

"IN THE ZONE" a tribute to the Sustainable Tourism Zone of the Greater Caribbean.



EDITORIAL

The Team of the Directorate of Sustainable Tourism of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) is pleased to present, our **eighth edition** of **In the ZONE**, a newsletter focusing on Sustainable Tourism in the Greater Caribbean.

In this edition, we look at the growing niche markets of **Agro-tourism** and **Community-based Tourism** in our Member States, as well as projects initiated under these themes by our regional partners. Both Agro-tourism and Community-based tourism contribute significantly to the sustainable development of rural communities, otherwise underdeveloped. They are an extension of the more popularly known 'Ecotourism' whereby both visitors and locals benefit. The ACS Directorate of Sustainable Tourism notes the importance of this type of tourism for the sustainable development of tourism in our Member States and Associate Members.

The Directorate of Sustainable Tourism also takes this opportunity to make mention of its upcoming **25th Meeting of the Special Committee for Sustainable Tourism (SCST-25)**. It will be held in collaboration with the Instituto Guatemalteco de Turismo (INGUAT) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Guatemala from **the 22nd to 23rd May, 2014** in the colonial city of La Antigua Guatemala, Guatemala. Cognizant of the importance of supporting and sharing knowledge on sustainable tourism best practices among the Greater Caribbean countries, the Directorate will incorporate, as the first component to the SCST-25, an **ACS Workshop on Best Practices and Lessons Learnt in Sustainable Tourism**.

The ACS Directorate of Sustainable Tourism

NUQUÍ, COLOMBIA: A Community and Sustainable Tourism Destination

Situated on the Pacific Coast of Colombia, the town of Nuquí is one of the country's main nature destinations, where beaches and forests converge with a living Afro-Colombian and indigenous culture.

Tourism development in this town has been generated thanks to the dedication of its residents, as evidenced by the management of the Utría National Natural Park (Parque Nacional Natural Utría), administered by the community organisation "Mano Cambiada".

La Aguada beach, which is located at the Park, received the Servcert-SGS international stamp of quality in tourism and the Colombian Tourism Quality Mark, making it the first national beach to be certified in sustainability requirements to be implemented in protected areas.

Additionally, investments have been made in works and human resource training. These include the construction and staffing of tourist inns, the auditorium and track at Parque Utría, the tourist pier, and the construction of a spa and adaptation of natural hot springs. At present, an Ecotourism Complex is being built, in an area inhabited by an indigenous group of the Emberá Ethnicity, which is preparing to be the operators of the project.



Panama Rural Tourism – Agritourism Programme

Overall Objective

Promote the development of the Rural Tourism product in Panama, allowing the visitor to stay for a longer period in the various destinations, in such a manner so as to diversify the offer of existing tourism products, thereby generating an increase in average expenditure, yielding social and economic benefits for the local populations as a result of the tourism activity and enhancing their quality of life. The Panama Tourism Authority verifies the potential of the tourism resources at the farm, taking into account its surroundings.



Different actions have been established by both institutions such as:

- Classification of farms based on their potentialities,
- Technical assistance to improve the farming activity and guidance in developing products,
- Training with national and international specialists and Internships

Nicaragua focussed on improving the competitiveness and infrastructure of Rural Tourism MSME's

Since 2007, the Government for Reconciliation and National Unity, through the Nicaraguan Tourism Institute (INTUR), has been promoting sustainable rural tourism and implementing an MSME Development Strategy, which places emphasis on training for Local Tourist Guides and support for bodies organising Rural Tourism; toward improving the competitiveness of rural tourism MSME's, strengthening business management, access to new markets and investment in municipal tourism infrastructure.



Projects include:

- ✓ **Coffee Route, Phase I and Phase II** - Co-operation from Luxembourg.
- ✓ **Water Route** - IDB.
- ✓ **Colonial and Volcano Route** - European Union, geared toward the development of rural tourism associated with volcanoes.
- ✓ **Agri-tourism Farm Pilot Project** in coordination with RENITURAL and FENIAGRO - Own funding.
- ✓ **Strengthening the competitiveness of Rural Tourism MSME's** - COSUDE
- ✓ **Project to Diversify and Raise the Quality of the tourism attractions** of the Island of Ometepe - COSUDE.

