainability			
Rising awareness of sustainability issues	3	Mismatch between expectations and reality among visiting mainland researchers	1
Enhancement of policy quality	4	Limited capacities or facilities (for researchers)	3
More informed decision making	3	Lack of education or expertise on islands	3
Embedding work in community	1	Political situation / sensitivity (of projects)	2
Collaborations create spin-offs	1	Complex relation between the Dutch mainland and the Caribbean part of the Netherlands	1
		Communication problems	2
		Different scale + dynamics on mainland + islands	4

6.3.1 Collaborative advantage

All ten stakeholders interviewed in the scope of this research agree on the importance of collaborating with local stakeholder in order to achieve the desired end of nature conservation and protection, in this case with respect to coastal and marine ecosystems.

It is stated by the IMARES researcher for instances, that “it only makes sense (to cooperate with local stakeholders) as they understand the local situation and the representative of WNF argues that local people are hired to “make sure that things they do is embedded in the community”. Next to this it is added by the TNO Caribbean that a local workforce increases the understanding of the local setting due to the uniqueness of every island’s circumstances. Therefore, the understanding of a situation is enhanced when Dutch mainland actors collaborate with Caribbean stakeholders. Furthermore, it is mentioned by the IMARES researcher that “there is a lot of insights you obtain from locals that enrich the project so incorporating local knowledge is essential” and “much more to be learned from locals than first meets the eye”.

This hints to the next advantage mentioned by four stakeholders, establishing a collaboration, which is a joint learning process resulting out of the combination of human potential and material resources. Often, expertise in a certain topic is provided by knowledge generating institutions such as TNO Caribbean, IMARES or

Naturalis which is then paired with local knowledge of the island's sides. Due to this, an insight into challenges local actors face is provided and as these stakeholders are part of the regional network it is easier for outsiders to establish contacts with other actors in the Caribbean. Additionally, mainland organisations often bring financial resources with them such as budgets the WNF or the Ministry of Economic Affairs allocates for the work of IMARES.

The Rijksdienst Dutch Caribbean for instance collaborates with the DCNA, and consequently other local actors, when it comes to the generation of the Nature Policy Plan Caribbean Netherlands 2013-2017. This increased participation of non-governmental stakeholders leads to more informed decision making as more actors are included and a more holistic view on issues is created. Through this, the quality of the Nature Policy Plan is enhanced as the National Office Caribbean points out. Furthermore, the inclusion of relevant groups increases the fairness of policies or laws as local stakeholders have the chance to express their concerns, wishes and remarks. This is mentioned by two stakeholders to be an advantage their collaborations generate. Another case where fairness is increased due to collaborative work is the WNF collaboration with local fisherman and a range of other stakeholders, such as policy makers, to set up a fisherman cooperation on the island of Bonaire. The WNF aims to develop a more sustainable fishery which is supported by the local community and fishermen when their views are concentrated in an organisation and can easier be perceived by other institutions. Related to this, IMARES points out that "knowledge empowers people and once you have a basic level of knowledge people get inspired" (24.05.2018).

The collaboration between the CEO and other stakeholders such as the TNO Caribbean creates the advantage that more experiences can be shared and more knowledge can be collected, which is then shared with SIDS. This leads to an increased resilience, inspiration and innovation of and in SIDS. The collaborations also enhance sustainability as partnerships between, for example, the TNO Caribbean and related stakeholders, create new projects whose aim it is to for example to enhance waste management. Stakeholders and knowledge is brought together which leads to more sustainable actions.

Next to this, some partnerships between stakeholders are aiming on increasing education and awareness among other stakeholders, inhabitants and tourists, which is mentioned by three stakeholders. The collaboration between Naturalis and ANEMOON Foundations leads to awareness "on what problems are and that the beautiful biodiversity and environment need to be conserved and protected" (Volunteer 2 from ANEMOON Foundation, 23.05.2018).

The involvement of certain actors such as the Centre of Excellence, the TNO Caribbean and the Rijksdienst Caribbean Netherlands which collaborate with other stakeholders add to the partnerships with their function as convenors and connectors. They bring either together stakeholders as a representative of the TNO Caribbean phrased it "we look around and see who does interesting things and then we connect them" or facilitates the cooperation within the Caribbean which is explained by a representative of the Rijksdienst as they "bring the islands closer together for reaching cooperation and agreement".

Another advantage of setting up a collaborative arrangement is the resulting spin-offs, mentioned by two stakeholders. A researcher from IMARES explains this with the following words that working together "leads to a great deal of additional spin off in terms of new ideas, new projects and new collaborations". Connected to this is another advantage the researcher mentioned while summarizing the benefits of collaborations which are increased "knowledge, effectiveness and enjoyment". The enhancement of joy is connected to interactions with local counterparts during face-to-face encounters when scientists for instance visit the research sides in the Caribbean. Moreover, appreciated social contact with local counterparts can make you feel home. Without

spin-offs, the researcher of IMARES contemplates that there might be “no longer lasting results than for example a publication”.

6.3.2 Collaborative challenges

A different language is perceived to be a problem in the collaborations between the Dutch mainland and the Caribbean part of the kingdom. On the islands itself, Dutch, Spanish, Papiamentu as well as English is spoken but the dominant language used differs from island to island and between stakeholder groups. When working together with local fisherman, it could prove useful to be able to speak Papiamentu in order to not only understand the other actor's language but also to comprehend the respective culture which can increase trust between non-islanders and local stakeholders. However, difference in language is not mentioned by all stakeholders to impact the collaboration negatively as Dutch is spoken on both sides. Therefore, there is a difference of opinion between stakeholders. It is for example also mentioned that “everybody speaks Dutch so the language does not let you know that it is a different culture you are working with” (Representative of Wolfs Company).

Culture seems to have a bigger impact on collaborative processes as different values or behaviours can create misunderstandings. Especially a different communication style is mentioned by the IMARES researcher as well as the representative of the Wolfs Company to create struggles. A rather direct and blunt way of communicating from Dutch mainland actors could be negatively decoded by Caribbean stakeholders as it “can create irritation” (IMARES researcher).

Other issue pointed out by an interviewee is a lack of open-mindedness on the mainland as well as on the Caribbean side. A certain degree of stubbornness among Dutch actors with respect to knowing things better meets scepticism towards non-islanders. Differing norms and values can lead to a lack of empathy. Therefore, a lack of knowledge about each other's culture creates a collaborative challenge as it generates misunderstandings and tensions between actors. However, it is also stated by the representatives of TNO Caribbean and the DCNA that this is usually just something you need to be aware of in order to prevent these misunderstandings to happen. The TNO researcher states for instance that “often people do not need to be supported with bridging cultural differences as it is in them, especially in behavioural sciences expertise” but it is also stated that if this is not the case, the TNO Caribbean offers support. During the talks with the actors in this research, it became clear that sometimes facilitation by local counterparts is involved but often it is each person's individual task to create a degree of awareness and cultural sensitivity. Furthermore, it is mentioned that each island has its own subculture which complicates the situation for external actors.

