Dear Tourism Colleague,

Welcome to the February edition of the Sustainable Tourism Roundup for 2022. This edition features upcoming education and training events, as well as information and updates from CTO and its tourism development partners relevant to sustainable tourism product development that you will find informative. You are encouraged to take action where appropriate and to disseminate this information widely, for the benefit of all tourism stakeholders.

Wishing you a safe and healthy 2022!

CTO INITIATIVES

YOUR'RE INVITED

Sustainable Tourism Technical Committee Meeting

WEDNESDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2022
10:00 AM (AST)

Virtual Meeting
Link will be provided via email.
Exploring Sustainable Tourism Development Options
As part of our efforts to provide our member countries with information to assist with their tourism planning, the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) will be hosting a virtual seminar titled “Exploring Sustainable Tourism Development Options” on March 3, 2022, at 11:00 am (AST). This is equivalent to 10:00 am in The Bahamas, Cayman Islands, Haiti, Jamaica and the Turks & Caicos Islands; and 9:00 am in Belize. Registration can be completed at the following link: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/ WN_z0tvKMlESdigVVuzBhaRsw

Packaging Tourism Products for Diverse Caribbean Experiences
Recognizing the importance of niche tourism development to diversifying the Caribbean tourism product offering, the CTO will be hosting a virtual seminar titled “Packaging Tourism Products for Diverse Caribbean Experiences” on March 15, 2022, at 11:00 am (AST). This is equivalent to 10:00 am in the Cayman Islands, and Jamaica; and 9:00 am in Belize. During this session, we will examine how Caribbean destinations can package their tourism products – and elements of their tourism products – in various ways to create various experiences and to appeal to different niche markets. Registration can be completed at the following link: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_VmXpKkmOT76VILWHqZ11iA
REGионаl &际national Partner Initiatives

CARPHA Situation Report No. 215
Report by the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA)


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

Please see the latest drought outlook from the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH) covering the 3-month period, October-December 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 February to April 2022 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 period February to April 2022: A persistent La Nina pattern is expected to continue during the core of the dry season, which should drive increasing dry spells across the northwest section of the region in addition to the ABC islands and Belize where seasonal rainfall is expected to be the usual or drier. A higher frequency of wet days and wet spells is forecast for the eastern Caribbean where rainfall is expected to be at least as wet as or wetter than the usual, which should taper the chances of wildfire and promote water reservoir capacity. Extreme wet spells for the region are not expected to feature prominently during the upcoming season.

Sargassum Sub-Regional Outlook Bulletin

This Sub-regional Outlook Bulletin details how the region will be affected by Sargassum for the period January – March 2022. Please use this link to download the bulletin: Sargassum Sub-regional Outlook Bulletin: VOL 2 | ISSUE 2 (mailchi.mp)
The 2020 Caribbean Sustainable Tourism Policy and Development Framework (CSTPDF 2020), is an update to the previous Caribbean Sustainable Tourism Policy Framework (CSTPF) published in 2008. It is designed to support the development and use of sustainable tourism related policies, strategies and practices in CTO member countries in the Caribbean.

Vision:
The vision for sustainable tourism development in the Caribbean is guided by the consensus of regional stakeholders, and defined in the policy and development framework as: “Caribbean Tourism that is sustainable, viable, of high quality, climate smart, resilient, and promotes empowerment and inclusiveness.”

Guiding Principles:
The CSTPDF 2020 outlines twelve (12) guiding principles that are intrinsic to the application of the integrated policies and their corresponding interventions and best practices. These guiding principles are, therefore, the underlying precepts for all decision-making and actions in the development and application of the sustainable tourism policies and interventions adopted.