A pioneer in the Central American Region, Nicaragua carried out a participatory process in which it defined its **Sustainable Rural Tourism Policy and Strategy** and currently has "**Law 835-Law on Sustainable Rural Tourism**", whose purpose is to "**Promote the formulation and implementation of guidelines and actions that would contribute to tourism development in the rural territories of the country with a sustainable development approach**".

"Grenada is Poised for a Major Rural Tourism Initiative"

Fulfilling Dreams, Preserving the Future through Value Added was the theme for the Launch of the Daimond Chocolate Factory in Grenada on Thursday 20th March 2014 which could bring about the major transformation of Victoria, St. Mark, locally regarded as the Sun Set City on the western coast of Grenada.

It is believed that this private public partnership has the possibility of producing some of the finest and best quality chocolate in the World which will be of immense benefit to the entire rural community of Victoria. In this regard, the emphasis will not be centred on making the operation too automated but on employing some of the local persons within the community. It will be an opportunity for greater production of cocoa in the surrounding villages, utilization of the rich natural and cultural heritage and various attractions within the Parish of St. Mark and St. John thus providing further value chain linkages.



Mr.L.A Burdick. Director of L.A. Burdick Chocolate and driving force behind project



Traditional dancing and polishing of the cocoa bean

Hence, should all the stakeholders, from the Grenada Cocoa Association to the various Government Ministries and tourism entities stick to this vision; the opening of this project will definitely be a dawn for the agricultural sector of Grenada.

IICA and Rural Tourism

The establishment of tourism sites and attractions in rural communities has the potential for increasing the participation of women, youth and farm families in the tourism value chain by way of employment, revenue generation through offers of accommodation and sale of indigenous food and craft. The positive impacts realized by keeping good agricultural land in production, retention of biodiversity and management of eco-systems, and the revitalization of community pride by preserving and validating rural culture and heritage, cannot be overemphasized.



Since 2002, IICA, the InterAmerican Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, has used rural tourism and agrotourism linkages as mechanisms for the promotion of sustainable livelihoods and diversification of farm income in rural communities. IICA's work has focused on the strengthening and modernization of the institutional framework at both public and private sector levels; diagnostic studies and design of rural tourism plans; knowledge sharing, documentation of success stories, and capacity building across Latin America and the Caribbean. For further information, contact Ena Harvey, IICA Agrotourism Specialist at ena.harvey@iica.int.



VENEZUELA- INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES TRAINED AS TOURIST GUIDES

With the objective of promoting and encouraging the development of community tourism, the Ministry of People's Power for Tourism (Mintur), in conjunction with the Directorate of Tourism and the Environment of the Bolivar State Government, awarded 66 certificates to members of five indigenous communities to serve as tourist guides in the municipality of Gran Sabana, Bolívar State.



This activity is the second phase of the meeting held by Mintur with residents of the Pemón Ethnic Group in the indigenous communities of Wará, Waramasén, Maurak, Chiricayén and Kinokpon-partí where, together with representatives of the Bolívar State Government, the City Hall of the municipality of Gran Sabana, Inparques, Corpoelec and the Gran Sabana School, topics of interest, geared toward protecting ancestral traditions and the environment were addressed. Training, organisation, economic strengthening, international relations and social and environmental impacts were some of the terms outlined for discussion and implementation.



DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: PROJECTS RELATED TO AGROTOURISM AND COMMUNITY BASED INITIATIVES

The following web links will lead you to Agro tourism and Community-based tourism initiatives in the Dominican Republic. These initiatives involve tours on coffee and cocoa plantations, as well as various exciting opportunities for visitors to participate in. It caters to both the nature-loving and adventure-seeking tourist.



1. *Estancia Natura*: <http://estancianatura.com/home.htm>
2. *El Sendero del Cacao*: <http://www.cacaotour.com/index.php/es/inicio>
3. *Tour de chocolate*: <http://www.tourdechocolate.com/>
4. *Café de la Mami*: <http://cafedelamami.com/>
5. *Yásica Mountain Center*: <http://yasicamountainecocenter.com/>



Sustainable Tourism in the National Tourism Policy of Mexico

On July 4, 2013, in the framework of the National Tourism Policy of Mexico, the Tourism Secretariat signed a Co-operation Agreement with the National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples and the National Tourism Development Fund, to promote the development and competitiveness of indigenous peoples by developing sustainable projects related to alternative tourism, eco-tourism and rural tourism.



