Transforming Tourism for Climate Resilience

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Caribbean Tourism Organization

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Introduction

Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO)

• Established in 1989, to support and promote Tourism Development in the Caribbean.

• Secretariat HQ: Barbados

• Membership: 24 Government Members and various Private Sector partners

• Strategic Functional Areas:
  – Sustainable Tourism Development
  – Human Resource Development
  – Regional Destination Marketing
  – Communications and Advocacy
  – Market Intelligence, Research and Statistics

Industry Partner: CHTA
CTO Member Destinations

Anguilla
Antigua and Barbuda
Barbados
Belize
Cayman Islands
Curacao
Dominica
Guadeloupe
Grenada
Guyana
Haiti
Jamaica
La Martinique
Montserrat
Puerto Rico
Saint Lucia
Saint Martin
Saint Maarten
St. Eustatius
St. Kitts
St. Vincent and The Grenadines
The Bahamas
The British Virgin Islands
Trinidad & Tobago

Caribbean Tourism Organization
Leading Sustainable Tourism - One Sea, One Voice, One Caribbean
Contribution of Travel and Tourism to the Caribbean

Social and Economic Benefits

- Estimated single largest sector contributing to GDP and Employment.
- Generates Income (taxes and foreign exchange earnings).
- Drives Investment, infrastructure and Services.
- Supports productivity in ancillary sectors (agriculture, services, creative industries etc);

-65.5% Decline in 2020
Sharp decline and contraction of the industry in 2020 as a result of COVID-19.
Modest Recovery in 2021 with Remote Working Visa Programmes, Travel Bubbles targeting Digital Nomads, Domestic and Intra-Regional Tourism etc.
Is Climate Change affecting Caribbean Tourism?
Climate Variability & Climate Change Impacts

- **Sea Level Rise** accelerates coastal/beach erosion and increases the vulnerability of tourism facilities in coastal areas inc... Marinas, Docks, Piers, Cruise ship facilities, Hotels/Resorts.
Climate Variability & Climate Change Impacts

• **Increasing Sea Surface Temperatures** - Coral Bleaching causes a reduction in fisheries/marine based attractions.

• **The Sargassum Phenomenon**

Healthy Coral versus Coral Bleaching
Source: Greenpeace.org
Climate Variability & Climate Change Impacts

- **Agricultural crops productivity** - Higher food costs, fewer local fare in restaurants.

- **Weather unpredictability** - Temperature and precipitation changes can affect the visitor experience.

- **Increased warming** - May result in warmer winters in northern markets and warmer summers in the Region, affecting seasonal demand.

- **Landscape and natural resource changes** - May lead to biodiversity loss thus compromising the quality and variety of natural attractions.
Extreme Weather Events...

Frequent and prolonged adverse weather conditions such as longer drought periods with water shortages and severe climate hazards (Hurricanes, Floods, Tropical Storms):

• Contribute to damages & loss, increased insurance costs, business disruption, cancellations, costly refunds and/or evacuation costs, and a negative image of the Region as Unsafe.

• Several Billions in losses in 2017 due Hurricanes Irma and Maria and in The Bahamas in 2019 in the wake of Hurricane Dorian.
Road Map to Tourism
Resilience in the Caribbean
Sustainable Tourism Resilience Framework

Four Pillars of Sustainable Tourism:
- Social and Cultural Equity
- Economically Viable
- Environmental Responsibility
- Climate and Disaster Resilience

Sustainability

Social
Environmental
Economic

Caribbean Tourism Organization
Leading Sustainable Tourism - One Sea, One Voice, One Caribbean
Challenges that Impede the Caribbean Tourism Sector from Implementing Adaptation and Mitigation Actions

• Confusion and lack of understanding of the various terms and concepts;
• Competing priorities with limited human and financial resources;
• Failure to recognize opportunities and the value linked to tourism marketing and product development;
• Low levels of inter-sectoral linkages at the national level. Often tourism sector stakeholders are not engaged by the relevant national agencies.

The climate-tourism nexus involves three primary issues: Mitigation actions including climate neutral programs; Managing Climate Impacts (Adaptation); Climate Resilience in the context of Hazards Management.
Recommendations and Needs
Transforming Tourism for Climate Resilience

Enhancing Climate and Disaster Resilience

• **Inter-sectoral collaboration** at the national level (climate change and disaster risk management planning).