Coming back to the trust issue, the Wolfs Company representative explicitly states that lacking trust leads to issues in developing collaborations. Local communities are rather tightly knit and it is perceived as difficult by some mainland stakeholders to get into this circle in order to develop a collaborative relationship. The WNF interviewee approaches an explanation with stating that this is “understandable as there are tons of people from the Netherlands coming to the islands to do something; a lot of the time that might not necessarily be what the islands want to see” and “people tend to take a step back and wait and see until they are convinced you are actually there to help”. This points towards an occasional mismatch between interests between the mainland and Caribbean actors. A NIOZ researcher made a similar observation and stated “sending over Dutch scientists does not always represent the interests of the local community”. Moreover, it is stated by the IMARES researcher that sometimes, the benefits of collaborating are not recognized yet on both sides. This

is linked to a lack of nation building activities and there is not really a feeling of togetherness between the four countries of the Kingdom as the researcher remarks.

In order to diminish the trust issues as well as to bridge interest between the islands and the mainland, a journey from Europe to the Caribbean is perceived to be helpful. Volunteer one of the ANEMOON foundation points out that “you need to go there (to the Caribbean oversea territory) on a regular basis, show your face, do your things, to meet locals and get them involved”. Here, another issue is coming to the surface, “the first challenge is 9000 km” as the DCNA phrases, and the TNO Caribbean underlines the difference in time zones. Both, distance and time can complicate the collaboration in some cases, for example when people need to pay their flights out of their own pockets as stated by both volunteers of the ANEMOON Foundation.

Scarce financial resources are an issue and can directly impact the work of actors involved in this study. For example, stakeholders were called together to discuss costs and benefits of cruise tourism on the island of Bonaire. However, a mix of scarce financial resources and lacking time prevented their involvement in the scenario making process where it was looked at possible developments of the cruise tourism. Furthermore, a limited budget prevents organisations from paying higher salaries and from pursuing projects which would be set up with an additional budget. The WNF representative could for instance imagine collaborating with local governments in order to work on climate proofing, for example to create policies to adjust to the consequences climate change entails. “Money is always a problem” as it is phrased by the NIOZ PhD researcher.

Collaboration between stakeholders does not only create a list of advantages as discussed in the previous section, it is seen as a necessity in order to develop and implement policies or projects successfully. For this however, it is perceived as crucial to be on the island itself which is complicated by the three factors, time resulting out of the distance between the Dutch mainland and the Caribbean islands, money for the journey and willingness to spend time on the island. The Rijksdienst Dutch Caribbean points out that limited facilities on the island further complicate collaboration and an mismatch between pre-departure expectations of visiting scientists and how reality really looks like, complicates collaborations as they need to adjust themselves to the island conditions and need to engage in preparations they thought would be already completed by their arrival.

Moreover, the islands itself lack the capacity to address all incoming researchers as due to capacity issues. The small islands need to deal with a multiplicity of local demands and additionally receive requests from the Dutch mainland or international actors to set up projects or engage in work on the islands as the IMARES researcher phrases. Connected to this is a challenge the island faced in the past which resulted out of a link between a few collaborative challenges and the increased funding and attention of the Dutch mainland after the dissolution of the Netherlands Antilles on 10th June 2010. According to the National Office for the Caribbean Netherlands (RCN), an increased amount of Dutch researchers travelled to the islands without or with very late information for local institutions about their plans. Nevertheless, these researchers still expected to have a smooth arrival and did not consider problems due to capacity issues nor planned to compensate the local organisations for their stay. As a consequence, a degree of indignation on the Caribbean side came up which could have led to denial of accommodating visiting researcher if the ministry did not step in. The latter stepped in and financially supported the DCNA to hire a person who becomes responsible for coordinating and bridging incoming researchers with local organisations.

There is simply a different scale then on the Dutch mainland due to the small size and island population. Different dynamics between the different geographical locations of the Kingdom of the Netherlands can create problems in collaborations. Waste management has for example a high priority on the island of Aruba and can endanger the coast and life under water when it ends up in the water. The representative of TNO Caribbean points out that the way the government and related companies and NGOs need to deal with the issue is very different from solutions which work on the mainland, as space is limited and limited economy of scale complicates waste separation. If stakeholders are not aware of the more or less visible differing dynamics, conflicts arise and ineffective solutions are implemented.

Next to varying dynamics, there are many differences between the islands which can lead to misunderstandings in collaborations when outsiders and locals disagree on solutions. According to the DCNA and WNF, legal and political differences result out of different statuses the islands have, either as the Caribbean Netherlands with a municipality status or as an autonomous country within the Kingdom (see 1. Introduction). It is for instance easier to receive project funding for Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba as the Dutch government is politically responsible and therefore bound to spend a certain budget on nature conservation in the municipalities. For Aruba, Curacao and St Maarten the situation is different as a budget exists as well they can be supported by the ministry of foreign affairs, which is not responsible for the municipalities. This generates confusion among stakeholders and it is remarked that sometimes “responsibilities are unclear” (Representative of WNF), especially when it comes to responsibilities of local and the national government.

Another collaborative challenge is the political sensitivity of projects as it is phrased by the IMARES researcher. Even though all project partners are constructive-minded and the collaboration is at full work, projects can get cancelled due to political discrepancies or undiplomatic comments.

One more collaborative challenge is mentioned by the Wolfs Company which simply lies in structural differences of organisations and institutions involved in the collaboration. The government is more bureaucratic whereas civil organisations are more idealistic. Frequent staff circulation of voluntary organisations makes it difficult to follow one coherent line in collaborative partnerships. New elections or appointed ministers change the government composition which can lead to changes in priorities, cancellation or starting of new projects and therefore can create frustration in collaborative stakeholders as they might need to start from zero again.

A last issue with was repetitively apprehended in the interviews was communication. The interviewees of the Rijksdienst Dutch Caribbean, IMARES, ANEMOON Foundation as well as the NIOZ point out that communication is either problematic at the moment or it needs to be improved in the future for the sake of environmental conservation and effective policy generation. Experiences such as a long time span until mails are answered, a lack of project explanation to locals as well as differences between communication styles between the Dutch mainland and the Caribbean part of the Kingdom create challenges. It is stated by the researcher from IMARES that “nature conservation is difficult sometimes and communication comes sometimes as a last thing”

6.4 Improvements of collaborative partnerships

This section provides the results related to the fifth sub-research question ‘How can collaborative partnerships be improved to be more effective according to the interviewed actors?’. During the interviews, the following eight recommendations were made on how to improve the collaborative partnership between the actors involved, in order to increase their effectiveness. It is indicated which actors made the recommendation or whether it is obtained from the Nature Policy Plan.

1. Increase of communication

The interviewees of NIOZ, RCN and IMARES agree that communication needs to be improved in order to enhance the effectiveness of collaborative partnerships. Communication between governments’ needs to be diplomatic and when a project is set up, it needs to be explained to local stakeholders in order to generate their commitment. Here, not only the ‘what’ component needs to be illustrated but also underlying motivation and the reasoning needs to be clarified in order to generate support. Furthermore, communication between stakeholders needs to be enhanced. The evaluation of the Nature Policy Plan Caribbean Netherlands 2013-2017 revealed that one of the biggest challenges is that there is “too little communication in nature conservation to local communities” (RCN official) which needs to be addressed in the near future.

2. Rising awareness concerning activities

Another outcome of the plan’s evaluation was that the activities or projects undertaken sometimes did not reach the community as they seemed to be unaware of what was happening. Furthermore, local inhabitants as well as tourists should be made increasingly aware of issues the islands face, especially related to climate change as the WNF emphasizes.

