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Keep Sake

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Community Tourism Manual

As part of a joint initiative between the Sustainable Tourism, Human Resource Development and the Research and Development Components of the Caribbean Regional Sustainable Tourism Development Programme (CRSTDP), a short-term consultant, Ms. Louise Mary Dixey, has been contracted to develop a good practice manual on Community Tourism Initiatives in the Caribbean. The British-born Ms. Dixey is a Community Tourism Consultant with considerable

experience, particularly in east and Southern Africa including Kenya, Namibia and Uganda.

The main objectives of the consultancy was to:

- Assist in establishing a clearer understanding of the terms **community tourism** and **community based tourism** by examining and presenting acceptable working definitions of these twin concepts
- Identify and compile good practices in community-based tourism through a review of existing regional and international case studies and literature research, and
- Develop a Good Practices Manual of Community-based Tourism in the Caribbean, which will include the findings of the research conducted and seek to highlight good practices in a number of critical areas including financial, technical, social and ecological benchmarks. The Manual will provide guidelines to entities wishing to properly structure ongoing or future community

tourism initiatives and will encompass the widest possible representation of good practices from CTO member countries.

The Manual will also serve as a resource tool for governments, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and tourism educational institutions that wish to benefit from lessons learned from successful community tourism development initiatives.

Call for submissions were sent out in June 2006 to CTO member countries in English, Spanish and French. Based on the submissions received Ms. Dixey has conducted verification visits in Barbados, Dominica, St. Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica.

It is anticipated that the Manual would be completed before the end of 2006 and it is expected to be a valuable resource in an upcoming community tourism Workshop planned for November, 2006.

For more information on the CRSTDP visit www.onecaribbean.org or www.caribtstp.org

Learning about Coffee in Dominica.

Photo courtesy: 3 Rivers Eco Lodge



In this issue

The Caribbean Identity and Community Tourism	2
NGS Seeks to Develop Global Geo-tourism Partnership	3
Disaster Risk Management Course for Strategic Partners	3
Up-coming CTO Events	4

The Caribbean Identity and Community Tourism

By CTO's Secretary General & CEO, Vincent Vanderpool-Wallace

There is growing recognition that the enduring strength of the Caribbean as an attractive tourism region comes from its global perception as a region comprised of a very large number of distinctively different and diverse vacation destinations and experiences. It has often been said that despite the vast size of China, vacationers will visit one city in China, decide that they have been to China and look for new destinations for their next vacation. Not so with the Caribbean. People around the world have come to understand that no one destination in the Caribbean represents all of the Caribbean and that one would need a lifetime of travel within the Caribbean to get a full flavour of the Caribbean. In fact, research shows that our new logo with its multiple colours and rhythmic line conjures up this notion of diversity within the minds of prospective visitors.

That is why any process, initiative or force that reduces the diversity of our destinations is the greatest threat to our long term future. Our individual cultural differences must be preserved and that should be a primary objective of all of the member governments of the Caribbean Tourism Organization. From this perspective, cultural preservation is not a "nice thing to do", it is now a matter of long term survival. Further, it has long been shown that warm weather vacationers are "destination collectors" and that the penchant for collecting is driven by a belief in the diversity of the destinations being collected. That is why one of the highest purposes of the Caribbean Tourism Organization has to be that of celebrating the individuality of our members while advancing and enhancing the reputation of the entire region within which we are all collected. To me, this should be at the heart of all discussions about sustainable development. It also reinforces our belief that sustainable development much be involved in all aspects of CTO's work and can no longer be seen as a niche activity.

A community is the vessel of a culture. In



Secretary General & CEO,
Vincent Vanderpool-Wallace

fact a dictionary definition of culture is: "the patterns, traits, and products considered as the expression of a particular community". If you agree with any of the foregoing, you must agree that our communities are the carriers of our culture and are therefore our lifeboats to the future.

So from the CTO perspective, one of the highest responsibilities of each member government of the Caribbean is the preservation of its local communities and its local culture. That is why any suggestion that there is a form or tourism that is NOT community tourism is a dangerous notion. All tourism in the Caribbean should be community tourism. It should be of, by, for and with the full consent and embrace of the community.

