

Multi-Destination Tourism to be discussed at the 24th Meeting of the Special Committee on Sustainable Tourism



Port of Spain (July 11, 2013) - The issue of Multi-Destination Tourism (MDT) is one of regional importance that will be addressed at the up-coming 24th Meeting of the Special Committee on Sustainable Tourism of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS).

For over five years, the ACS, through its Directorate of Sustainable Tourism has been engaged in the development of a Multi-Destination Tourism Programme which seeks to facilitate dialogue and cooperation among the regional stakeholders in the tourism and transport sectors. The objective is to preserve the “Caribbean” destination market share in extra-regional markets and increase intra-regional tourist flows.

In this regard, the Directorate will inform of advances made in the organising of Aviation Day Caribbean, pursuant to outreach to the Latin American and Caribbean Air Transport Association (ALTA). Aviation Day Caribbean will gather the Regional Tourism and Transport Authorities with the Airline Executives, to facilitate collaboration, networking and dialogue. This high-level forum is scheduled for November 13th 2013 in Cancun, Mexico and the ACS will be partnering with both the Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO) and ALTA for the hosting of this event.

This initiative responds to calls from various regional governments, in advocating for the region to explore incentives and strategies to strengthen regional carriers, enhance intra-regional travel and through joint airlift agreements, increase linkages between regional and international based airlines as part of a broad-based strategy to boost tourist arrivals.

The advances and way forward on issues such as regional collaboration in the area of Sustainable Tourism is another topic that occupies equal importance on the agenda. Emphasis will be placed on achieving consensus on the way forward in the project to establish the Sustainable Tourism Zone of Greater Caribbean (STZC). The Directorate has been collaborating with the Regional Council of Martinique for the conceptualisation of a Regional Cooperation Mechanism for dialogue, interaction and engagement of the participating destinations, Regional Tourism Authorities, as well as to facilitate consultation with regional cooperation and funding agencies for integrated planning among STZC stakeholders.

This project will facilitate the expansion of the Sustainability Indicators Project to include at least

one destination in each of the ACS Member States. Additionally, a website will be developed to function as an information, marketing and resource tool, to support the establishment and promotion of the STZC and the Greater Caribbean Region in international tourism markets. In addition to showcasing the Regions Destinations, the website will be equipped with tools for the sustainable management of tourism destinations and information conducive to adopting sustainable tourism practices for Destination Mangers, Regional Governments and the public at large.

The ACS acknowledges that increasing co-operation among the countries of the Greater Caribbean Region is critical in positioning the region as ONE Greater Caribbean Destination. With its proposed initiatives, the ACS has sought to tap into existing and potential synergies by increasing collaboration in crosscutting issues of mutual interest, which can be achieved through a process of knowledge exchange, alliances and partnerships for horizontal co-operation.

The Special Committee on Sustainable Tourism meetings held annually will be chaired by the President of the Martinique Committee on Sustainable Tourism, Mrs. Karine Roy-Camille. High level officials in attendance include the Minister of Tourism of Trinidad and Tobago, the Honourable Stephen Cadiz; Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism, Mrs. Juliana Johan-Boodram, and Acting CEO of the Tourism Development Company Limited (TDC), Ms. Yolande Selman. In addition to participating in the meeting, the Ministry of Tourism and the TDC are collaborating closely with the ACS in hosting the meeting.

Other high-level delegations from ACS Member and Associate Member Countries as well as representatives from regional organisations are also expected to be in attendance as the region seeks to pursue a collaborative approach in the advancement of the ACS Sustainable Tourism Work Programme.