3. Creation of an island platform for consultation

The Nature Policy Plan Caribbean 2013-2017 states that “It is recommended that each island forms a platform for consultation between local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the Islands Government representatives on the management of the protected areas and species” (Ministry of Economics, 2013, p.16).

4. Making projects more structural in nature

According to the IMARES researcher, an increase in structured collaborations can make projects less politically sensitive and more stable when changes occur.

5. Coordination / pooling of interest groups

The Volunteer two of the ANEMOON Foundation proposes that nature conservation could be enhanced when Dutch mainland organisations often coordinate their actions better. It is stated that different nature conservation organisations come to the islands in order to communicate the same message repeatedly with only change being centred around a different animal group. It could also help to send staff more coherently as they are better informed about the islands and already established a personal network in the local area.

6. Bridging the gap between external expertise and local

A NIOZ researcher noted occasional mismatch between scientific interests from the mainland local island concerns. A suggestion for improvement is made which proposes to improve the dialogue with the local community and to meet regularly in order to find out more about their interests and concerns.

7. Challenges cannot be prevented but you need to be strategic

In order to work together effectively despite different organisational structures, the interview from the DCNA emphasizes the need to be strategic in collaborations. This means for instances that topics and also partners need to be chosen upon consideration of strengths, weaknesses, differences and awareness of challenges you might encounter in the future.

8. Personal Attitude

It is pointed out that everybody is biased to a certain degree but it is important to make this transparent. Other stakeholders “should know how to place it in their own thinking” (Representative of Wolfs Company, 22.05.2018) in order to decrease conflict possibilities. Furthermore, people who work in a different cultural context need to become aware of their own values and need to be careful to not see their own culture as the building block for progress. Also, the IMARES researcher mentions that processes tend to take longer on the island itself but it is important to remember that “with patience you get there anywhere” (24.05.2018). Non-island stakeholders need to learn that limited capacity of the islands and a multiplicity of local demands as well as cultural differences lengthen processes. This needs to be accepted as an inherent feature to the situation. Patience paired with diplomatic conversation where bluntness and directness is mitigated can make collaborations more effective in the future.

6.6 Relation to United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 14

In the last section of the results it is returned to the general research question ‘How does collaborative governance help to reach the UN SDG 14?’ while focusing on the relationship between SDG 14 and the collaborative arrangements the stakeholder engage in.

When asked about an assessment of work in the Caribbean related to SDG 14, the COE official stated that “there could be a lot of things happening that are related to SDG 14 where the organisations involved might not even know that the goal exists”. The WNF representative answered the question how to improve work towards SDG 14 on the islands with “they should start thinking about it” and therefore highlights a lack of awareness.

When asked about their work related to SDG 14, other stakeholders portray their projects related to coastal and marine conservation and protection such as the DCNA’s conch restoration project or the Wolfs Company’s cost-benefit analysis of cruise tourism on Bonaire.

It was found that SDG 14 is not explicitly mentioned in the stakeholders’ work but the actions undertaken in the collaborations also work towards the targets mentioned by SDG 14 (see Introduction).

For example, the TNO Caribbean collaborates with local stakeholders in order to manage waste more effectively and to prevent it from entering the ocean. Research about marine ecosystems is conducted by IMARES, the NIOZ, and collaborating Naturalis as ANEMOON Foundation. Moreover, the TNO Caribbean strengthens local capacities by providing training of for instance rangers. Furthermore, the sustainable management of coastal areas is improved by the Nature Policy Plan as the documents divides responsibilities and presents goals as well as strategies to protect nature. The plan was created in a collaborative arrangement between the Ministry of Economic Affairs, the RCN, the DCNA and local island stakeholders. Furthermore, the collaboration between. for example local fisherman and the WNF aims to establish a fishermen cooperation which aims to make fishery practices more sustainable.

The representative of CEO adds that “the SDG framework has become more and more embedded in national strategies” (28.05.2018) and that it “has helped island states structure how they will priorities

these challenges which makes it easier and increases the interest to participate” (28.05.2018). Related to this, the *Report on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals* states that “although clearly the SDGS are increasingly well known in government, the general public is not yet familiar with them” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, 2017, p.15) which could be connected to the communication issue mentioned by the representative of PCR. Collaborative programmes or activities are often not communicated to the local society.

It is also marked that many institutions and organisations did not include the goals as an overarching framework, at least not yet. Therefore, one of the findings of the research is that actions towards the targets themes of SDG 14 are undertaken without relating it to the goal itself. Most of the stakeholders in this research do not explicitly refer to SDG 14, but the SDG report states that SDGs are often implicitly incorporated into stakeholders’ work (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, 2017).

Nevertheless, the governments of the Caribbean overseas territories will increasingly incorporate the SDGs in development plans or policy making in the next years (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, 2017). This is increasingly done in collaborative governance arrangements as “The SDGs should be the subject of a lively, transparent, political debate in order to ensure and safeguard broad support (...) and implementation has to involve all relevant actors in society” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, 2017, p.10). It is emphasized that it is understood by the Netherlands, Aruba, Curacao and St Maarten that collaborative partnerships are crucial in order to work towards the SDGs, which is mentioned several times in the Report on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (2017). It is emphasized that “The four countries of the Kingdom of the Netherlands agree that the key to success in attaining the SDGs is our willingness and resolve to form partnerships (...) across sectors and national boundaries ” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, 2017, p.14) such as between research institutions, governments, companies and the inclusion of the society.

7. Discussion

This section discusses the previously presented results and links these to the literature reviewed. Overlap between the results and other research papers are illustrated and new findings which deviate from previous literature are debated which is visualised in table 5 and table 6. The first five sections are structured per sub-research question and include next to comparison to the literature, an indication of relevance for the scientific field as well as unexpected findings when occurring. Last but not least, the limitations of this research are mentioned and it is discussed to what extent they affect the quality of the research findings.

7.1 Collaborative stakeholder arrangements between Dutch and Caribbean overseas territory stakeholders

Collaborative governance arrangements between Dutch and Caribbean overseas actors vary in structure and the degree the government is involved in. In some collaborative governance arrangements, the public sector is directly involved. The collaboration between the Ministry of Economic Affairs, the RCN and DCNA, which brings on board various additional stakeholders located on the Caribbean overseas territory, is one example.

However, the government does not always play a direct role in the collaborative governance arrangements as proposed by the collaborative governance definition by Huxham (2000) (see 3. 4 Collaborative Governance). One collaborative arrangement was set up between IMARES and STENAPA in order to increase the sustainable management of the local coast. In this collaborative partnership, the national and local governments are only indirectly involved as they commission and support both stakeholders to do their work. Here, Donahue's (2010) definition is more suitable to describe the collaborative governance arrangement as it emphasizes "joint efforts by (the) public and (the) private actors, each wielding a degree of discretion, to advance a goal that is conventionally considered governmental" (p. 151). STENAPA is mandated by the local government to enforce authority related to nature conservation.

The collaboration between Naturalis and the ANEMOON Foundation could be seen as an outlier when it comes to collaborative governance. The arrangement is characterised by only a weak connection to the government as it is limited to mere interactions with local governing bodies instead of the latter's active participation. Arts (2006) illustrates the concept *governance without government* which describes solely the partnerships between the civil society and the private sector. However, a collaborative governance definition without participation of the governments was not found. Therefore, the actions of Naturalis and the ANEMOON Foundation might not seem to fit to collaborative governance on the first glance, as projects such as marine biodiversity research to establish a baseline is not a task which is usually done by the government.