The twelve (12) value propositions or guiding principles convey CTO current requirements for sustainable development to 2030 and are aligned to the broader international development agenda purported by UNWTO. In this context, the CSTPDF recognises the need for all policies and development initiatives to address and mainstream climate change, disaster resiliency, gender equity considerations and public-private partnerships. The values and principles continue to further define sustainable tourism, its interaction with communities and the environment, and the underlying importance of social inclusion with a process which includes engaging local community participation. Most importantly, the values and principles stress that sustainable tourism guidelines and management practices are applicable to all forms of tourism, across all tourism sub-sectors and market segments, in all types of destinations in the Caribbean.
The range of regional priority areas for sustainable tourism development was integrated accordingly under seven (7) broad policies. Each integrated policy is further linked to a respective goal to be achieved to fulfil the policy. These policies and goals are indicated in the figure “CSTPDF 2020 Integrated Policies & Development Goals”.

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<tr>
<th>POLICY</th>
<th>DEVELOPMENT GOAL</th>
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<td>1. Destination Management Capacity</td>
<td>To ensure adequate and appropriate national and regional capacity to manage the development, growth and sustainability of tourism</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Destination Access, and Transportation</td>
<td>To develop energy efficient and cost-effective transportation options to facilitate a sustainable level of destination accessibility, greenhouse gas reduction and climate change adaptation and mitigation</td>
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<td>3. Destination Marketing, PR and Product Development</td>
<td>To continuously improve the sustainability of the marketing mix and the enhancement, diversity and quality of tourism products</td>
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<td>4. Linkages and Value Chain Management</td>
<td>To develop and strengthen local linkages between tourism and other economic sectors to maximise the multiplier effect, ensure inclusiveness and reduce leakages</td>
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<td>5. Resource Use and Management</td>
<td>To ensure the sustainable use of the natural environment and the cultural heritage for the benefit of all</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Climate Smart Action</td>
<td>To reduce the vulnerability of Caribbean tourism to the potential impacts of climate variability and change</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Risk Resilience</td>
<td>To manage the health, safety, security and disaster risk issues that impact the sustainability of tourism</td>
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This feature was taken from:
Executive Summary of the CTO’s Caribbean Sustainable Tourism Policy and Development Framework
http://ourtourism.onecaribbean.org/resources
Looking Back at 2021 and Hoping for a Better 2022

By Tourism & More, Inc.

Although 2021 was a somewhat better year than 2020, most people in the tourism industry will not be sad to say adieu to the year that has just ended. We might call the year 2021 a year of hope and despair, a year when we thought we might see an end to the pandemic and a year of false starts. This past year was not an easy year. We saw nations once again shutting their borders, Europe experienced a great deal of internal turmoil due to its being open and then closed to tourism. To add to the frustrations found throughout the tourism industry many nations suffered from supply chain failures, high inflation, and a continued decline in customer service. Crime and terrorism were also a problem, especially in some Western nations. For many people the new travel restriction that came with the Omicron variant of Covid-19 were the final straw. New restrictions, like mushrooms, seem to pop up almost overnight.

From major tourism destinations to rural areas, the travel and tourism industry has become aware that the Covid-19 pandemic is still very much with us and that the travel and tourism industry will have to adjust to new and unique challenges if it is to survive. As the world’s economies face new challenges, from high inflation to lack of employees tourism leaders are having to rethink their assumptions and world views. It seems hard to believe that only a few short years ago tourism leaders believed that during this new decade no industry, nation, or economy would be an island unto itself. International tourism was on the rise and many locales, such as Barcelona, Spain, Venice, Italy, or the United States national park system faced was then called “over-tourism”. Then, almost in the blink of an eye, the world of tourism changed, and the fear of over-tourism became the fight for tourism survival. How the travel & tourism industry adapts to these new economic and environment shifts will impact the world’s economy for decades to come.

Two years into the pandemic it has become clear that tourism has no easy solutions. Airplanes might be full one day only to become empty the next, hotels and other places of lodging must now compete for the business traveler with on-line meetings. Furthermore it is not clear how the Covid-19 virus might mutate and what new challenges both tourism officials and public health experts might have to face in 2022.

To help you determine your own strategy Tourism & More presents the following ideas and possible future trends although emphasizing that we live in a highly fluid situation and what might appear logical today might be invalid tomorrow.