In fact, each government should establish mechanisms to ensure that ALL incoming workers at ALL levels receive proper and continuing indoctrination in the ways of local culture. The highest crime that we have committed thus far is the implicit suggestion that many incoming investors and work permit holders are free to bring not only their processes but also their cultures to supplant local cultures. That belief which has been reinforced by years of practice has been most debilitating and has led to a convergence of Caribbean cultures, Caribbean architecture and the

foods that are served to our visitors instead of maintaining our diversity.

If it has not been made clear before, we need to make it clear in future that we are importing efficient processes more that we are importing the content of expatriate cultures. We know that there has been much intentional and inadvertent complicity between locals in positions of responsibility and expatriates in positions of influence in eroding local cultures. We now have to work hard in the public interest to expose those who are ashamed of all aspects of their local culture or who so wish to receive the approbation of others that they seek to destroy it. We must work equally as hard to educate those who have been inattentive to this ongoing erosion. Of course there are aspects of our cultures that we wish to extirpate. But in order for the change to take full root, that has to be our decision.

I am sure that there are other examples in the Caribbean but a good place to start in search of a best practice might be the now defunct "BahamaHost for Incoming Workers". That program sought to educate incoming workers about The Bahamas and the culture of the Bahamian people. It went even farther in encouraging newcomers to choose an area in which to become a permanent part of the community and discouraged the commonly observed practice of expatriate workers spending their entire time in the cocoon of other expatriate workers. I do not know why it was discontinued.

The beauty of this recommendation is the high likelihood that it will be embraced by our governments. They are always in search of initiatives that demonstrate their commitment to "the small man" and to their communities even while they embrace the need for foreign investments, foreign investors and foreign workers. This recommendation suggest that rather than every community moving toward the cultures being brought in from the outside by these investors and workers, both would be required to move toward the middle. The foreign investors and workers will bring the capital and the "know how", local investors and workers will preserve and provide the content.

NGS Seeks to Develop Global Geo-tourism Partnership

*Brainstorming Group at Work
Global Geo-tourism Partnership Meeting National Geographic
Headquarters, Washington*

The CTO was among several international organizations invited to participate in the second scoping meeting held to discuss the formation of a Global Geo-tourism Partnership, which took place at the National Geographic Society's headquarters in Washington, DC on August 14. Organizations represented at this meeting included National Geographic Society (NGS), United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), United Nations Foundation, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), National Trust for Historic Preservation, The HTC Group, National Parks Service, World Monuments Fund, George Washington University, Sonoran Institute, International Finance Co-operation (IFC), International Ecotourism Society, Scott Wayne Associates, Counterpart International, Conservation International, US Forest Service, Scenic America, CKV Direct Marketing, Conservation Fund and Solimar International. Central to the activities of the meeting was a brainstorming session to examine the structure, role and funding for the Global Geo-tourism Partnership.

National Geographic (NG) defines geo-tourism as tourism that sustains enhances the geographic character of a place- its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents. The principles of geo-tourism are very explicit, as it identifies the requirements and/or activities necessary to sustain and enhance a place. NG sees geotourism as "sustainable tourism energized" however, some will question the need to resuscitate or energize something that has not been allowed to mature and take root in the development of tourism.

Principles of Geo-tourism

- Integrity of place
- International codes
- Market selectivity
- Market diversity
- Tourist satisfaction
- Community involvement
- Community benefit, protection and
- enhancement of destination appeal
- Land use
- Conservation of resources
- Planning
- Interactive interpretation
- Evaluation

For a more detailed description of each of these principles and more on geo-tourism visit www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/sustainable/

Some participants stressed the need for geo-tourism to be seen as an approach and not just another niche market. The brainstorming sessions proved to be a very useful exercise, highlighting some critical issues for consideration including the fact that research must be seen as the foundation of the proposed Partnership.

The use of the NG destination score-card as a destination evaluator and as a part of the geo-tourism initiative must



demonstrate how results of the survey are changing travel behaviour. Additionally, it must be determined if it is truly a credible source of travel information. Many cautioned that the development of the Partnership should not lead to the creation of another tourism certification programme. It was also suggested that countries signing the Charter (those adopting the principles of geo-tourism) should engage in self-policing. Some envisioned that donor support would be given to develop projects to assist those destinations that have signed the Charter, while others saw a virtual organization being created with a network of institutions that will assist those countries applying the geo-tourism principles.

