

CARIBBEAN NATURAL RESOURCES INSTITUTE  
(CANARI)

**COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM IN THE CARIBBEAN**

A WORKSHOP HELD BY THE  
CARIBBEAN NATURAL RESOURCES INSTITUTE  
AND THE  
ST. LUCIA HERITAGE TOURISM PROGRAMME

**February 1999**

**Final Report**

**“Community-based Tourism in the Caribbean”**  
**Vieux Fort, St. Lucia, 1-5 February 1999**  
**Workshop Report**

**Introduction**

The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute and the St. Lucia Heritage Tourism Programme came together to organise and facilitate a regional workshop entitled “Community-based tourism in the Caribbean”. This event was designed to meet the needs of Caribbean resource managers and development workers involved in making community-based tourism initiatives a reality. The workshop sought to review and refine approaches to community-based tourism and extract lessons from case studies with a view to transferring skills and methods that could be used in practical settings within the region. This is a report of the main features of the workshop rather than a verbatim record.

**Context and Rationale**

Tourism has been hailed as an engine for economic growth and prosperity for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Yet over the past ten years, concern has been mounting at the negative impacts of the industry on domestic economies, social and cultural systems and natural resources. Since the late 1980s efforts have been made to define more benign types of tourism, giving rise to a number of alternative approaches. Whether these represent a paradigm shift or an attempt to re-package conventional products remains a cause of debate, but the search for approaches to tourism that minimise negative impacts and provide benefits for a broad range of participants continues.

In the Caribbean, globalisation has left small island economies with little choice other than to become increasingly dependent on tourism. Against the trend of development that characterises that dependency, some local communities have identified opportunities within tourism and are participating in the industry, but these cases remain isolated and exceptional. These examples, where communities participate in the appraisal and implementation of tourism related activities on their own terms, can be called community-based tourism.

The workshop was, in part, a response to a perceived willingness on the part of industry decision makers to look again at the nature of the Caribbean tourism product. It was felt that this re-examination offered an opportunity to analyse the ways that tourism related benefits are distributed and negative impacts mitigated. The workshop was also a response to widespread interest in the use of nature and heritage for rural development in the Caribbean, as communities, resource managers and development workers seek to harness growth in tourism in ways that do not result in environmental degradation, economic insecurity and cultural upheaval. During the course of implementing their respective programmes and based on feedback from partner institutions, the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute and the St. Lucia Heritage Tourism Programme identified a need for a workshop for institutions working to facilitate a broader spread of community benefits accruing from the industry.

**Organisational Backgrounds**

***The Caribbean Natural Resources Institute*** (CANARI): In 1995 the Institute in conjunction with Martinique’s Regional Agency for Tourism Development and the Ajoupa Bouillon Office of Tourism conducted a three-day seminar to examine the relationship between eco-tourism and rural development in the Caribbean. In 1997 the Institute published a document entitled “Rural Development through Heritage Tourism: Guidelines for the Caribbean”, which defined community-based tourism, set out its pre-requisites and described mechanisms that could be used to develop this approach.

**The St. Lucia Heritage Tourism Programme (SLHTP):** The SLHTP's objectives include, amongst others, the enhancement of St. Lucia's image in the market place as a "green" destination, with a unique blend of attractions, and types of accommodations; and advocacy for the sustainable management of the island's natural and cultural resources through participatory processes of education, capacity building, product development, marketing, credit access and the promotion of environmental and cultural resources.

### **Course Overview**

The principal goal of the workshop was to strengthen the capacity of Caribbean institutions to support community-based tourism projects and programmes. The main elements of the workshop are included at Appendix A. The organisers set out to achieve this by drawing on experiences from St. Lucia and the region. Participants were encouraged to use and analyse examples drawn from their own experience. The course included field visits to community-based tourism initiatives and benefited from the insights provided by resource people from the St. Lucia Heritage Tourism Programme who presented examples from their work.

The workshop was designed for community representatives, resource managers and development workers involved in community-based tourism initiatives in the Caribbean. The workshop also targeted tourism development personnel from governments, non-governmental organisations and industry bodies involved in supporting community-based initiatives. The participants shared responsibilities for the daily management of the workshop by helping to facilitate, record, monitor and evaluate the sessions. A list of participants is included at Appendix B and a summary of their evaluation of the workshop is included at Appendix C.

