

The Turks And Caicos Conservation Fund: Towards Sustainable Financing of Marine Protected Areas

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“If an organization or business is unable to operate profitably, it will not long survive and will have little impact on preserving the world’s natural and cultural resources.”

Adventure Travel Society

Funding Mechanism for PAs

- Funds appropriated in national budget
- Entry Fees (charge for visitation)
- Leases/Licences/Concessions
- Grants
- Taxes/Levies

TCI Protected Area System formed 1992

- TCI A nature based tourism dependant economy
- 34 PA's established
- 19 Include a Marine component



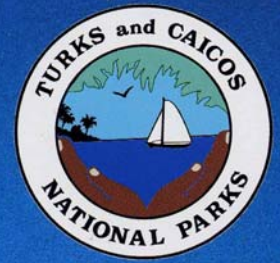
LEGEND OF PROTECTED AREAS OF THE TCI

- NATIONAL PARKS
- HISTORICAL SITES
- NATURE RESERVES
- ▲ SANCTUARIES



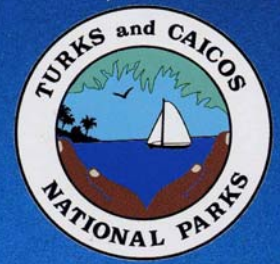
TCI Protected Area System formed 1992

- TCI A nature based tourism dependant economy
- 34 PA's established
- 19 Include a Marine component
- Low Priority afforded to funding of protected area system (less than US\$ 150,000 in 1992 estimated 2% of need)



TCI Conservation Fund: Background, 1992-1998

- Need for a funding mechanism identified as early as 1990's
- By 1995 parks still largely 'paper parks'
- Project and Fund concepts developed

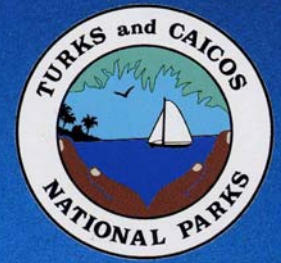


1995 A Social and Economic Assessment of Protected Areas

A model was proposed:

- Controlling board
- Financial Plan
- Raising of endowment funds
- Collection of user fees
- Independent audit