Nonetheless, in this research it is argued that these kinds of joint work are linked to collaborative governance. The baseline research and other activities such as Naturalis collaborating with other actors to offer nature education workshops for local stakeholders, WNF's lobbying activities or their offered support to local governments in the development of new legislation, creates collaborative advantages. Their work raises awareness among local stakeholders, aims to empower local actors and wants to improve other stakeholders' decision making processes. These actions can be related to Gray's (2007) three phases of collaboration as for example the WNF, Naturalis and the ANEMOON Foundation raise awareness of problems and try to persuade stakeholders to act upon issues which are some of the characteristics of the problem-setting phase. However, there is an even closer link to the concept of collaborative governance when considering literature about the *Window of Opportunity*. Some of the work of these stakeholders could be perceived as an active creation of this momentum for change. In other words, these actions might not be directly considered as collaborative governance but they might create the basis for future collaborative arrangements. One of the objectives of the expedition of Naturalis and Anemoon volunteers in 2015 was to raise awareness among the island inhabitants, visiting tourists and the island population on the European mainland. Additionally, the volunteers who engage in citizen science projects on the islands spread passionate stories about their experiences when they return and for instance spread awareness on coastal and marine issues such as pollution they witnessed. This could lead to increased problem recognition in society and government bodies, knowledge generating institutions or NGOs can pick up the problems with the aim to tackle or mitigate environmental issues. Moreover, the monthly newsletter BioNews from the DCNA informs people about research projects, upcoming events on the islands and other news related to nature. Thus, it contributes to an increase in knowledge about nature and awareness of which areas require special protection and reasons for conservation.

Another example is the work the WNF engages in, for instance as they are working with the fishermen on Bonaire to set up a fishery organisation. As collaborative governance only looks at collaborations between stakeholders and not the citizens per se, the formation of this organisation gives the fisherman a chance to

voice their concerns more collectively and effectively. An ordered formation is more likely to be part of future negotiations than fragmented and unorganised individuals.

Moreover, the representative of the WNF stated that one objective of the NGO's work in the Caribbean is to create change which presupposes the generation of a momentum. People need to come together at a specific point of time, where enough information are available to present to the stakeholders in order to for instance illustrate reasons to change established behaviours. This links back to the reviewed concepts *Multiple Streams Approach* by Kingdon (2014) and the Window of Opportunity illustrated by Cairney & Jones (2015). The Window of Opportunity has two types of openings, the predictable and the unpredictable window (see 3.5 Multiple Stream Approach & Window of Opportunity). Upcoming elections or expiring agreements and legislations give stakeholder the chance to voice concerns or to prepare proposals in time (Kingdon, 2014). The previous Nature Policy Plan Caribbean Netherlands for 2013-2017 gives relevant stakeholder groups now the chance to present their concerns due to the evaluation and feedback phase for the generation of the new policy plan. An example of the opening of the unpredictable window in the context of this research, is the hurricane which hit Caribbean islands in summer 2017. As a response to the destruction and to assist with rebuilding facilities, the Centre of Excellence collaborated with E&Y to set up an action-oriented commission of experts which jointly exchange knowledge to develop activities which supports the recovery process of islands.

Furthermore, Kingdon (2014) mentions that the opening of a window can lead to the opening of another one, which he depicts with the word spillover. Here, a parallel can be drawn to the interview with the IMARES as the researcher states that collaborations "have a great deal of spin-offs from the initial narrow (project) focus which you gradually expand; it is like a cascade of ideas and projects that follow". This hints to the effect that when collaboration is formed, it is likely that more projects or future collaborations result out of this initiative in the future.

The information gathered in the interviews show that policy, problem and politics streams as well as the Window of Opportunity are relevant as already indicated with examples relating to the Caribbean above. The dissolution of the Netherlands Antilles on the 10th June 2010 leading to the establishment of a new constitutional order, probably one of the most obvious examples, can be understood as an event of the politics stream. An increase of stakeholder groups and change of political responsibilities led to different task and duties. Back then, IMARES for instance got the feedback from the government that the islands are now part of the knowledge institutions work which lead to more problem streams as the attention of issues in the Caribbean context is increased. Moreover, actions can be generated quicker as the overseas territories lie in the area of responsibility. As another example of politics streams Kingdon mentions, is the change in national mood which influences politics (Kingdon, 2014; Cairney & Jones, 2015; Béland & Howlett, 2016). A similar aspect is evident in the Caribbean context. Joint work (especially in scientific projects) is mentioned to be politically sensitive as collaborations can get called off or put on hold due to undiplomatic communication, cultural differences which lead to conflicts and misunderstandings. Thus, occasional struggles evident in relations between Caribbean and mainland stakeholder can lead to closing a Window of Opportunity, even though the stakeholders conducting the work are motivated to jointly work together but the decision comes from a higher (political) level.

To prevent the closing or to open the Window of Opportunity and to keep the collaboration alive, it could help to consider the factors which can influence or hinder a successful collaboration. When stakeholders are more aware of the complexity of creating an opportunity to collaborate and the factor, or streams, are

influencing this process, it can create greater awareness and create more tactfulness. Thus, the recognition of MSA could be seen as a tool, for instance for NGOs who aim to lobby in order to increase marine or coastal conservation with establishing more partnerships.

7.2. A comparison between motivations of stakeholders and reviewed literature

Table 7. Compared motivations mentioned in the reviewed literature and stated in the stakeholder interviews with indicated overlaps (bold)

Motivation in literature	Stakeholders motivation	Frequency	Grouping of stakeholder motivations
Uncertainty	Increase nature protection, conservation and awareness on sustainability issues	10	Environmental
Lack of (knowledge, financial, material) resources	Increase (local) knowledge	9	Scientific
External circumstances (e.g. disasters, elections)	More informed decision making	5	Scientific
Engage more people in decision-making processes	Inclusion of local views	5	Social
Presence of a leading initiator	Support local actors	4	Social
Interdependency of actors	Convenor/facilitator - Enhance stakeholder/island collaboration	3	Social
Empowering self or others	Empowerment of locals	3	Social
Shared learning	Influencing the policy making process	3	Political
(Financial) incentives	Recognition and improvement of outdated/incomplete information available (e.g. about marine species)	2	Scientific
Sharing risks + costs	Area for responsibility since 10.10.10 (Expansion of kingdom)	2	Political
Generating collaborative advantage	Implement policies set by the ministry and compliance to international (environmental) regulations	1	Political
	Preparation of UNESCO Heritage nomination	1	Political
	Contract with government to conduct research	1	Political
	Hobby (paired with interest)	1	Social
	Long term vision/circular economy /reuse	1	Economic/Environmental
	Compliance to international rules	1	Political

Motivations to set or to join a collaborative arrangement which are mentioned by both, the reviewed literature as well as the stakeholders, centre around the engagement of stakeholders in order to empower or to include actors in decision and policy-making processes, to jointly create new knowledge and to accumulate financial and material resources.

Some motivations mentioned by the stakeholders in this research are more specific and bond with the context such as increased nature protection or the preparation of the UNESCO Heritage nomination. These motivations are therefore less likely to be mentioned in the literature which describes the concept of collaborative governance itself and does not refer to a case study where individual interests of stakeholder groups are mentioned.