### **Participants' Motivations**

Participants were invited to outline their motives for attending the workshop. These were summarised as:

- to gather information;
- to exchange experiences;
- to gain insights for planning community-based tourism;
- to learn;
- to hear of practical steps that support community-based tourism, especially with regard to economic sustainability;
- to place tourism in natural resource management context;
- to hear of planning techniques for participation;
- to gain skills that would help develop community-based tourism products;
- to develop a network for practitioners;
- to learn how collaborative management can assist with the development of community-based tourism.

The participants' motives reflected the developing nature of this field. Their desire to interact, gather information, and learn pointed to a need among practitioners to acquire knowledge in an area that is rapidly developing and increasingly relevant. The desire to exchange experiences and network among people working in the area of community-based tourism pointed to a need for readily available expertise that could lend support to practitioners, who are sometimes isolated within their institutions.

It was inferred that the general interest in approaches to community-based tourism as opposed to a demand for specific techniques also reflected the recent development of this discipline and the early stage that practitioners had reached in advancing the approach (further borne out by the

expressed need for skills and methods related to planning). It was therefore felt that a “manual” based on the proceedings of the workshop, would not be appropriate, given the lack of established practice on which to base such a document. This report therefore serves as a summary of discussions in order to further the understanding of community-based tourism rather than a list of prescriptions generated by the workshop.

### Definitions

In order to develop a common understanding of the terms that would be used throughout the workshop, participants developed some working definitions of key words and concepts. The following framework was agreed:

**Goal:** Sustainable community development.

**Strategy:** Community-based tourism (where communities are a player in the tourism industry and exercise control through their own involvement).

**Products:** Nature, heritage, culture and rural life.

### Issues

Ms. Agnes Francis, a tourism consultant, based in St. Lucia gave a presentation at the beginning of the week, which set the tone for the workshop and was instrumental in helping the participants to identify the following issues (Ms. Francis’ presentation is summarised at Appendix D):

<b><i>Contextual issues</i></b>	<b><i>Issues for facilitators</i></b>	<b><i>Issues for development</i></b>
Community-based tourism cannot ignore national and local development priorities.	Breaking into the highly structured tourism industry presents one of the greatest challenges for facilitators.	A community-based tourism site, activity or attraction should have the ability to be developed into a feasible tourism product.
Where communities define needs for tourism development, linkages can be made with other quality of life initiatives (e.g. infrastructure development).	The role of the public sector in facilitating private sector activity is a matter for debate: should policy be driven by market or community needs?	One of the selling points of community-based tourism is its potential to authenticate the visitor’s experience, and diversify a destination’s appeal.
Broader development initiatives can provide an entrée to community-based tourism.	The community should be aware of the resources needed to realise their ideas and the social, cultural, economic and physical impacts of tourism.	There is a need for credible market research to help develop feasible community-based tourism products and aid local decision making.
	Generation and management of revenue should feature in capacity building for community participation in tourism.	

### The Benefits of a Community-based Approach to Tourism

Participants discussed the merits of community-based tourism and there was agreement that this approach had the potential to:

- broaden the distribution of benefits from tourism;
- diversify a destination's tourism product;
- contribute to broader socio-economic goals (e.g. poverty reduction, employment generation, lower crime rates);
- enhance the funding and management of parks and protected areas;
- decentralise the tourism industry, by transferring decision making to a community level;
- contribute to the development of a regional tourism product (e.g. music);
- lead to the empowerment of local communities;
- provide a sense of ownership at a community level of the industry;
- act as a stimulus to local products (e.g. cuisine);
- authenticate the visitor's experience thereby adding value;
- lead to improvements being made to the aesthetics of a site or attraction;
- lead to the development and strengthening of institutions especially at a community level;
- strengthen community identity and sense of pride.