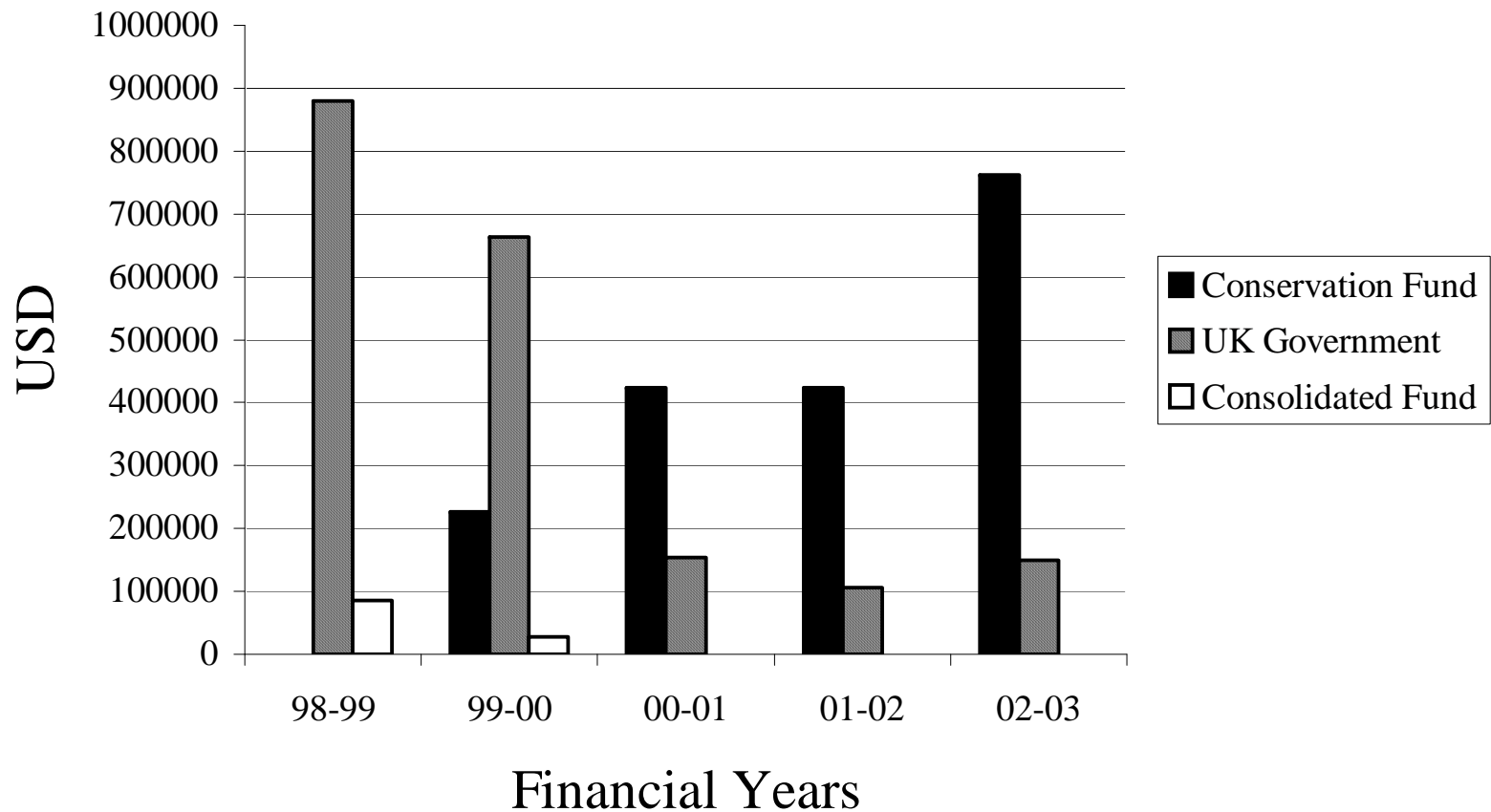
1998 Project and Fund Start

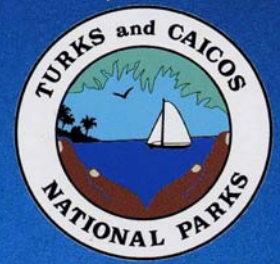


- 1st April 1998 beginning of financial year
- Coastal Resources Management Project (CRMP) started (UK + TCI Gov)
 - Establishment of the fund was a condition of UK project financing
 - Conservation Fund established as a Special Fund under Finance Audit

'The Donor Dream'

- The Fund has successfully replaced Donor funds



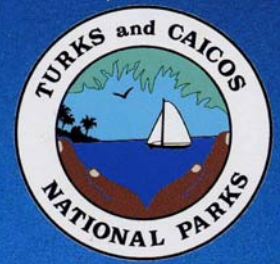


Coastal Resources Management Project (CRMP)

Purpose

Initiate a programme for the effective management of the protected area system and enhance national environmental awareness.

Project outputs



1. Develop a National Parks Service (now PAD)
2. Management in 3 pilot marine parks
3. Support and capacity building to the National Trust
4. Plan to extend management to all 33 protected areas
5. Establish a National Environment Centre

National Environment Center (NEC)

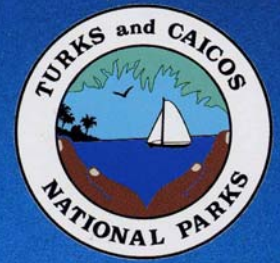




The Conservation Fund

- Funded by a 1% tax on hotel and restaurant revenue
- It collected with the other 9% of Accommodation Tax as a standard 10% charge on every transaction
- Collected by Treasury through the normal tax collection system

Structure of the TCI Conservation Fund (CF)