An unexpected finding, however, is stated by the two volunteers of ANEMOON Foundation and the NATURALIS researcher, which mention a plain interest in combination with the hobby to dive to be two of the motivations to engage in their joint work. Interest and Hobby could be understood as a more general motivation as it might be the reason for other motivations such as influencing the policy-making process or to support certain actors in their work. Sometimes it is a personal job to engage in a collaborative governance arrangement, but a passion for a certain topic can be the underlying reason for the decision for the joint work, either for an individual but also for stakeholder groups where people pursue the same interest.

Also, the motivation of enhancing collaborations on and between the islands is mentioned by for instance the representative of the Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland and do not appear in the literature. What might explain this deviance is the broader context of this study, the political relationship between the Netherlands and for instance the BES-Islands, as there are responsibilities the mainland has to fulfil but there are also simply more capacities and expertise on certain issues than on the small islands. Also, the interest of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to protect its nature, as evident in the *Nature Policy Plan* (Ministry of Economic Affairs, 2013) or *Report on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2017), is a motivation of the four countries of the kingdom to support each other in order to create a more sustainable future.

Furthermore, the motivations can be sorted into five groups political, social, scientific, environmental and economic motives as indicated (table 7). Here, it needs to be distinguished between how many of the motivations can be grouped into one of these categories and how many times the respondents indicated that this motivation applies to them. To clarify, sixteen different motivations were stated by the sample group. Six of these motivations can be classified to have a political motive and only one motivation was environmental. However, when considering the frequency of for how many actors this motivation applied, the picture looks different. The environmental reason was stated by all ten stakeholders, whereas one of the political motivations was stated for instances by only three actors. This indicates that political

motives are relevant only for a few stakeholders. Furthermore, three of the sixteen motivations were scientific and five are social. The social motivation were relevant for either five (inclusion of local views), four (support local actors) or three (remaining social motives) of the stakeholders. Nine respondents mentioned the scientific motive to increase local knowledge, whereas roughly half of the actors stated the two remaining scientific motivations of improving outdated information and to increase more informed decision making. The latter motivation is to be considered scientific as it implies an increased knowledge in order to judge a situation better. Therefore, it can be stated that there is a higher diversity of social motivations. Only one motivation can be grouped into the cluster of economic motives, the generation of a long term vision/circular economy /reuse, which was also only mentioned by one stakeholder. The only economic motive is related to environmental interests as actions such as recycling and less waste increase sustainability. Therefore, it can be pointed out that economic motivations seem to be less important for the sample of this research.

7.3. A discussion of stakeholders' perceived collaborative advantages

Table 8. Compared collaborative advantage mentioned in the reviewed literature and stated in the stakeholder interviews with indicated overlaps (bold)

Collaborative advantages in literature	Collaborative advantages perceived by stakeholders
Joint learning process among stakeholders	<i>Joint learning process among stakeholders</i>
Sharing of information	<i>Creation / Sharing of new information</i>
Empowerment of actors	<i>Empowerment of actors</i>
Increased fairness and inclusiveness of decision making	<i>Increased fairness and inclusiveness of decision making</i>
Enhanced understanding of the situation or problem	<i>Enhanced understanding of the situation or problem</i>
Increased efficiency	<i>Increased resilience, inspiration and innovation</i>
Spin-offs resulting out of collaborative arrangements	<i>Spin-offs resulting out of collaborative arrangements</i>
Sharing of risks and costs	Increased enjoyment
Change of established reasoning	Facilitating or convening activities
Increased creativity, inspiration, innovation	Enhanced marine conservation and protection and increased sustainability
New value creation through the combination of human potential and material resources within a collaboration	Rising awareness of sustainability issues
	Enhancement of policy quality
	More informed decision making
	Embedding work in community

Seven out of the fifteen motivations mentioned by the stakeholders were also evident in the literature reviewed and therefore fit in with previously conducted research. Lasker et al. (2011) point out the advantages of sharing cost and risks as well as changes in reasoning, which were not mentioned by the actors in this study. However, this does not mean that these points are not created by the collaborative arrangements. Increased creativity, inspiration and innovation, for instance, could be an advantage which is less obvious and might happen unconsciously as a by-product. The two newly mentioned advantages facilitating and convening activities as well as increased enjoyment were already discussed as unexpected results in the previous section. The overlap between these and a few other collaborative advantages in this study, which are also mentioned as motivations, emphasize that many collaborative advantages are recognized and desired even before a collaborative process starts. This is evident in the results of this study as well as in the literature, as for example, the empowerment of other actors is an advantage of resulting out of collaboration but also a motivation to engage in the joint work, even before the collaborative arrangement starts. Therefore, it is sometimes difficult to differentiate between collaborative advantage and motivation.

The two advantages, raising awareness of sustainability issues as well as enhanced marine conservation and protection, are also rather case specific as they deal with environmental issues which could be a reason why they are not mentioned in the reviews literature. Nevertheless, the last three perceived advantages mentioned in Table 5, which are more general, are also not found in the literature. It seems like many researchers do not explicitly state motivations to engage in collaborative governance arrangements but rather mention the advantages resulting out of it. As these overlap, it could be that motivations are simply left out as they are included and covered by the collaborative advantages, but this is just a speculation.

7.4. A discussion of stakeholder's perceived challenges

Table 9. Compared collaborative advantage mentioned in the reviewed literature and stated in the stakeholder interviews with indicated overlaps (bold)

Collaborative challenges in literature	Collaborative challenges perceived by stakeholders
Different language, culture, values, historic background	Different language, culture, value, historic background
Different organisational structures	Different organisational structures
Increased amount of time and bureaucracy	Increased amount of time
Lack of respect, trust or openness	Lack of trust and openness
Multiplicity of opinions can hinder decision making	Multiplicity of opinions can hinder decision making/ clashing interests
Inconsistent participation	Inconsistent participation
Influence of interpersonal relationships (on e.g. inclusion of stakeholders)	Realisation of mutual benefit
Different interpretation of the problem	Distance between the islands and mainland
Power differences	Limited budget / funding issues
Decreased efficiency	Embedding work in community
	Mismatch between expectations and reality among visiting mainland researchers
	Limited capacities or facilities (for researchers)
	Lack of education or expertise on islands
	Political situation / sensitivity (of projects)
	Complex relation between the Dutch mainland and the

	Caribbean part of the Netherlands
	Communication problems
	Different scale + dynamics on mainland + islands

Five out of the seventeen challenges experienced by the stakeholders were also evident in the literature reviewed and therefore fit in with previously conducted research. Especially Huxham (2000) emphasizes that differences in language, culture and values create collaborative challenges which are in accordance with perceived challenges by six of the stakeholders. An overlap between literature and actor experiences can be detected in the challenge marking an increased amount of time. In some cases, it takes a while until overseas stakeholders reply or provide visiting scientists with permits to enter and conduct research in protected areas as perceived by a few mainland stakeholders. However, the IMARES researcher stated that this is actually not a challenge but something inherent to the situation, as small island institutions have to deal with a multiplicity of local and overseas demands. This simply requires acceptance and patience from mainland stakeholders as the researcher indicates. Moreover, the official of the Centre of Excellence remarked that "cultural differences are usually not an issue as people are aware of it" (28.05.2018). This marks a discrepancy between the perception of culture to be an issue or not. However, the Centre of Excellence often collaborates with other SIDS and the cultural differences, for instances between islands in the Caribbean, might be smaller than between the islands of the Dutch overseas territory and the Dutch mainland. This could be a possible explanation for the difference in problem perception among the stakeholders. Nest to this, an inconsistent participation was noted in the academic literature (Huxham., 2000) and was also perceived by volunteer 2 of ANEMOON Foundation, as it is remarked that Dutch mainland organisations should send staff to the islands more coherently.