### Who Are the Players?

Participants were invited to identify the stakeholders to be considered in the development of community-based tourism. These included:

<b>Public sector</b>	<b>Non-profit sector</b>	<b>Private sector</b>
<i>Central Government Agencies</i>	<i>Community-based organisations</i>	<i>Banks/Lending institutions</i>
<i>- Tourism</i>	<i>National/Sub-national NGOs</i>	<i>Funding agencies</i>
<i>- Natural resource management (e.g. forestry)</i>	<i>Community residents</i>	<i>Landowners</i>
<i>- Community development</i>	<i>Environmental pressure groups</i>	<i>Individual entrepreneurs</i>
<i>- Works</i>	<i>Cultural activists</i>	<i>Service providers/Employees</i>
<i>- Planning</i>	<i>Religious organisations</i>	<i>Tourism operators (e.g. hotels, tour operators, airlines)</i>
<i>- Law enforcement</i>	<i>Diaspora groups (i.e. community members living abroad)</i>	<i>Tourism associations</i>
<i>- Health</i>	<i>Neighbouring communities</i>	
<i>- Finance</i>		
<i>- Small business development</i>		
<i>- Agriculture</i>		

**Field Visits.** During the workshop two field visits were undertaken to give participants a first hand look at efforts to develop community-based approaches to tourism at both a village and individual level.

**Laborie.** The Environmental Conservation and Heritage Organisation of Laborie (ECHO-Lab) is a community-based organisation working in a fishing village (population 7,000) on the South-East coast of St. Lucia. This 15 person institution has a mission to develop an awareness within the community of the need to conserve the environment (historical and natural) through community education and the promotion of community participation. Their goals are three-fold:

1. To identify, develop and conserve nature-heritage sites in and around Laborie in collaboration with local and national groups and government.
2. To disseminate information and organise activities that develop environmental awareness in the community
3. To promote activities associated with oral traditions and customs of the community.

One of group's principal projects is a development on a hill-top called Morne Leblanc which overlooks the village and much of the South-East coast. The site has historic significance and scenic beauty and the group have plans to create a small park area for use by St. Lucians and international visitors.

The Morne Leblanc project was developed through a process of consultation at the community level and grew out of a remarkable degree of consensus within the village on the kind of tourism that it would like to see. That shared vision has been developed as a result of the work of strong community-based institutions such as Echo-Lab.

The project was designed to benefit the community by boosting community pride and involvement, providing a site for education and recreation and providing a catalyst for modest, but well-planned tourism. Funding for the infrastructure has been obtained through the Government of St. Lucia and the Laborie Credit Union, while the community has provided voluntary labour in the tradition of "Coup-de-mains". The site is seen as a link to secondary attractions in the village such as restaurants, a museum and interpretation centre, a craft market, and the use of the beach for recreation.

The community have identified a number of issues that need to be addressed, as they seek to achieve their vision for tourism in Laborie. These include the need to find workable solutions to public sanitation and solid waste disposal problems. The greatest challenge identified by community leaders is that of maintaining the village's identity, heritage and culture, while embracing tourism.

**Latille Falls.** Latille Falls is a six acre family owned property near the village of Micoud on the South Eastern coast of St. Lucia. Contained within the site is a waterfall, an organic small holding and basic facilities for visitors. These have been developed by an individual entrepreneur, Mr. John Joseph, who conceived Latille 10 years ago as a place where people and nature could co-exist and where sustainable technologies could be demonstrated. Most of the developments have occurred over the past three years. Trails have been marked, an innovative pump irrigates fruit trees and vegetable plots, flush toilets have been installed, a basic reception area has been built and seating provided throughout the site.

Mr. Joseph has developed the site for tourism (in a way that has retained an authentic St. Lucian rural atmosphere), while at the same time maintaining a small holding and rearing fish. He has done so in way that has made all the activities compatible, and has succeeded in diversifying his enterprise.

Although Latille is the product of the efforts of an individual entrepreneur, it can said to be community-based for a number of reasons. Mr. Joseph is of the community, people from the neighbouring village regularly visit the site, schools and youth clubs and other groups use Latille as an educational and recreational resource. At the same time Mr. Joseph has developed links with tour operators, who sell his site as an authentic St. Lucian experience.

