

**ASSOCIATION OF CARIBBEAN STATES (ACS)
DIRECTORATE OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM**

**WORKSHOP ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM INDICATORS IN THE GREATER
CARIBBEAN**

Panama, November 13, 2015

REPORT

OPENING

The Workshop was opened by **Mr. Julio Orozco Perez**, Director of Sustainable Tourism of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), who extended greetings on behalf of the ACS Secretary General indicating the importance of this dialogue to explore closer alignment of initiatives related to the sustainable managements of tourism destinations, as the ACS seeks to advance with its pioneering initiative of the Sustainable Tourism Zone of the Greater Caribbean (STZC).

Mr. Juan Portugal, Head of Community Tourism of the Panama Tourism Authority extended a warm welcome to Panama, indicating it was a pleasure to host and made mention of the importance of the days' discussion to contribute to more effective use and management of our countries fragile resources and the environment.

Mr. Juan Pablo Nieto, Head of Product Development, Guatemala Tourism Board and Representative in the capacity as Chairman of the ACS Special Committee on Sustainable Tourism, offered greetings on behalf of the Minister of Tourism of the Republic of Guatemala, reiterating the importance of the STZC as a tool for the preservation of our natural and cultural patrimonies to contribute to social and economic development of our countries and the region. He made mention of the participation of Guatemala in the current STZC phase.

This was followed with introductions and remarks by the workshop participants who thanked the ACS for organising the meeting and the Panama Tourism Authority of the Republic of Panama for the excellent arrangements in hosting. There was general consensus that the workshop was an opportunity to learning of ongoing sustainable tourism and destination management initiatives, considering that the sustainable management of destinations remains one of the most critical aspects of tourism development. The List of Participants is attached as **Annex A**.

**SESSION 1: THE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM ZONE OF THE GREATER CARIBBEAN
(STZC)**

**Presentation - The STZC: A Legal Framework for the sustainable management
and future certification of tourism destinations in the Greater Caribbean**

Director Orozco delivered a presentation on the historical evolution and process to develop the STZC Convention and establish the legal framework. He also gave an overview of the phases to develop and pilot the implementation of the indicators and informed of next steps envisaged by the ACS to include development of a certification component to enhance and add value to the STZC. This presentation is attached as **Annex B**.

WORKSHOP ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM INDICATORS IN THE GREATER CARIBBEAN

SESSION 2: THE STZC SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS AND PROCESS

Presentation - The STZC Regional Cooperation Mechanism Project and introduction to the Online Calculator and E-Toolkit

Mrs. Jenny Reyes, Communications Specialist with MC Consultant, the consulting firm hired for implementation of the Regional Co-operation Mechanism of the STZC project, delivered a presentation via Skype, on progress made with implementation of the project. She also gave a demonstration and overview of the features and functions of the STZC website, indicating that the website will be completed and officially launched for the general public in the coming weeks.

As it relates to the feedback from the participants, the Representative of Guatemala, Mr. Juan Pablo Nieto requested clarification of the terms of indicators related to the commercial sexual exploitation of children adding that this exploitation as a whole was an issue for that country. **Mrs. Daisy Trujillo**, Head of International Technical Cooperation of the Panama Tourism Authority voiced support for the intervention by Guatemala. She further indicated that Panama would like to propose two destinations, Porto Bello a port city in Central Panama and Boca del Toro in the Caribbean coast. She informed that formal communication would shortly be sent to the ACS. She also shared that there are challenges and weaknesses in data collection and suggested that the ACS and other organisations present devise ways to help countries create more consistent, reliable and accurate methods for data collection.

The representative of Colombia, **Mary Amalia Vásquez**, Director of Quality and Sustainable Development of Tourism offered congratulations indicating the website seemed user-friendly and simple to use. She also inquired of progress made with the implementation of the indicators with the five pilot countries the team of consultants were currently working with. She made mention of the need for training on how to use the website and the availability of a demo in order that countries can become familiar with the platform.

Mrs. Jenny Reyes in her response mentioned that the intention with this project was to create a regional co-operation mechanism to support the actualisation of the STZC. The website was consequently designed to facilitate this process and would enable networking and exchanges among the participation destinations in ACS member countries. She indicated that the first step in this project entailed a study to identify the needs, weaknesses and come up with strategies, training methodologies, tools and templates related to data gathering, management and reporting in relation to the STZC.

Ms. Kathleen Pessolano, Destinations Program Director, Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) made the recommendation that countries be encouraged to collect the required data, reports and statistics and store on a shared drive so that it is readily available to substantiate self-evaluations.

Mr. Juan Pablo Nieto observed that the self-evaluation will be the baseline for compliance with the standards and agreed that countries needed to include all evidence that will prove compliance with the indicators, whether STZC or other, to support verification.