The Partnership could be a worthy venture if truly internationalized- where affiliations with existing international organizations that promote sustainable tourism initiatives, facilitate donor support for research and other activities that promote sustainable tourism business models, can be strengthened.

Disaster Risk Management Course for Strategic Partners



Participants of the CDB/USAID OFDA Course on Disaster Risk Management at CDB Headquarters, Barbados

The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the United States Agency for International Development Office of Foreign Disaster (USAID OFDA) hosted a three-day pilot training course on Disaster Risk Management from August 29 -31, 2006 at the Bank's headquarters in Barbados. The course was organized against the backdrop of extensive damage caused by a number of natural hazards including hurricanes, flooding and volcanoes in the region, in recent times. Research indicates that the Caribbean is likely to be affected by a number of natural hazards which are predicted to occur in the region in increasing frequency and magnitude in the coming years. Coastal developments and climate change will also serve to place the Caribbean region at greater risk in the future.

The CTO was among the strategic partners represented at the introductory course, which included representatives from the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce (CAIC), the Department

Disaster Risk Management Course for Strategic Partner cont'd

for International Development (DFID), the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), the Caribbean Association of Indigenous Banks, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the Caribbean Council of Churches, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Caribbean Meteorological Organisation and representatives from National Disaster Coordinating Agencies and Planning Divisions from Dominica and the British Virgin Islands, respectively.

The CDB has hosted over 30 workshops since the 2000 commencement of the Disaster Mitigation Facility for the Caribbean project (www.caribank.org/Projects.nsf/DMFC?OpenPage). The pilot training programme's intent was to offer a "train the trainer" type programme that would allow strategic partners to be introduced to the basic principles of disaster risk management and enhance the general awareness and understanding of disaster risk in general.

According to Dr. Cassandra Rogers, Consultant Project Manager at the Disaster Mitigation Facility for the Caribbean at the CDB, the bank will use the workshops as inputs in to the bank's process of charting a way forward. Dr. Rogers indicated that the CDB will establish disaster risk management as a permanent function of the organization and this will be reflected in the institution's 2007 work programme.

The Caribbean Identity and Community Tourism cont'd

Finally, it is most important that we do not create any confusion between good and proper marketing principles and the need to ensure that local cultures are preserved. I have always believe that "my culture is for me" not for the visitor and the visitor has no obligation to embrace all aspects of my culture with the same fervour of my embrace. Besides, good marketing requires us to "anticipate and provide for the needs of our visitors". But visitors coming into a new area cannot indicate a need for an experience to which they have never been exposed. That is why the second part of good marketing requires us to also " ... provide for those experiences that we anticipate they might like in order for them to judge whether they like it or not". It is through this second effort that we bring our cultures to the forefront and deliver on many of the reasons that people travel to new areas and new cultures in the first place.

Up-coming CTO Events

CTC-29: Oct. 22 - 25, 2006
Grand Bahama, The Bahamas
Visit www.onecaribbean.org to download your registration form

Community Based Tourism Training
November 6-10, 2006
Trinidad

We Welcome Your Feedback

We welcome you feedback on the activities of the ST Division and would appreciate receiving your suggestions on how Keep Sake can be improved. Please send your questions, suggestions or comments to Mareba Scott, Sustainable Tourism Product Specialist at msscott@caribotourism.com

About CTO

The Caribbean Tourism Organization, with headquarters in Barbados and marketing operations in New York, London and Toronto, is the Caribbean's tourism development agency and comprises over 30 member governments and a myriad of private sector entities.

The CTO's mission is to provide to and through its members, the services and information needed for the development of sustainable tourism for the economic and social benefit of the Caribbean people. The organization provides specialized support and technical assistance to member countries in the areas of marketing, human resource development, research and statistics, information technology and sustainable tourism development. The CTO disseminates information on behalf of its member governments to consumers and the travel trade.

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