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Mr. Edison Rijna, Governor
Bonaire Executive Council Members
Bonaire Island Council Members
Plasa Reina Wilhelmina 1
KRALENDIJK
Bonaire

Conservation of the Bonaire Donkey

Your Excellency and Honourable Council,

Since a long time there is a population of donkeys on Bonaire Island. We have received information that this population is in danger of eradication. The population is very unique, because it lives since decades isolated from other populations. Therefore they represent with high probability a unique genepool of donkey varieties. The Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) committed the nations to conserve their biodiversity and to ensure its sustainable use. The Conference of the Parties (COP) of the CBD, in existence since 2005, has specifically recognized the special nature of agricultural biodiversity and the need for its conservation.

SAVE Foundation is a European Umbrella Organization for the conservation of rare breeds and varieties. Some years ago we collected the still remaining numbers and occurrences of donkeys in Europe. The number of the animals is decreasing dramatically. But unfortunately this is not only the case in Europe, it is a worldwide trend. Besides their occurrences a survey on the use of donkeys (http://www.agrobiodiversity.net/topic_network/donkey/breedatlas_donkey.asp) showed very different possibilities of use. As a feral or semi-feral population the Bonaire Donkeys are very unique. Such donkey populations are important browsers to keep the landscape open carefully and prevent overgrowing of e.g. abandoned areas.

Therefore we appeal not to allow the decimation and probable eradication of the donkey population on Bonaire before investigations on the population and their impact are done and (new) possibilities of the use of donkeys on Bonaire (tourism, trekking, carrying diving luggage etc.) are carried out. We hope that the Bonaire administration will intervene in the recent actions concerning the Bonaire donkeys in this sense.

Yours sincerely,

SAVE Foundation

Waltraud Kugler
(SAVE Project Director)