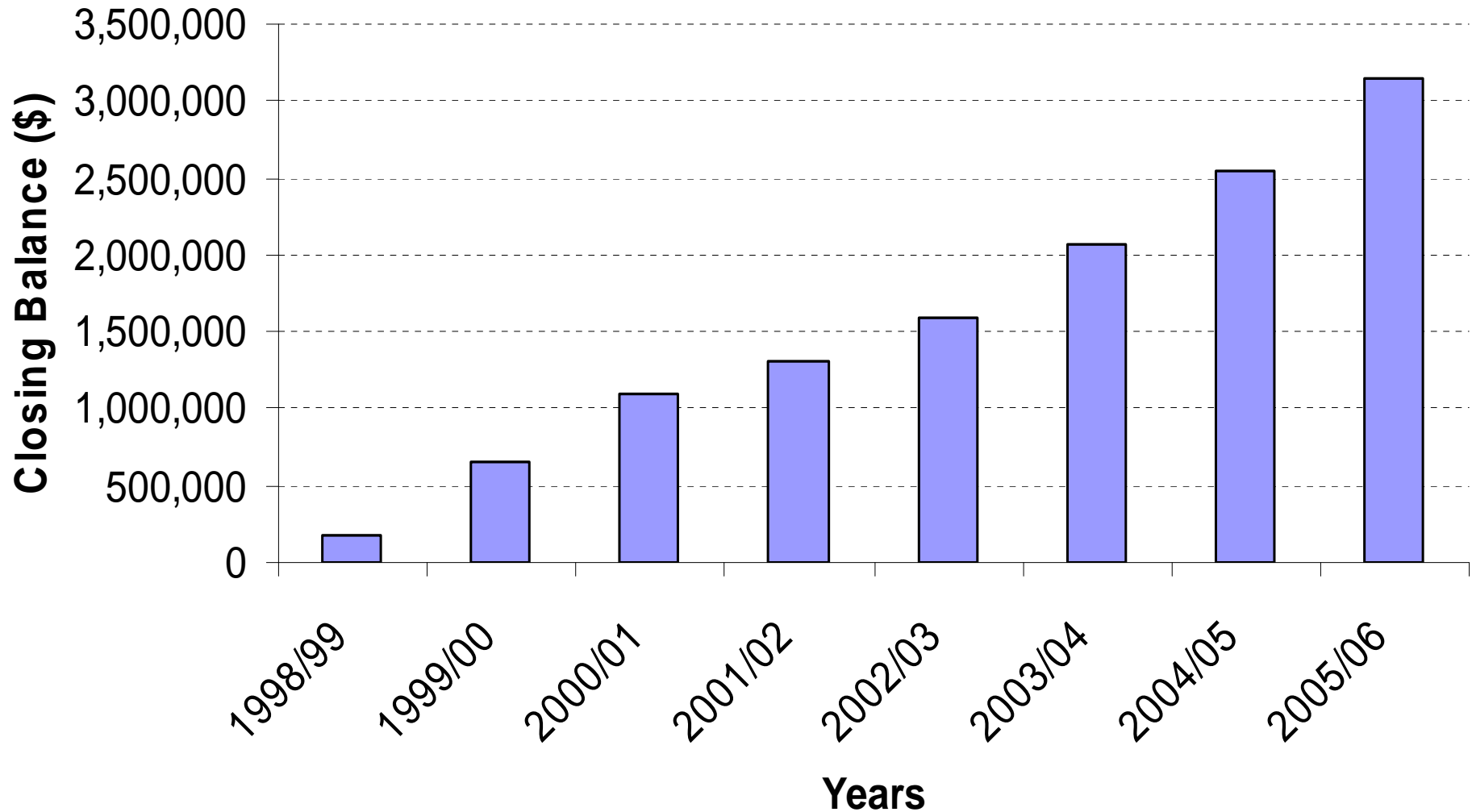
- Conservation Fund maintained as a sub-account of the Consolidated Fund
- Only paper not physical separation of funds
- Hypothecated once per year – which is a legal obligation

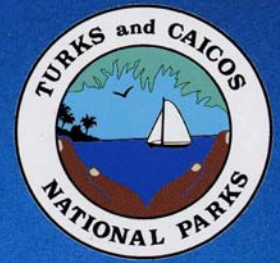


Financial Management

- Governed by TCIG overall financial procedures
- Has an Accounting Officer appointed
- Separately audited by the Audit Office which is established independently from government

Performance of TCI Conservation Fund (1998-2006)





Distribution Policy of the Fund

- > \$3.1 million available
- 70% Management of Protected Areas
(shared between PAD and National Trust)
- 20% Community Conservation
Projects
- 10% Reserve

Community Conservation Projects;

- Criteria / areas of priority for the selection and awarding of projects.;
 - Reef Conservation
- ○ Beach Management
- ○ Coastal Clean Up
- ○ Cultural & Historical Preservation
- ○ Environmental Education
- ○ Protected Areas Support
- ○ Eco-Tourism & Nature Trails
- ○ Environmental Research

Examples of Project Funded by Conservation Fund;



Mangroves

Blending land and sea, mangroves form an interesting environment along our coastline. Hardy, tropical plants, mangroves are one of the few trees that thrive in salt water.

