The Team of the Directorate of Sustainable Tourism of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) is pleased to present our 13th Edition of ‘In The Zone’ focusing on “Experiences and Lessons Learnt by the Tourism Industry in the area of Meeting Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE)”. The Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions segment, often referred to as the MICE, is large and diverse by its nature and consists of organisers and suppliers engaging in the development and delivery of meetings, conferences, exhibitions and other related events held to achieve a range of professional, business, cultural or academic objectives. Presently, the MICE segment is one of the fastest growing segments within the tourism sector generating high economic incomes and revenues for cities and countries such as in the Region of the Greater Caribbean and also around the world.

In this edition, the Directorate of Sustainable Tourism wishes to showcase some of the initiatives developed by the National Tourism Authorities and Regional Organizations which have been developing the MICE segment in their countries by attracting event organizers and generating great impact in the tourism sector as a mechanism to increase the demand of meetings and events while at the same time promoting the destinations of their countries.

We hope that you enjoy this issue and that it enriches your knowledge as we stand together confident that the Greater Caribbean will be positioned as a leader in the MICE segment in the coming years.

Julio Orozco
Director of Sustainable Tourism
Its position as one of the Caribbean’s major financial centres has influenced the destination of Trinidad and Tobago to aggressively pursue the MICE market. Indeed, this decision has proven lucrative, as MICE visitors spend almost 25% more than leisure visitors. After experiencing a taste of Trinidad and Tobago, it presents the opportunity to have these business visitors return for leisure with their friends and family in the future.

Moreover, tapping into the MICE market has provided additional value to the destination. MICE complements the destination’s promotion of sustainable tourism. Many of the international meeting planners have worked with the destination’s hotels on green initiatives, enforcing their policies against use of plastic water bottles and minimising paper use at events.

International meetings and conferences involving local chapters of professional organisations facilitate knowledge transfer and many of the bodies hosting conferences at the destination have incorporated community service projects into their itineraries, providing tangible benefits to local communities, e.g. medical screenings.

Article and Photos:
Tourism Development Company Limited
The MICE Segment in Guadeloupe

In a single trip to the Guadeloupe islands, one can discover 5 destinations each with their own identity. These easily accessible islands that are in close proximity to each other boasts of a variety of accommodations adapted to the different aspects of the MICE segment (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Exhibitions), enabling service providers to combine an array of original experiences in order to create dynamic, surprising, unique and unusual packages.

The MICE Programme in the Guadeloupe islands, through its high-level organization, knew how to respond to new trends with sustainable, inclusive activities and even Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives that foster interactions with the population, its traditions, living heritage and the participant’s contribution to the protection of culture and local natural spaces.

Organizing MICE activities serves to generate economic activity in inter-seasonal periods and also involve partners who are not working in the tourism industry but are delighted to take the opportunity to have others discover their original and memorable traditions.

The MICE market encourages a lot of creativity in diverse fields such as creole food, the cocoa sector, rum, music, books, tropical natural spaces, history of the islands...

Article and Photos:
Tourism Committee of the Islands of Guadeloupe
“Antigua and Barbuda, the Beach is just the beginning”
Effect and Impacts of Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) of Tourism

Antigua and Barbuda understands that Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Exhibitions (MICE) Tourism plays a key role in influencing all areas of the economy and effects demand on the other sectors to provide products and services to support. There are many benefits to MICE Tourism. Some that have been seen includes:

- Positive contribution to employment and income in the tourism and supporting sectors
- Generation of investment in tourism/recreation infrastructure to be used by locals and visitors alike
- Opportunities for idea exchanges and for the establishment of valuable business and professional contacts
- An effective marketing tool for attracting new business and visitors to the destination.

Antigua and Barbuda has attracted business from the Tourism, Security, Financial, Health and many other sectors playing host to several regional and international meetings, conferences and exhibitions.