Some of the challenges perceived by the stakeholders are created due to the specific context of this research. Distance, differences between the four countries of the Kingdom of the Netherlands such as varying scales or dynamics as well as history are difficulties which cannot be influenced and are inherent to the situation. Gray & Purdy (2018) call these types of challenges *cross-level dynamics* which hint to difficulties created by stakeholders located far away from each other and which are situated on different administrative or governance levels. For instance, local organisations can frame the same issue differently than inter(national) institutions, prioritise differently and it needs to be adhered to different regulations. This creates the problem that solutions which might work in location A do not work in location B, due to these cross-level dynamics (Gray & Purdy, 2018). The TNO Caribbean provides the example of waste management here, which has a very different dynamic on the island due to limited space; high transportation costs and limited recycling possibilities to the mainland. The same problem area looks very different in the European and Caribbean locations, which prevents solutions from being directly transferred to another location with a different context. Instead, solutions need to be translated to fit a certain context which logically is dependent on knowledge exchange between stakeholders to combine expertise, local knowledge and innovative ideas.

Political sensitivity and other challenges, such as communication and embedding the work into the local community could be understood to depend less on the study's context but rather result out of interactions between people and differing organisational features. However, these obstacles are not mentioned in the literature reviewed. These perceived challenges link to the need of actors involved in collaborations between the mainland and the overseas territory to develop cultural sensitivity and to engage in diplomatic communication.

Another point for discussion is the challenge of funding issues and limited budgets. Scarce financial resources could counteract with the engagement of citizen scientists groups, when it comes to generating

new knowledge. These volunteering citizen scientists, which are for instance part of the ANEMOON Foundation, might be a good option to create valuable data for increasing the knowledge related to coastal and marine ecosystems and with this more effective conservation plans and regulations. An additional benefit of engaging citizen scientist groups in collaborative arrangements is a rising awareness and recognition of environmental problems as volunteers mobilize other people (Volunteer one from ANEMOON Foundation).

In relation to this, the IMARES researcher emphasized that more researchers visit the Caribbean overseas territories in order to engage in scientific projects and are hosted by facilitating and hosting institutions which were set up collaboratively between different island and mainland stakeholders such as local governments and the NIOZ. Here, the IMARES researcher speaks of an increase in "scientific knowledge tourism."

7.5 Recommendations

When answering the general research questions of 'How can collaborative governance help to reach the SDG 14?' it could be distinguished between actual collaborations which took place in the past or are currently happening, and the potential collaborative governance has in this area. Therefore, if the recommendations made by the stakeholders are taken up, collaborative governance can increasingly help to thrive forward towards SDG 14.

Especially communication between stakeholders and the local island inhabitants is perceived to be an issue on multiple levels as it ranges from research projects to the Nature Policy Plan.

To dig deeper into the recommendations, the advice to enhance communication and personal attitudes both links to another issue, which is stated by the IMARES researcher to impact the relation between the Dutch mainland and the overseas territory. The researcher remarks that a lot of people on the mainland are not aware that the BSE-Islands are municipalities of the Netherlands since 2010 and do not recognize how it enriches the culture of the country. The respondent states that we therefore still need to "actively stimulate new nation building" (Researcher from IMARES). This can be linked to the politics stream of the reviewed *Multiple Streams Approach* where multiple factors come together such as the general mood in society which can direct the attention of stakeholders to a problem (Cairney & Jones, 2015). This links to the research questions in that sense that successfully enhanced nation building could lead to an increased awareness of other countries of the kingdom, which are located 11000 km away from each other. This can increase the willingness to collaborate due to a stronger sense of togetherness. On the mainland side, the organisations, institutions and the public could be more likely to recognize problems the overseas territory is dealing with.

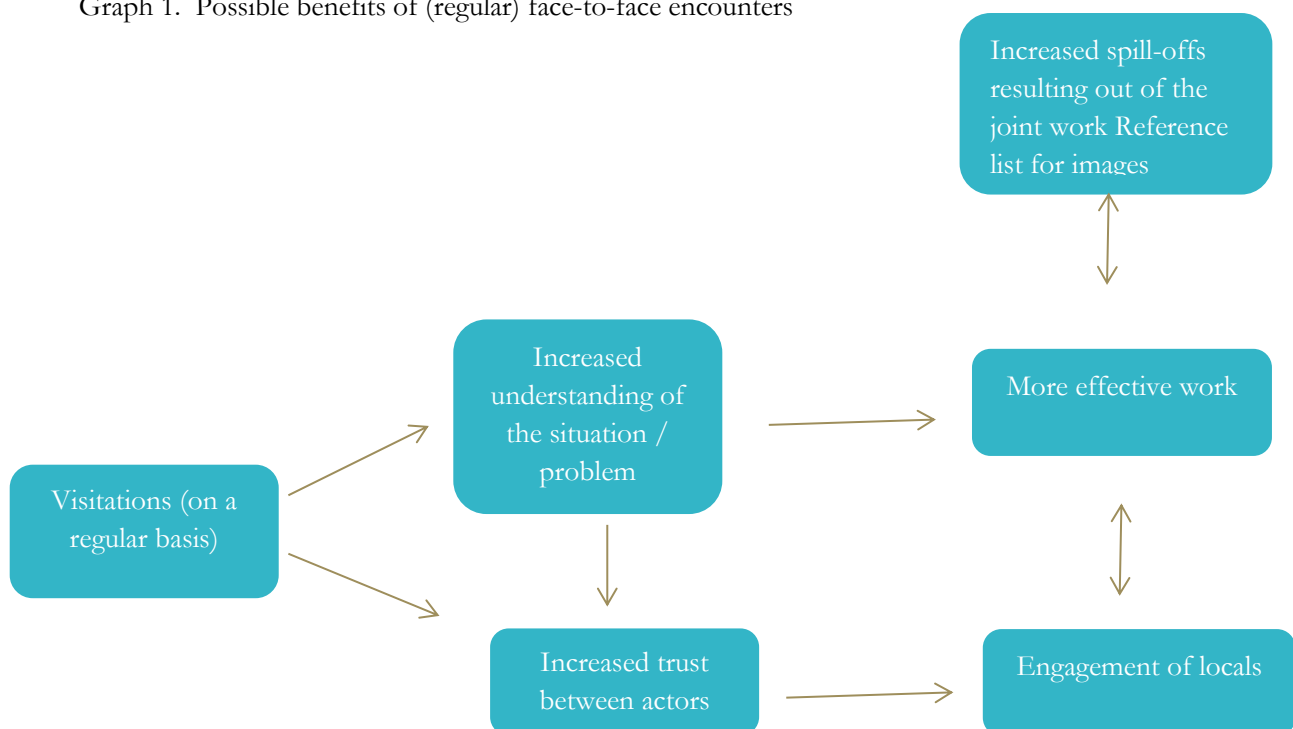
Moreover, the recommendations could be sorted into groups when it is considered what they are aiming to improve. The advice to create more structural projects and to increase the communication between collaborating parties are aiming to improve the collaborative process itself. The advice to enhance the personal attitude, for instance to increase cultural sensitivity, is concerned with an individual person which is part of a stakeholder collaboration. The outcome of collaboration, such as the effectiveness of a created policy or to get more support among the local citizens, can be enhanced by the advice to raise the awareness concerning the activities or projects undertaken, to increase communication between stakeholders and to the locals, and the recommendation to bridge the gap between external expertise and local interest. The remaining three recommendations to create an island platform for consultation, to

coordinate interest groups and to make strategic choices when collaborative partners are considered can be grouped under enhancing the process of collaborative forming.