The new administration has presented tourism as a tool for fighting poverty, generating development and promoting inclusion, as well as an instrument for creating more and better opportunities for Mexicans in those regions that are most in need in the country.

The three institutions are working toward designing and implementing actions to train the peoples, the indigenous communities and tourism service providers, so as to encourage the laying down of roots of the culture and its regional traditions, which have a high potential for attracting tourists.

Community Based Tourism Initiatives in Guyana

Conservation International's Blueprint on Sustainable livelihoods in the Rupununi

North Rupununi Development Board role within the Rupununi as aiding in capacity building, product development and implementation of policies while encouraging co-operation and co-ordination of activities of its constituent communities.

North Rupununi District Development Board's (NRDDB) role on facilitating community development planning and implementation of policies whilst encouraging co-operation and co-ordination of activities of its constituent communities.

Family Operated Initiatives

Karanambu Ranch's Adoption of Giant River Otters; and Rock View Lodge's operation as Interior, Lodge and Resort

Community Operated Initiatives

Yupukari Caiman House, Rewa Eco-Lodge, Maipaima Eco-Lodge, Aranaputa Friendly Society, Mangrove Heritage Restoration Project, Moco Moca Rice and Bean Project

Partnership Initiatives

Santa Aratak (Santa Mission) and Arrowpoint Nature Resort

Iwokrama Nature Reserve and Fair View Village



Agrotourism Initiatives

Mainstay Wayaka Pineapple Processing Plant, Splashmin's Orchard, Saint Stanislaus's Farm, Rock View Lodge's Tambaqui Fish farm, Wowetta Women's Agro-processors Group, Pandama Retreat and Winery, Aranaputa Friendly Society, Mangrove Heritage Centre, Inter-American Institute for Co-operation on Agriculture seminar on a National Development Strategy for Agro-Tourism in Guyana.

GENERAL INFO

What is the ACS?

The Convention Establishing the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) was established following the signature of the Convention on 24th July 1994 in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, with the aim of promoting consultation, cooperation and concerted action among all the countries of the Caribbean.

What is the SCST?

The Special Committee on Sustainable Tourism (SCST) is a technical body meant to assist in the performance of the Ministerial Council. It brings together the representatives of the Members States to discuss issues and projects related to sustainable development of tourism in the Greater Caribbean.

The Executive Board of the SCST

President:

Mme. Karine Roy-Camille

Présidente du Comité Martiniquais du Tourisme
Immeuble le Beaupré -97233, Schoelcher,
Martinique

Tel : 011 596 696 271 247

Email:

karineroycamille@martiniquetourisme.com

Vice-Chairmen:

Santiago Rojas

Ministro de Comercio, Industria y Turismo
Calle 28 No 13 a 15, Bogota Colombia

Tel: 6067676 Ext. 1368 Fax: 6967521/22

Mme. Stéphanie Balmir VILLEDROUIN

Ministère du Tourisme

Port au Prince, Haiti

Bur.: 011-509-3816-0100/ 011-509-3703-3111

Fax: 223 5359/221 3613

Rapporteur:

Pedro Pablo Duchez

Director del Instituto Guatemalteco de Turismo
(INGUAT)

7^a Avenida 1-17, Zona 4, Centro Cívico,
Ciudad de Guatemala, GUATEMALA

Tel: 2421 2801 / 03

Fax: 242 12879

Contribute :

The DST invites you to send your photographs and articles for the next issue.

"IN THE ZONE".

Contact :

Mrs. Bevon Bernard-Henry

DST Secretary

Email : bbhenry@acs-aec.org

Ms. Rehanna Ramroop

Research Assistant

Email : rramroop@acs-aec.org

Thank you!

" IN THE ZONE", is conceived to increase interaction and the level of cooperation between ACS Member and Associate Member States and International and Regional organizations as well as observer countries. It features destinations, events and activities in Member Countries as well as from our partners.