Currently, Antigua and Barbuda offers several conference and meeting rooms, some with state of the art facilities, that can hold up to 700 persons in one room and smaller rooms that can hold up to 30 persons. Exceptional facilities such as the Sandals Grande Antigua Resort and Spa and the Verandah Resort and Spa top the list.

Understanding the importance of this market, the Government has aggressively targeted investment in the hotel sector for the MICE market, improved the airport facilities and specifically the VIP and business traveller services, embarked on a drive to secure more regional and international airlift, continually promoted the destination as a secure and politically stable one – all of which are ingredients needed to develop and maintain a strong MICE Tourism product.
In October 2016, The School of Hospitality, Gastronomy and Tourism held its XXVI Congress in Havana. Formatur School of Hospitality and Tourism organized this event which mainly focused on Sustainable Tourism and Community Development.

The main topics of the scientific programme, dealt with community tourism from different views, underlining the different ways to do it and the opportunities of development that it offers to the communities, when the population take advantage of its natural and social environment where they live, their customs, traditions and culture as a main source of survival regarding sustainability as the main goal.

In the event, from an academic view point, the best experiences were analyzed such as, The Fire Festival of the Caribbean, The Festivities at Remedio, typical dances and their culture associated with the main crops such as sugar cane, coffee and tobacco. The purpose of this was to highlight the importance of these events in order to promote the best practices of the communities and to support the development of the sustainable tourism in the region.

Article and Photos:
Miriam J. Rendom Fernandez of the Ministry of Tourism of Cuba
The main objective of the Destination Marketing Organization (D.M.O.) is to promote and develop the market for international conventions and congresses within the Panamanian territory.

Panama seeks to position itself within the international standards as an ideal destination for organizing events worldwide, taking advantage of the diverse facilities with which it counts as its wide hotel infrastructure, the convenient aerial connectivity and its variety of meeting spaces, such as the upcoming Amador Convention Center, which will be one of the largest meeting venues in Central America.

Congress and Convention, as a figure of the Panamanian Convention Bureau (CVB) is responsible for inviting congresses, conferences and international events which seek attractive venues for conducting said events. All of this is done through incentives, which are then transformed into logistical services. As a result of the wide data base available, both public and private actors are able to join together to accomplish the objective of responding to the demands of the international markets in an effective manner.

Article:
Tourism Authority of Panamá
With the international launch of *Marca Perú* (Brand Peru) in 2012, Peru’s tourism industry has been progressively gaining ground, transforming this sector into a fundamental GDP generator for the nation, approximately 3.75%.

One major element of this success is attributed to the rapidly-advancing MICE segment in Peru, which currently represents 6% of the country’s US$ 4 billion tourism-generated earnings. In previous years, lack of infrastructure to host large-sized events proved to be this sector’s biggest hurdle. However, the *Lima Convention and Visitors Bureau* credits the collaborative effort of the Peruvian private sector and the Peruvian Export and Tourism Promotion Commission (Prom Perú) for the four-spot jump Lima achieved in the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) 2015 rankings, securing its position at the top in the Americas and 16th in the world for number of event attendees.

The inauguration of the Lima Convention Centre in 2015, with a capacity of 10,000, has played a vital role in boosting the MICE segment in Peru, and has hosted landmark conferences such as the 86th annual APEC Economic Leader’s Meeting in November, 2016.

With numerous new expansion projects in the pipeline, the Peruvian MICE segment is expected to be among the top 3 in Latin America by 2020.
EVENTS HELD
Commemoration of the Declaration of 2017 as the Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development was held at the Secretariat in Trinidad and Tobago on April 7th, 2017.

UPCOMING EVENTS
The Directorate of Sustainable Tourism will be developing the following Activities:


THANK YOU
The Directorate of Sustainable Tourism of the Association of Caribbean States expresses its gratitude to all the contributors of this Newsletter and look forward to your continued support as we work together to develop sustainable tourism in the Greater Caribbean Region.

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