WORKSHOP ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM INDICATORS IN THE GREATER CARIBBEAN

Mr. Juan Portugal, of the Panama Tourism Authority made the recommendation to include prevention, mitigation and adaptation to the topic on climate change in relation to the STZC indicators, which was noted.

Mr. Ely Barillas, Cooperation coordinator at the Ministry of Tourism of El Salvador and representative of the Central American Tourism Integration Secretariat (SITCA) inquired as to the participation of El Salvador in the STZC project. **Director Orozco** in his response indicated that unfortunately, there has not been any response from El Salvador to the communications sent and in that regard, the ACS is committed to follow-up with the countries. He also mentioned that the turnover of professional staff at the ACS as well as in the countries of the region with changes in government and priorities over the past decade make it difficult for all countries to participate in the same manner. He asked for his support to integrate El Salvador in efforts related to the STZC.

Presentation - The process to develop and implement the STZC Indicators

Dr. Donovan Campbell, Director of South-South Partnerships, Caribbean Partnership provided information on the background to develop the indicators, outlining the core objective. He outlined the multi-dimensional nature of the indicators developed for the STZC, highlighting that the indicators were relevant and applicable across countries. He also gave insight into the challenges organisations face with developing indicators and with obtaining as well as maintaining credibility. He continued that the added value was the calculator tool developed that allows having quantitative indicators to evaluate and measure sustainability in numerical terms.

SESSION 3: THE GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE TOURISM CRITERIA (GSTC)

Presentation - The GSTC Indicators and Process

Ms. Kathleen Pessolano, Destinations Program Director, Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) presented on the work of the Council and progress to date related to implementation of the GSTC indicators for destinations and hotel and tour operators. She informed that the standards are qualitative and indicate what is required at the policy level for sustainability. She reviewed the GSTC evaluation process which entails a 3 day assessment on site and reviewing select policy documents, mapping stakeholders and documents, and concludes with a workshop and focus group meeting. Following this the destination is provided with preliminary guidance on the status of the destination based on the criteria and recommendations for how they can improve. Please refer to presentation notated as **Annex C**.

Pursuant to her presentation **Ms. Pessolano** suggested to continue having these dialogues and incorporate destinations in the discussion which would afford countries the opportunity to come together and share the experiences, best practises and substantive learnings from each destination. She further recommended that the next meeting could possibly be held on the margins of an annual Tourism Industry conference or summit.

Director Orozco agreed to this suggestion and indicated that this was one of the intentions as it relates to future meetings, in order to continue dialogue with the aim of

WORKSHOP ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM INDICATORS IN THE GREATER CARIBBEAN

concretising partnerships.

The Representative of Guatemala, **Mr. Juan Pablo Nieto** informed that the master plan of Guatemala was based on the GSTC indicators and proposed that in the next meeting of the ACS Special Committee on Sustainable Tourism, to be able to continue having this type of dialogues with the organisations working in the region and with other countries. This recommendation was duly noted.

SESSION 4: DESTINATION EVALUATION AND CERTIFICATION-BEST PRACTISE OF COLOMBIA: THE HISTORIC CENTRE OF CARTAGENA DE INDIAS

Mrs. Mary Amalia Vásquez, Director of Quality and Sustainable Development of Tourism delivered a presentation on the experience of Colombia to develop and implement a Sustainable Tourism Certification Programme for the city of Cartagena de Indias, Colombia. She shared best practices, challenges and lessons learnt.

She explained that this first phase was funded and supported by the Cartagena Tourism Corporation. The follow-up audit would be the responsibility of the destination itself and that these details were in the process of being finalised. Please refer to presentation notated as **Annex D**.

DISCUSSION FORUM: TOWARDS HARMONISATION OF DESTINATION MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES

Comparative Analysis of the Sustainable Tourism Indicators of the STZC, GSTC and the Sustainable Destination Alliance of the Americas (SDAA)

Ms. Amanda Charles, Sustainable Tourism Adviser of the ACS presented an adaptation of analysis conducted by Sustainable Travel International (STI). This entailed a brief introduction to the three initiatives, comparison of the indicators for complementarities and gaps, key findings and recommendations for the way forward towards harmonisation and collaboration among the three initiatives. Please refer to presentation notated as **Annex E**.

Following this presentation discussion ensured to explore follow-up actions and possible next steps to enhance co-operation closer alignment of the Destination Management initiatives in the Region.

Director Orozco emphasising the importance to collaborate and present a common front, suggested that the various organisations with destination management initiatives can mutually endorse each other initiatives, which would aid in sending a strong message to the countries of the region and the international community.

Ms. Kathleen Pessolano of the GSTC, voiced agreement to this approach and explained that this was the core purpose and mission for the creation of the GSTC to reduce confusion in the market place and come to a common understanding and framework of sustainability in the tourism industry.