The discussed above indicates that most of the recommendations stakeholder made are related to enhancing the forming of the collaboration as well as to arrive with a more effective outcome. Only one recommendation deals with the personal attitude of people engaged in one of the arrangements.

Next to directly stated recommendation, it was also mentioned that face to face encounters are important in collaborative arrangements between oversea and mainland stakeholders which was for example stated by the representative of the WNF. Personal encounters with the local population in order to raise awareness about environmental issues and to establish collaborative partnerships with local stakeholders, is also perceived to be important by volunteer two of the ANEMOON Foundation, as it increases trust between the actors involved. These perceived benefits can also be related to other collaborative advantages such as increased participation of locals which is visualised in graph 1.

Graph 1. Possible benefits of (regular) face-to-face encounters



7.6. Returning to the main research question

Collaborative governance arrangements affect decision making processes and policy generation due to the increased participation of stakeholder and accumulated knowledge. However, not only the arrangements itself should be considered when collaborative advantages are assessed. Often, more hidden spill overs stakeholders are not aware of can make a step towards SDG 14 or its targets in a more indirect way. The IMARES researcher for instance outlines that knowledge tourism is on the rise in the Caribbean. This type of tourism has the benefit to not only create the basis of more informed decision making but also attracts different visitors to the island with a certain mind-set. These tourists are more likely to have a smaller environmental impact as they are more interested in nature conservation and protection due to their related research projects and increased knowledge in this area. Therefore, this tourist type might be more aware of the consequences of its behaviour. When a researcher is engaged in a successful project and establishes connections at the location, the person is likely to recommend his or her student to go to the island and to enhance research skills during the field work as stated by the IMARES researcher.

To discuss a different point and to relate back to the introduction of this paper, it is stated at the beginning of this research that it is currently a trend among Dutch organisations to form coalitions in order to work towards the Sustainability Goals more effectively (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2017). With the findings of this study in mind, it can be pointed out that the respondents indeed recognize the advantages of engaging in collaborative arrangements. The stakeholders work together to share knowledge, or to engage in a joint learning process. Therefore, it is recognised in this case study, that more can be achieved when it comes to SDG14 and its targets, when stakeholders collaborate rather than acting solely. In fact, some of the mainland respondents even indicated the wish to increase collaboration with local stakeholders when it comes to the sustainable management of the environment, but restraining factors such as limited budgets and lacking trust, make this difficult.

The study indicates that collaborative governance can enhance marine conservation through enabling and creating joint learning processes, sharing of new information and an enhanced understanding of the situation when different actors with varying resources are brought together. This enhanced understanding of the situation arises through knowledge and resource difference which might complement each other, such as local knowledge about the state of the biodiversity and expertise in a certain topic area which could be brought in from outside the islands, such as by NGOs or research organisations. Next to this, the enhanced understandings lead to more effective implementations of measures which protect and conserve marine nature. Moreover, when collaborative arrangements are structured to include or aim to empower actors which were not previously included in the decision making process, their concerns might be new to policy makers which can lead to the recognition of new environmental issues.

7.7 Discussion of Limitations

The key limitations which were discovered to impact the quality and generalisability of this thesis are presented in the following.

First, the case study is bound to a specific context with a unique stakeholder composition and challenges, which can look very different considering possible future case studies, as there are already vast differences between the islands of the Caribbean oversea territory as well as the Netherlands. Furthermore, only ten stakeholders were interviewed due to the scope of this Bachelor thesis and the unavailability of other contacted actors. Interviews with additionally stakeholders would have created a more holistic picture of

collaborative governance arrangements in the overseas territory and could lead to new findings. Only one person from each organisation was interviewed with the exception of the ANEMOON foundation (see Table 3) which is the main limitation of this study. The results of this research could be different when other representatives or researcher would have been interviewed, as these actors might articulate different perceptions and other experiences. Therefore, the external validity of the study is limited.

Secondly, the use of snowball sampling creates a limitation as the respondent who provided the contact details of other stakeholders could have been biased (subconsciously) as personal relations to other organisations or individuals could influence the recommendation of exactly this person.

Thirdly, only two stakeholders could be interviewed face to face, which could have impact the data quality as it is easier to come up with new or follow-up questions when the reactions of a person can be seen. However, when possible, the skype conversations were conducted with using the camera function of skype in order to make up for this limitation.

Fourthly, for most of the stakeholders as well as the researcher of this study, English is not the native language. It needs to be considered that this could also impact the data quality as respondents might have expressed themselves differently in their mother tongue and meaning of what was said got lost in while translating the perceptions into English. A few times, some of the respondents did not know a certain term in English and they had to paraphrase where further meaning could have gone lost.

Another limitation is that I am not of Dutch nationality. This could have influenced people when talking about cultural differences or they could have exaggerated a difference to make it clear for the 'outsider'.

8. Conclusion & Recommendations for further research

This research has looked at how collaborative governance helps to reach the UN SDG 14, with a focus on Dutch actors in the Caribbean overseas territories. The following paragraphs conclude the results of this thesis structure after each research question.

The first sub-research question of this study asked 'Which Dutch actors, including the government, NGOs, companies and knowledge institutions, are involved in collaborative governance arrangements. The mainland knowledge generation institutions IMARES, the Royal NIOZ, the Wolfs Company are included in collaborations which are or were related to the Saba Bank research or developed scenarios with stakeholder input about the future of cruise tourism. The WNF engages in many collaborative governance arrangements, such as setting up a fishery cooperation with local stakeholder or engaging in collaborative projects to raise awareness of harmful chemicals in sunscreens. The Dutch government is represented in the Caribbean Netherlands by the RCN which works together with the Ministry of Economic Affairs as well as the DCNA and other local actors in order to create and to improve the Nature Police Plan The Caribbean Netherlands. Furthermore, the Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development of SIDS was set up through a collaborative arrangement between the government of the Netherlands as well as Aruba and the United Nations Development Programme.

These actors are engaged in the respective collaborative arrangements due to an environmental interest to increase nature protection and conservation as well as to increase knowledge on the islands, which were ranked as the two highest motivations among stakeholders. This was followed by the aim to arrive with more informed decision making and to include local views in considerations, which were both ranked as the third highest motivation. This provides an answer to the second sub-research questions which answers the second research question 'What is the motivation of actors to join the governance arrangements

relating to the SDG 14?” Next to this, it can be concluded that social and scientific motivations are more relevant to the stakeholders of this study than political and economic motives to engage in collaborative arrangements.