Once considered useless, the many values of mangroves are now evident. A variety of wildlife finds food and shelter in the mangroves. Their roots help stabilize the shoreline and also filter pollutants. Gracilar, long-legged wading birds build tree-top nests in their branches.



A Mangrove Food Chain

Mangroves serve for many species and are the beginning of a food chain for many other organisms. Larger predators, including fish and ducks, feed on the smaller creatures. Fish, in turn, provide food for animals such as wading birds, snakes, and otters.



Types of Mangroves

Red mangroves, closest to the water, have a long prop root that makes a web of support for the tree in marshes, bays, and estuaries of the water.

Black mangroves, farther inland, are characterized by their highly branched roots. They provide crucial support for the tree through aerial roots.

White mangroves, without aerial roots, are found in areas where the water table is high.



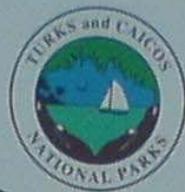
White Mangrove

White mangroves are usually found further inland than red or black mangroves. They prefer moist, salty soil and are the most salt-tolerant of the mangroves. Stipules of white mangroves help absorb nitrogen in aquatic areas. However, the shallow root system makes these trees vulnerable to being uprooted by strong winds.



Red Mangrove

Typically found closer to the water is brackish water, red mangroves have the thickest, by far longest, most numerous roots called "prop roots." The fact that the red mangrove depends on its prop roots for support is the reason of the name "prop roots." The prop roots of the red mangrove actually start growing before the tree has 200 more days to be carried to the water by other organisms.



WELCOME

Grand Turk Cays Land and Sea National Park Long Cay Sanctuary

A number of small cays occur to the south and east of Grand Turk. These cays along with the series of patch reefs located on the leeward side of Gibbs, Round, Long, Penniston, Pear and Martin Alonzo Pinzen Cays offer protection to the main island from prevailing winds.

These cays also support a relatively large population of nesting birds, iguanas and endemic plants. Penniston Cay has a magnificent population of frigate birds (*Fregata magnificens*) and supports a significant breeding population of brown boobies (*Sula leucogaster*).

Gibbs and Round Cay host nesting sooty and brown noeddy terns (*Sterna fuscata* and *Anous stolidus*).

Long Cay is home to the last remaining Turks Island population of the TCI rock iguana (*Cyclura carinata*) and a spectacular assemblage of Turks Head Cacti (*Echinocactus horizonthalonius*).

Established under the 1992 National Parks Order
Take Pride in our National Parks



WELCOME

South Creek National Park

With an area of 183 acres, South Creek National Park contains the largest mangrove ecosystem in the Turks Island group.

Healthy mangrove stands dominate the area. They consist of mixed forests of well-developed and relatively dense stands of red mangroves (*Rhizophora mangle*) and white mangroves (*Laguncularia racemosa*).

The forest detritus provides nutrients for the marine environment thus contributing to the nutrition of the reef community in the area.

This nutrient rich environment also supports immense varieties of marine life in an intricate food web, providing nursery grounds for a large number of commercially valuable marine species of fish and shellfish.

Established under the 1992 National Parks Order
Take Pride in our National Parks












NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
South Creek National Park

With an area of 93 acres, South Creek National Park contains the largest mangrove wetlands in the United States. Healthy mangrove wetlands provide the area. They provide a natural means of soil enrichment and naturally filter excess nutrients from agricultural runoff. The wetland provides habitat for the marine environment that contributes to the health of the reef community in the area.

This natural site management also supports numerous species of birds. It is an excellent bird-watching location. It is a great location of community events, sports events of the area.

Established under the 1992 National Parks Oath
Take Pride in our National Parks











Protected Areas Department

Community Conservation Projects



Positive mechanism for engaging stakeholders and carrying out conservation work

■ However:

- High transaction costs
- difficult to manage
- difficult to monitor
- Insufficient Stakeholder participation in projects



Conclusions -1

- CF is now well established and providing significant funds to the PA system in comparison with prior allocations
- Management is broadly within guidelines but improvements can be made

Conclusions -2

- Political commitment remains high
- Institutional arrangements are still evolving
- Challenge is to improve function and expand to all 33 protected areas

Recommendations for future development of the CF - Immediate

1. Improve regular management of the fund to provide quarterly income and expenditure
2. Better publicize the fund
3. Revise goals and objective for the fund
4. Produce public annual report