• **Innovation** - Partnering with Carbon Credit schemes; national Travelers Philanthropy programs (**BVI Climate Change Trust Fund**).

• **Tourism Product Development** - **S.A.V.E Travel** (Mangrove replanting, coral reforestation).

• **Community Partnerships** - Clean-up / Beautification Campaigns.

• **Education and Awareness** - Protocols for Visitor Management, Communication and Staffing:
  - **Visitors** - Identification, relocation and/or evacuation
  - **Public sector** - Digital systems for contact and outreach to guests
  - **Private sector and local Community** – Partnership and engagement to mitigate staffing issues/ conflicting family responsibilities/ Shelter
  - **Regional Level** - Business Continuity Planning

• **Accessing Funding / Technical assistance** - To implement policies and undertake projects - GCF/ CDB/EU/UN Agencies and others.
Transforming Tourism for Climate Resilience

REGIONAL & INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES
Climate Smart Sustainable Tourism Project

- Training and Tools to enhance Resilience:
  - Multi-Hazard Risk Management Guide for the Caribbean Tourism Sector
  - National and Regional Training Workshops
  - Responsible Tourism Flyers and Postcards for Tourism Employers, Employees and Visitors to the Caribbean
  - Regional Education and Awareness Campaign
    [www.ourtourism.onecaribbean.org](http://www.ourtourism.onecaribbean.org)
  - Online Training Courses
  - Study to assess the need for Climate Products and Services for the Caribbean Tourism Sector.

*Implemented: September 2017 - December 2021*
Caribbean Sustainable Tourism Policy and Development Framework

Vision for Tourism

“Caribbean Tourism that is sustainable, viable, of high quality, climate smart, resilient, and promotes empowerment and inclusiveness.”

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The goal of the Climate Smart Action Policy and Development Framework is to reduce the vulnerability of Caribbean tourism to the potential impacts of climate variability and change (CVC). Climate change is a major issue for the long-term sustainability of regional tourism. On one hand, climate change impacts have consequences for tourism, while on the other, tourism activities can generally be contributors to CVC.

Caribbean governments can tackle CVC in tourism through several policy approaches and interventions, for example, by encouraging the use of measures such as carbon offset programmes, to reduce the tourism sector’s carbon footprint. Within this framework area, however, the interventions and best practice guidelines on Climate Smart Action are centred on a range of actionable policies in four (4) broad areas, i.e.:

1. Adapting to Climate Change Conditions;
2. Mitigating against Climate Change;
3. Climate Smart Planning, Awareness and Partnerships; and
Regional Inter-Sectoral Collaboration: A Pioneering Tool for Tourism Climate Resilience

Tourism Climatic Bulletin
- CTO, CHTA and CIMH Collaboration
- Quarterly bulletin with Climate forecasts 3 mths in advance
- Developed to help tourism businesses and policymakers identify and prepare for both favourable and inclement climate conditions in the Caribbean and major source markets.
Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action In Tourism

This declaration aims to lead and align climate action across tourism stakeholders, gaining approx. 500 signatories to date: Governments; development agencies; financial institutions; NGO’s; the private sector; and academia. Commitments are as follows:

• Deliver **climate action plans** within 12 months of becoming a signatory (or update existing plans), and implement the plan.

• **Report annually** on progress in meeting targets and actions.

• **Align with 5 pathways**: measure, decarbonize, regenerate, collaborate, finance climate resilience.

Caribbean: CTO, ACS, OECS, The Bahamas, St. Lucia, Barbados*

Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Opportunities for Caribbean Tourism

**CC Mitigation**
- Carbon Capture/ Carbon offsetting programs
- Carbon Credit schemes
- Renewable Energy Technologies
- Reduction in GHG emissions
- Replanting (Trees, Mangroves)
- Coral Reforestation

**CC Adaptation**
- Product Development (SAVE Travel & Travellers Philanthropy)
- Mono-Product (Sun/Sea) Diversification
- Building Design Standards
- Climate Change Policies
- DRM Plans & Committees
- Coastal offsets/ ICZM Management plans

Water & Energy Conservation
- Inter-Sectoral Collaboration
- Education and Awareness
- Financing
THANK YOU!

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