The three most stated collaborative advantages mentioned by the respondents are enhanced marine conservation, protection and increased sustainability as well as an increased creation and sharing of new information and the enhanced understanding of a situation. However, collaborative arrangements are not without challenges. Different languages, cultures as well as values, financial issues and a lack of trust on the side of local stakeholders were experienced most frequently by the respondents. Many of the stated advantages and challenges overlapped with the reviewed literature; however a few outliers were detected. Enjoyment is an additional gain of jointly working together, as a stakeholder mentioned to connect a diving hobby with the interest to gather new data in the Caribbean overseas territory. Challenges which were not stated by the literature but came up in this study are for instance political sensitivity as well as communication. These two issues were experienced to either hinder the effect of collaborations as the achieved work did not reach the local island population or collaborations had to be cancelled off due to undiplomatic behaviour of officials. These findings obtained from the research questions provide an answer for the third and fourth sub-research questions, ‘Which advantages do the stakeholders see with a collaborative governance approach’ and ‘What are the challenges resulting out of these collaborations the stakeholders perceive?’

The results related to the fifth sub-research question ‘How can the collaborative partnerships be improved to be more effective according to the interview actors?’ are connected to the communication and political sensitivity challenges as these are incorporated in the advice communicated by the sample. Furthermore, individuals need to work on their personal attitude and should increase their cultural sensitivity as it was recommended by some of the stakeholders. The majority of recommendations can be centred around the aim to either enhance the formation phase of collaborative arrangements or to enhance the outcome of the collaborations.

With the knowledge provided by the sub-research questions, the general research question ‘How can collaborative governance help to reach SDG 14?’ can be answered. To my knowledge, this is the first report of dealing with collaborative governance arrangements in the Caribbean related to SDG 14 which looks at the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Despite the limitations, valuable insights could be found. The stakeholders present in the collaborative governance arrangements do not explicitly mention SDG 14 as part of their work, however, the collaborative partnerships are in accordance with the targets of the goal and therefore help to achieve SDG 14 directly as well as indirectly. To provide a few examples, the TNO Caribbean is working with stakeholders towards managing waste on the islands and collaborative research projects, where IMARES is for instance involved in, assess as well as create recommendations for further environmental protection. The WNF’s work of setting up a fishery cooperation fits to the SDG 14 target of increasing the sustainability of fishing, which is one of the desired outcomes for the organisation.

Furthermore, some collaboration between actors, such as NATURALIS or the ANEMOON foundation, cannot directly be understood as collaborative governance arrangements but they help to create the window of opportunities, the momentum, for future collaborations. Therefore, it can also be concluded that many stakeholders in the Kingdom of the Netherlands engage in or build the basis for future collaborative governance arrangements in order to enhance the conservation and protection of life under the sea.

The engagement of mainland actors in collaborative arrangements in the Caribbean is motivated by strengthening the capacities on the islands with empowering local stakeholders and to provide expertise

for instance for better informed decision making. However, there is more potential in collaborative arrangements between Dutch mainland and Caribbean oversea actors. Without the occasional mismatch between local and mainland interests, undiplomatic behaviour, trust issues as well as struggles to embed work into the community, collaborative governance could play a bigger role in moving towards SDG 14. It has to be acknowledged that the Kingdom is a complex case due to vast differences between the four countries it encompasses.

Some collaborative obstacles could be moved out of the way with effort from all sides, such as political sensitivity or the occasional mismatch between interests when cultural differences are acknowledged, accepted and appreciated. For this, it needs to be deeply inherited by each stakeholder that, as stated in the introduction of this paper, the sustainable development goals “can be achieved only with a broad alliance of people, governments, civil society and the private sector all working together” (United Nations, 2014, Article 1).

With the findings and limitations of this study in mind, the following five recommendations can be made for further research.

- The most obvious recommendation is to interview more stakeholders than it was done in this study to generate a more holistic picture of collaborative governance arrangements in the Caribbean. Therefore, future research should include a bigger sample group.
- Future studies could fruitfully explore the issue of this thesis further as the islands of the oversea territory are very different from each other, culturally, economically, historically as well as resources and problems differ. It could be analysed whether there is a difference between the islands when it comes to collaborative governance arrangements involving the Netherlands and local stakeholders. A distinction could be made between the BES-Islands and the three other countries of the Kingdom, Aruba, Curacao and St Maarten, as there are many differences between the Caribbean areas related to their administration and duties of the mainland.
- Currently, a new version of the Nature Policy Plan Caribbean Netherlands is written which incorporates the feedback of the plan from 2013-2017. In a few years, the improvements can be tested and critically assessed. Therefore, future research should further investigate and critically assess whether the feedback of the plan’s evaluation is incorporated and whether it enhances the internal structure of the collaborative governance due to for instances an improved communication or increased cultural sensitivity.
- The Build Back Better active think tank organised this year deals with increasing resilience and rebuilding some of the islands infrastructure which were hit by the last hurricane. Build Back Better was organised in collaboration of the COE with other stakeholders. It could be researched whether there is a connection between environmental disaster and the occurrence of collaborative governance arrangements. This is a relation for future research to explore.
- Looking forward, further investigation could test whether there are differences in structure, outcome effectiveness, challenges and collaborative advantages or challenges in collaborative arrangements for goal 14 and for other SDGs. Also, the goal 14’s trade-offs and synergies to other goals are still under researched.

9. References

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10. Reference List for images

Front page:

Water colour painting by Lena Pech

Image 1:

oi. (n.d.). Annual meeting of the Ombudsmen Institutions of the Kingdom of the Netherlands held in Sint Maarten. Retrieved April 16, 2018, from <http://www.theioi.org/ioi-news/current-news/annual-meeting-of-the-ombudsmen-institutions-of-the-kingdom-of-the-netherlands-held-in-sint-maarten>

Image 2:

Curacaotogo. (n.d.). Retrieved June 27, 2018, from <https://curacaotogo.com/top-5-best-beaches-on-curacao/>

Image 3:

Feel Bonaire. (n.d.). Retrieved June 27, 2018, from <http://www.feelbonaire.com/listings/hawksbill-turtle/>

Image 4:

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Image 5:

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Image 6

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11. Appendix

A) A list of set questions for the semi-structured interviews

- What is your work / the projects you are engaged in about?
- In which collaborative arrangements are you involved relating to environmental conservation and protection in the Dutch oversea territory?
- How did you get engaged in the collaborative arrangement?
- What is / was your motivation to engage in the collaboration?
- How is the collaboration linked to the SDG 14?
- What is your function / role in the collaborative arrangement?
- Which Caribbean Stakeholders are engaged in the collaboration?
- Which other Dutch Stakeholders are engaged in the collaboration?
- How does the collaborative arrangement look like? or What is the process of the collaboration?
- Which advantages does the collaboration create?
- Which challenges did / do you face in in the collaborative arrangement?
- How can the collaboration be improved?
- How are information or results shared in the collaborative arrangement?
- How can you estimate your future engagement in the collaboration?
- Is there anything you would like to add?

B) Table of acronyms

Acronym	Meaning
BES-Islands	Bonaire, St. Eustatius, Saba
COE	Centre of Excellence for the Sustainable Development of Small Developing Island States
DCNA	Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance
IMARES	Institute for Marine Resources and Ecosystem Studies
NIOZ	Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research
RCN	Rijksdienst Caribisch Nederland

RQ	Research Question
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SRQ	Sub-research question
STENAPA	St Eustatius National Parks Foundations
STINAPA	De Stichting Nationale Parken Boniare
TNO	Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research
TNO Caribbean	Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research in the Caribbean
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WNF	Wereld Natuur Fonds