-In a world beset by high costs, daily regulation changes, and poor service freebees are more important than ever. Even when people are feeling good about their economic situation travelers still love to receive something for nothing, even if they have to pay for it! In these challenging times, a welcome drink or cookie, a small gift or souvenir can turn a simple experience into a memorable one. Combine basic costs into the cost of an admission ticket or a free night’s stay. If hospitality is based on the idea of being taken care of and pampered than charging for extras may be a poor strategy. Avoid extra sur-charges. In the new world of travel, personal service is essential.
Be appreciative! All too often tourism businesses act as if they are doing the customers a favor. This is the time to develop creative ways to show appreciation. For example, locales may want to develop "welcome passports" to be used at restaurants and hotels where visitors are provided with a free "extra" as a way of showing appreciation. Showing appreciation is especially important in an era where long-haul travel may decline. Tourism businesses will become dependent on local, short-haul and regional travel if they are to survive during the initial recover phases. Follow-up letters may also be sent in which the local tourism industry thanks people for visiting. The letters can even be e-letters and used as a way to encourage visitors to return for another visit.

Smiles cost nothing. The travel and tourism industry might have to cut back on products offered or raise prices, but a smile is a commodity that never runs out and costs the industry nothing. Having employees with dower looks on their faces is the last thing that the travel and tourism industry needs.

Be realistic. That means keep up with the news, follow guidelines and use common sense. In these trying times it is all too easy to become despondent. Face the world with realistic optimism. Have confidence in yourself and your industry and be prepared to find creative solutions to whatever problems 2022 might have in store for all of us. Tourism professionals will have to face reality, begin to prioritize problems, and seek solutions one at a time. Be dignified and honest with both employees and customers. The worst thing to do is to lose credibility.

Inflation means additional travel costs! In a world where prices rise faster than wages visitors and travelers will be seeking ways to economize. Travelers and tourists do not see each part of their tourism experience (hotel, transportation, food, attractions) as separate experiences but rather as a unified experience. The tourism industry needs to do the same. Each of tourism’s components needs to work with the other sectors of the industry to find ways to increase the quality of the tourism experience despite higher prices. If visitors do not see the total experience as worthwhile, then all of the tourism industry’s components will suffer.

Think local especially in these times of high fuel costs! Consider expanding your market by finding more visitors closer to home. This solution will help not only the local hotel industry, but also permit retailers to weather the storm by adding to the community’s economy as tourism revenues from outside of the local region begin to fall. Buying and featuring local products adds a unique quality to the travel experience. In areas where there are geographic limitations, such as many island destinations, develop creative pricing, along with creative airport hospitality.

Surveys and asking people to fill out on-line recommendations can become counter productive! Many frequent travelers are over-surveyed and see right through surveys that are designed to avoid negative feedback. Surveys have become so common in tourism that they have become not only meaningless but a new annoyance. The best surveys are oral survey where the tourism business not only listens but acts.

Get to know your product again! Tourism professionals need to rethink what they are selling! Ask yourself: Are we selling experiences, leisure, rest, or history? Are we selling basic transportation or the travel experience? How does our business fit into the total travel experience in this post-Covid-19 world? Do our past marketing efforts reflect current realities?

The last impression is often the lasting impression, so consider being creative when people leave a destination. For example, hotels can give a restaurant coupon to departing guests, passport controls can hand out a come-back soon brochure or gas stations can offer a free cup of coffee-for-the-road. The cost of the item is a lot less important than the memory and positive word of mouth advertising that it will create.
Compliments,

Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO)
Resource Mobilization and Development Department

SHARON BANFIELD-BOVELL
DIRECTOR OF RESOURCE MOBILIZATION & DEVELOPMENT
BANFIELDS@CARIBTOURISM.COM

AMANDA CHARLES
SUSTAINABLE TOURISM SPECIALIST
ACHARLES@CARIBTOURISM.COM

MARVELLE SEALY
PROGRAMME ASSISTANT
MSEALY@CARIBTOURISM.COM