Dear Tourism Colleague,

The Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) looks forward with great anticipation to the continued recovery and resurgence of Caribbean Tourism, noting the strides being made by the international medical community and efforts by regional governments in developing relevant protocols and response strategies. This August edition of the Sustainable Tourism Roundup features information and updates relevant to sustainable tourism product development and various resources to support your ongoing efforts and initiatives in response to COVID-19. You are encouraged to take action where appropriate and to disseminate this information widely for the benefit of all tourism stakeholders.

SPECIAL FEATURE:

Climate Smart Action

Climate variability and change hampers the region’s ability to sustain the unique biodiversity and other natural and cultural assets that complement the tourism product and give the region its competitive advantage.
REGIONAL & INTERNATIONAL PARTNER INITIATIVES

CARPHA Situation Report No. 182
Report by the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA)

Situation Report No. 182 on the Coronavirus Pandemic in the Caribbean as at August 9, published by the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) can be downloaded using this link: Situation Report No. 182 – August 9, 2021

CARPHA in its role as the regional public health agency for the Caribbean has produced various information resources and tools. Please visit the CARPHA website for updates and toolkits including Technical Guidance Documents, Prevention Measures and Travel Advisories, via the following website: https://carpha.org/What-We-Do/Public-Health/Novel-Coronavirus

Caribbean Drought Bulletin
Caribbean Drought & Precipitation Monitoring Network (CDPMN)

CARIBBEAN DROUGHT BULLETIN
August 2021 | Volume VIII | ISSUE 2

Please see the latest drought outlook from the Caribbean Institute for Metrology and Hydrology (CIMH) covering the 3-month period, April-June 2021. We encourage you to pay keen attention/take the appropriate actions if and where necessary. Click HERE to access the latest drought bulletin.

Caribbean Climate Outlook Newsletter

The CariCOF Climate Outlook for August to October 2021 is now available online on the Caribbean Regional Climate Centre’s website and can be accessed here.

The latest climate outlook products include the Temperature and Precipitation Outlook Maps, the Drought Outlook, the Wet Days & Wet Spells Outlook, the Experimental Dry Spell Outlook, and The Caribbean Climate Outlook Newsletter (PDF download of the Newsletter here).

Summary for the upcoming 3-month period, August to October 2021: The peak of the wet/heat/hurricane season is forecast to bring an increase in wet days and wet spells, heatwaves and tropical cyclone activity in Belize and the Caribbean Islands. This results in frequent disruptions of outdoor activities and rising water levels in soils, rivers and reservoirs. However, the potential for flash floods, long-term flooding and cascading impacts, as well as, for heat stress will be high to extremely high. Heat stress will peak during heat waves of which several can occur anywhere throughout the period. The Guianas enter the dry season, which will help the flood waters to recede in areas still affected. Yet, higher than usual numbers of wet spells will lead to slow improvements

Sargassum Outlook – July 2021
University of South Florida Optical Oceanography Lab

Attached is the Sargassum Outlook for July 2021. Overall, the total Sargassum amount decreased from June, but still remained high for many regions. The Great Bahamas also experienced large amounts due to the northwest transport of Sargassum from the central West Atlantic.
In this issue we will feature one of the key critical regional sustainability issues related to “Climate Smart Action”.

The region’s weather and climate are pull factors for visitors and a necessary part of the lifestyle and livelihoods of the Caribbean’s society. Climate variability and change (CVC), however, have had significant and increasing negative consequences within the region over the past ten (10) years. Not only have weather and climate-related events dominated natural hazard occurrences in the Caribbean, but they have also been associated with more economic damage and loss cumulatively than other types of hazards.

**Key Issue: Wide-Ranging Consequences of Climate Variability and Change**

The implementation of measures to adapt to and mitigate climate variability and change (CVC) must continue to address impacts such as:

- Greater intensity of hurricanes (i.e. category 3-5 hurricanes) and increased amounts of rainfall from hurricanes
- Sea level rise
- Saltwater intrusion into freshwater aquifers
- Temperature changes
- Increased sea surface temperatures
- Changing rainfall pattern
- Negative Economic Impact
- Energy Production & Innovation

The goal of the Climate Smart Actions is to reduce the vulnerability of Caribbean tourism to the potential impacts of Climate Variability and Change. Towards achievement of this goal and addressing the associated issues and considerations as a result of CVC there are four (4) broad areas for policy action by CTO member countries. See box below.

Information on Climate Smart Action is included in the CTO’s Caribbean Sustainable Tourism Policy and Development Framework: Chapter 7: Policy & Development Framework for Climate Smart Action

http://ourtourism.onecaribbean.org/resources
Dealing with Difficult Customers

By Tourism & More, Inc.

