

Completes Study On Sto. Domingo Park

Island Resources Foundation, Inc., has announced that it just completed a preliminary study for the site of a proposed marine park in the Dominican Republic.

Dr. Edward L. Towle, president of the Foundation, said that a preliminary marine and terrestrial wildlife survey was made of the 300-square mile tentative site.

The survey team consisted of Dr. Anne La Bastille, William E. Rainey, John McEachern and Towle, along with scientists, sociologists and archeologists from Santo Domingo.

Towle noted that the Virgin Islands pioneered in the marine park concept in the Caribbean, with Buck Island National Monument and the Trunk Bay underwater trail and protected coastal waters of the V.I. National Park.

The Island Resources head said Barbados, Antigua, Barbuda and Guadeloupe are planning underwater parks and the BVI are also exploring the idea.

Towle said of the Dominican Republic's park that, "The motives behind any undertaking of this sort are involved and the steps in developing it are complex.

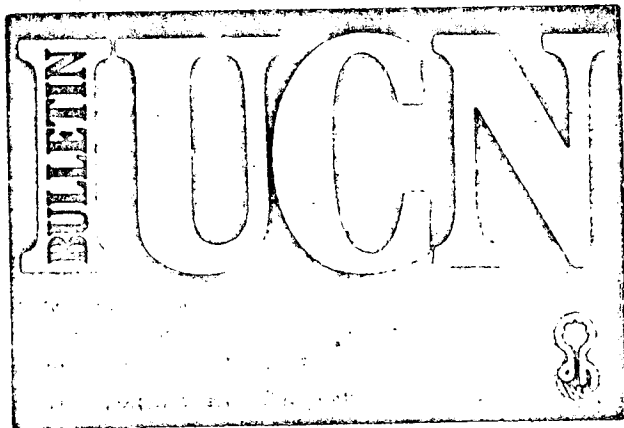
"We must resolve conflicting interests and, if the park is to succeed, it must be based on sound scientific surveys of the area's environmental features, which take time."

Of his own group's role, Towle said, "Once the interest is stirred, we supply the experienced environmental planning and technical specialists to aid both

government and private conservation groups."

He said the Foundation is doing an environmental study for the United Nations Development Program, involving nine Caribbean island groups and has, over the past year, developed a set of guidelines for island development for the International Union for the Conservation of Nature.

The Island Resources Foundation is based at Harms Lagoon Marina and currently has on-going conservation and resource planning projects in 15 countries.



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New marine park surveyed in Dominican Republic

The Island Resources Foundation recently completed a preliminary marine and terrestrial wildlife survey of the proposed site for a new marine national park in south-eastern Dominican Republic. The projected park would encompass semi-arid Isla Saona, Bahia Catalinita, and the entire Bayahive - Boca de Yuma Peninsula and the surrounding waters, comprising some 750 sq.km. in all.

A number of rare and endangered species were found within the area, including green and hawksbill marine turtles, the manatee, the Haitian solenodon, roseate flamingo, white-crowned pigeon and Hispaniola least parrague.

Dr. Edward L. Towle, president of the Foundation, reported increasing interest among Caribbean island governments in the safeguarding and rational development of marine resources. Barbados, Antigua and Barbuda and Guadeloupe are also moving ahead to establish underwater parks and the British Virgin Islands have a Marine Conservation Committee currently exploring the feasibility of setting aside selected areas as marine parks or preserves, he said.