Mrs. Sharon Banfield-Bovell, CTO Regional Human Resource Development

WORKSHOP ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM INDICATORS IN THE GREATER CARIBBEAN

Consultant, commented that it was important to consider how to differentiate and package the various initiatives and communicate to the countries, so they are aware that there are options, from the point of national, regional and global initiatives. **Dr. Lorraine Nicholas**, Tourism Specialist, OECS Secretariat agreed with this suggestion, adding indicating that her organisation was willing to assist the harmonisation process by performing an Advisory role, and give direction, support and advice to its member countries.

The representative of Guatemala, **Mr. Juan Pablo Nieto** expressed the interest and commitment of his country to the topic of sustainability indicating that Guatemala's Tourism Master Plan was based on the GSTC and additionally is participating in the STZC initiative. Adding that it would be up to countries to decide which approach would best fit with its national priorities and objectives. **Director Orozco** agreed adding that it was important to recognise countries choices and individual efforts.

The representative of Colombia **Mrs. Mary Amalia Vásquez** suggested that the initiatives remain voluntary where the country decides whether or not it wants to be part of any other initiative.

Director Orozco presented the topic of the group of experts as required by the STZC Convention as part of the Evaluation Process, requesting feedback from the countries present. **Mr. Juan Pablo Nieto** of Guatemala recommended that the Experts Pool be pre-selected by the ACS and proposed to the countries, which would have the responsibility to choose the consultant based on their individual needs. **Mr. Ely Barillas**, Coordinator for Cooperation, Ministry of Tourism of El Salvador and representative of SITCA, seconded this proposal and indicated that SITCA is in a position to support the process to generate and validate a pool of regional experts.

Director Orozco thanked the workshop participants for their input and constructive feedback, indicating he wanted to have a follow-up meeting next year. **Mr. Juan Pablo Nieto** of Guatemala voiced his assent and recommended including in the dialogue, the Central America Integrated System for Quality and Sustainability (*Systema Integrado Centro-Americano de Calidad y Sostenibilidad*). The representative of -SITCA **Mr. Ely Barillas**, was requested to convey this message. It was proposed to establish a working group to continue working on the topic of harmonization and come to agreement on the way forward.

ACTIONS FOR FUTURE COLLABORATION

- The participants agreed to be part a working group to advance the topic of harmonization of destination management initiatives. On this matter, the participants agreed that the harmonization process must respect and be consequent with all individual efforts made by each country in order to certify sustainable tourist destinations as is the case of Colombia.
- It was agreed that the ACS would seek to convene another in-person meeting for next year, and in the interim would co-ordinate the efforts of the working group via online technologies.
- The CTO representative proposed to explore joining efforts to host on the margins of the Annual Sustainable Tourism Conference of the CTO, planned for next year.

WORKSHOP ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM INDICATORS IN THE GREATER CARIBBEAN

DATE AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETING

Director Orozco suggested that the next meeting of the partners can be online indicating that the ACS would facilitate via WebEx. It was agreed that a possible date for this next meeting was **February 4th, 2015**.

CLOSING REMARKS

Mr. Juan Portugal of the Panama Tourism Authority offered commendations to Director Orozco for the very effective handling of the meeting and to the workshop participants on the successful outcomes.

The representative of SITCA **Mr. Ely Barillas** expressed his thanks to the Panama Tourism Authority and the ACS indicating he was grateful for this opportunity, and found the exchanges very beneficial and productive. **Mrs. Elsa Judith Santizo Juarez De Rodriguez**, of the Guatemala Tourism Board shared these sentiments, adding that she found the presentations and proceedings very informative, and indeed it was up to the individual countries to take management of their own sustainability efforts.

Ms. Kathleen Pessolano of the GSTC adding her thanks to the ACS and the Panama Tourism Authority reiterated that there is this bombardment on countries and therefore need for a bigger picture message. She highlighted the best practise of Colombia and indicated it was important to find ways to promote and validate this pioneering effort on their part.

Mrs. Daisy Trujillo on behalf of the Panama Tourism Authority offered her commendations to the ACS and to the workshop participants for a very successful meeting indicating that it was Panama's pleasure to host, extending her best wishes for a safe return journey to their respective countries, adding that she looked forward to welcoming everyone in Panama again soon on their next visit.

Director Orozco thanked Daisy and the other members of the team at the Panama Tourism Authority for their support and excellent coordination efforts. He also applauded the workshop participants for fruitful discussions indicating that he looked forward to continue working with them on those and other topics to contribute to the sustainable development of tourism in the Greater Caribbean Region.