In the northern hemisphere, the month of August is often called the “dog days” of summer. The name derives from the fact that it is often too hot for even a dog to want to wander along the streets. The end of the summer traditionally has also been high tourist season in much of the world. The tourism industry is hoping that after the major economic declines of the past year that 2021 will be a time of recovery. If the vaccines work then 2021 might be a time when planes and hotels are full, and visitors’ nerves are often frayed. This is the month when things, often beyond the tourist professional’s control, often seem to go wrong. For example, much of the world experiences all sorts of thunderstorms or other weather-related travel delays. These result in angry visitors and the need to rework all sorts of travel schedules.

August is a good month to review what makes our customers upset, how to keep tempers from flaring, and how to maintain control over often uncontrollable situations, such as weather-related delays. With the tourism season in high gear, take the opportunity to test your skills at turning difficult situations into successes and learning how to lessen anger and increase product and customer satisfaction. To help you survive this difficult period in tourism, consider the following:

- Remember that, in the world of tourism, there is always the potential for conflict and customer dissatisfaction. No matter what you do, there will always be those who want more or are not pleased with what you do. Visitors are paying a great deal for their vacation and want to feel in control, even in situations where no one has any control. Develop scenarios in which the customer has some sense of control no matter how slight. For example, instead of merely saying that something cannot be done/accomplished, try to phrase the response as a potential alternative. When offering these alternatives, make sure that front line personnel always remain alert and demonstrate patience. Often, a tourism crisis can be eliminated not by solving the entire crisis, but by allowing the customer to feel that he or she has won at least a small victory.

- Know your legal, emotional and professional limitations. There are many reasons that people travel, some for pleasure, some for business, and some for social status. For those in the latter group, it is important that tourism professionals understand the power of social standing. These are people who tend not to want to hear excuses. They are fast to anger and slow to forgive. In dealing with them, know what angers you and when you have reached your limits. Be wise enough to recognize when trouble is brewing and that help will be needed.

- Be in control of yourself. Tourism is an industry that challenges our own sense of self-worth. The public can be both demanding and at times unfair. Often, events occur that are simply out of our control. It is during these times that it is essential to control one’s internal fears and emotions. If your words express one idea and your body language states another, you will soon lose credibility.

- Tourism requires multi-dimensional thinkers. Tourism demands that we learn how to juggle a number of unrelated demands and needs at the same time. It is essential that tourism professionals train themselves in the art of information manipulation, event management, and personalities coping. During the difficult periods, front line people need to be able to juggle all three skills at the same time.

- Successful tourism centers deliver what they promise. Tourism often suffers from over-marketing and promises of more than it can deliver. Never sell a product that your community/attraction does not offer. A sustainable tourism product starts with honest marketing.

- Successful tourism leaders know when to question their instincts. Instincts can often be a major help, especially in time of crisis. Depending only on instincts, however, can lead to a crisis. Combine instinctive knowledge with hard data. Then before making a decision, organize both sets of data in a logical fashion. Our instincts can provide those rare moments of brilliance, but in most cases use base your decisions on hard data and good research.
Successful tourism businesses work at taming a difficult situation rather than dominating it. Tourism specialists have long realized confrontations are usually lose-lose situations. Real success comes in knowing how to avoid a confrontation. During moments of anger, be prepared to think on your feet. One way to learn the art of thinking on one’s feet is by developing conflict scenarios and training for them. The better trained our tourism and front line personnel are, the better they become at crisis management and making good decisions.

Be cognizant of an ever-changing environment and know how to seek opportunities from difficult or unstable moments. If you find yourself in a confrontation, make sure that you handle it without bruising your customer’s ego. Challenge your attacker in a way that permits the upset customer to see his/her mistake without losing face. Remember that a crisis is composed of both a danger and an opportunity. Seek out the opportunity in every tourism business crisis.

- Try to make an angry customer part of your team. When trying to win over an angry customer, be sure to maintain good visual contact and be positive in both the words that you use and the tone of speech employed. Let the customer vent first and only speak after the venting stage has been completed. Allowing the customer to vent, no matter how unfair his or her words may be, is a good way to demonstrate that you respect him/her even if you disagree.

- Remember that you need the customer more than he/she needs you. As unfair as it may be, tourism is a customer-driven industry. Tourism is not about equality, rather it is about service and doing for others. Tourism naturally has a hierarchy and those agencies that take this social hierarchy into account tend to be the most successful.

The goal of "Tourism Tidbits" is to provide travel professionals with a monthly, easy-to-read overview of creative ideas. For more information, please contact Dr. Peter Tarlow at ptarlow@tourismandmore.com or visit www.tourismandmore.com

Compliments,

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