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Executive Council

Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations
State Secretary for Kingdom Relations and Digitalization, Alexandra van Huffelen
Attn. Director Spatial Policy, Art 5.1 lid 2 sub e Woo
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Your number (letter):

Your letter of:

Our number: **200/2024**

Subject: Spatial Development Programme Caribbean Netherlands

Enclosures: Detailed comments OLS to RO CN

Saba, May 20, 2024

Dear Ms. van Huffelen,

Thank you for sharing the draft Spatial Development Programme Caribbean Netherlands for advice. During previous preparatory stages we have been able to provide input into the draft program, including several sessions with the Executive Council and Island Council. We appreciate the opportunity to provide advice on the draft program.

Public Entity Saba welcomes the drafting of a Spatial Development Programme for the Caribbean Netherlands. As a summary of national spatial policy, it provides a helpful starting point for the development of a Spatial Development Plan for Saba.

We recognize that in developing an overarching program for the three islands in the Caribbean Netherlands, there will be objectives and policies that may be less relevant to Saba or require a local interpretation. We believe there is sufficient flexibility in the program to provide this local interpretation through our Spatial Development Plan by setting out what themes are binding or need consideration.

It is noted that several studies are being initiated at the national level, in particular the development of recommendations and/or guidelines on the level of facilities, and a study to determine the extent of national parks and buffer zones. We would like to be involved in these initiatives to make sure that they align with local priorities and circumstances. We also look forward to working with the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (BZK) and the other public entities in the Caribbean Netherlands on the updating of the BES Construction Decree.

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Regarding the 'Saba' section of the program, we have sought clarification on the line that suggests that development in a small part of the Mount Scenery National Park may be allowed under circumstances. We understand this is based on private agreements between the landowners and does not reflect local policy. We have reached agreement with BZK that this exemption should be removed.

It is appreciated that following the adoption of this program, ongoing and structured consultation with BZK will take place during the preparation of Saba's Spatial Development Plan. Whilst we welcome support in the scoping of studies that may be needed for our Spatial Development Plan, it is important to stress that these need to be tailored to Saba's unique needs and context. We believe that collaboration is key to ensure effective local implementation of the program.

Please find further, mostly minor, suggested changes and comments in the attached document.

We look forward to working with you on the implementation of the Spatial Development Programme Caribbean Netherlands during the preparation of the Spatial Development Plan for Saba.

Trusting to have informed you sufficiently, we remain.

Sincerely,

The Executive Council of the Public Entity Saba

Art 5.1 lid 2 sub e Woo

cc.EC-mbrs, ISD

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