LIST OF ANNEXES	
Annex A:	List of Participants
Annex B:	Presentation on the ACS Sustainable Tourism Zone of the Greater Caribbean
Annex C:	Presentation on the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC)
Annex D:	Presentation on the Destination Evaluation and Certification - Best Practise of Colombia: The Historic Centre of Cartagena de Indias
Annex E:	Presentation on the Comparative Analysis of the Sustainable Tourism Indicators of the STZC, GSTC and the Sustainable Destination Alliance of the Americas (SDAA)

WORKSHOP ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM INDICATORS IN THE GREATER CARIBBEAN

ANNEX A / ANEXO A / ANNEXE A

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS / LISTA DE PARTICIPANTES / LISTES DE PARTICIPANTS

CHAIRMAN OF THE SCST/PRESIDENTE DEL CETS/PRESIDENT DU CSTD		
Sr. Juan Pablo Nieto Jefe Division Desarrollo Del Producto, Instituto Guatemalteco De Turismo (INGUAT)	7ma Avenida 1-17 Zona 4, Centro Civico Guatemala, Guatemala T: (502) 2421-2800	jnieto@inguat.gob.gt ; cc: macevedo@inguat.gob.gt
COLOMBIA		
Sra. Mary Amalia Vásquez Directora de Calidad y Desarrollo Sostenible del Turismo, Ministerio de Comercio, Industria y Turismo de Colombia	Calle 28 # 13a-15, Bogotá, Colombia T: (571) 606 7676 ext. 2415	mvasquez@mincit.gov.co ; egiraldo@mincit.gov.co
CARIBSAVE		
Dr. Donovan Campbell Director of South -South Partnerships	1 Phoenix Ave, Kingston 10 JAMAICA T: (876) 632-03075	Donovan.campbell@caribsav.org ; taneque.heslop@caribsav.org
CARIBBEAN TOURISM ORGANIZATION (CTO)		
Mrs. Sharon Banfield-Bovell, Regional Human Resource Development Consultant, Caribbean Tourism Organization	Ground Floor, Baobab Tower, Warrens, St. Michael, BB22026, BARBADOS T: (246) 427 5242	banfields@caribtourism.com ; cc: bmorgan@caribtourism.com
GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE TOURISM COUNCIL (GSTC)		
Kathleen Pessolano, Destinations Program Director, Global Sustainable Tourism Council	945A 25th St, NW Washington DC 20037, U.S.A. T: 202.379.8206	kpessolano@gstcouncil.org
ORGANISATION OF EASTERN CARIBBEAN STATES (OECS)		
Dr. Lorraine Nicholas, Tourism Specialist, OECS Secretariat,	Castries, Saint Lucia T: (758) 455-6395	lnicholas@oece.org
SISTEMA DE INTEGRACIÓN TURÍSTICA CENTROAMERICANA (SITCA)		
Sr. Ely Barillas, Coordinador de Cooperacion, Ministerio de Turismo de El Salvador	Alameda dr. Manuel Enrique Araujo, EdificioCarbonel 1 y 2, Pasaje Carbonel, Colonia Roma, San Salvador, EL SALVADOR T: (503) 2243-7835	ebarillas@mitur.gob.sv
OBSERVER/OBSERVADOR/OBSERVATEURS		
Ricardo Sandoval Director de Planificación y Desarrollo Turístico de la Autoridad de Turismo	Autoridad de Turismo de Panama , Avenida Balboa y Calle Aquilino De La Guardia, Edificio PH BICSA FINANCIAL CENTER, Piso 28, PANAMA T: (507) 526-7000	rasandoval@atp.gob.pa
Juan Portugal Jefe de Turismo Comunitario		jprotugal@atp.gob.pa

WORKSHOP ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM INDICATORS IN THE GREATER CARIBBEAN

Soraya Alderete Jefa de Calidad y Cultura turística		salderete@atp.gob.pa
Daisy Trujillo Jefa de Cooperación Técnica Internacional		dtrujillo@atp.gob.pa
Sra. Elsa Judith Santizo Juárez de Rodríguez Asesora Administrativa	INGUAT - Instituto Guatemalteco de Turismo, 7ma Avenida 1-17 Zona 4, Centro Cívico Guatemala, Guatemala T: (502) 2421-2800	jderodriguez@inguat.gob.gt ; jderodriguez@itelgua.com
SECRETARÍA DE LA ASOCIACIÓN DE ESTADOS DEL CARIBE (AEC) SECRETARIAT OF THE ASSOCIATION OF CARIBBEAN STATES (ACS) SECRETARIAT DE L'ASSOCIATION DES ETATS DES CARAIBES (AEC)		
Mr. Julio Orozco Director, Sustainable Tourism	5-7 Sweet Briar Road, St. Clair Port of Spain	jorozco@acs-aec.org
Ms. Amanda Charles Adviser, Sustainable Tourism	Trinidad and Tobago Tel: (868) 622-9575 Fax: (868) 622-1653	acharles@acs-aec.org