## Requirements for Community-based Tourism

Participants were asked for their assessment of the requirements for community-based tourism and listed the following:

- **Policies** and a policy environment that enables community-based tourism.
- **Community vision** and leadership are critical in mobilising local efforts in support of community-based tourism.
- **Institutions** (e.g. environmental and cultural) at a community and national level are essential facilitating mechanisms.
- **Quality products** need to be developed (e.g. through the use of minimum standards) capable of attracting the desired market segment.
- **Funding** at an appropriate level especially for start-up costs, can help community-based entrepreneurs.
- **Markets** need to be identified, researched and accessed.
- **Understanding and knowledge of the:**  
structure of the industry;  
existing regulatory framework;  
potential products/services/options;  
small business development/project management.
- **Natural resource management** skills and methods may be needed where development impacts on the environment.
- **Infrastructure** can help to create access and improve the quality of a community-based tourism product.

There was agreement among participants that of these needs: policy, community vision, and institutions ranked as the three most important requirements for community-based tourism, and that community vision is the most critical.

## Developing a Community Vision

The workshop looked at the methods that facilitating institutions could consider when working with a community to develop their vision for tourism. The following were identified:

- **Exposure** can reveal the opportunities presented by community-based tourism e.g. through exchanges and visits to successful initiatives.
- **Participatory planning** can help to address development needs, expectations and aspirations e.g. through community consultations at the earliest stage.
- **Facilitation** provided by intermediaries can help to identify scope and sharpen focus, especially where consensus is desired.
- **The sensitisation of national tourism planners** to needs and capacities can help to ensure that the vision is that of communities and not of the planners.
- **The sensitisation of communities** to environmental and cultural issues (e.g. through working with small groups) can help to develop a vision that matches the demands of the market.
- **Leadership and institutions** at a community level can often play a critical part in initiating, influencing and crystallizing opinions.
- **Use of outside expertise** can help to provide answers to technical questions that may need to be addressed before arriving at a vision.

## Techniques for Developing Community-based Tourism

A number of presentations were made by the St. Lucia Heritage Tourism Programme (SLHTP) on techniques that they were testing as mechanisms for developing a community-based approach to nature heritage tourism in St. Lucia. The two principal areas of focus were product inventories and

minimum standards.

### ***Product inventories***

The SLHTP had identified the need for a mechanism for collecting information on potential and actual community-based tourism ventures, to assist in their work as an institution dedicated to developing the sector. The inventory was seen as a database of sites, attractions and activities that could amount to a nature-heritage, community-based tourism product. It was felt that this information was an important means of:

- helping the agency to set priorities and focus the resources at its disposal;
- ascertaining the potential of sites, attractions and activities;
- preventing duplication of efforts (by sharing information with partner agencies);
- identifying needs for development;
- identifying the range of resources that could constitute a nature heritage tourism product;
- identifying any limitations to development (e.g. carrying capacity).

As part of its commitment to developing nature heritage tourism in St. Lucia from a community-based perspective the SLHTP used a participatory process to develop the format for collecting data and involved stakeholders and partners that would have an interest in the information contained in the inventory. The SLHTP took that view that the inventory should be:

- developed through consensus;
- have a well defined scope;
- adaptable;
- a tool for decision making;
- simple to use;
- up datable and able to be revisited;
- accessible to partners.

One of the first steps in developing the inventory was to define the parameters for sites, activities and attractions to be included. In conjunction with partners the SLHTP decided that, in terms of approach, its clients should contribute to:

- the development of the host community;
- sustained development over a long period of time;
- community empowerment.

In addition they should draw on:

- community leadership and coordination; and
- community input ranging from consultation to control.

In terms of the form of the products included in the inventory, it was agreed that the sites, attractions and activities could include cultural, historical, biological or physical attributes (or any combination of these) and should make sustainable use of the natural resource base. It was also felt that in providing goods and services to visitors, clients should be enhancing St. Lucia's overall tourism product, for example by adding value or contributing to the development of new markets.

The SLHTP also wanted to be sure that the sites, activities and attractions would make a contribution to the achievement of objectives in its four programme areas and developed initial indicators that would help determine this.

<b>SLHTP Programme Area</b>	<b>Indicator included in inventory (assessed with client)</b>
<b>Social</b>	extent of community involvement
<b>Environment</b>	contribution to protection of the resource base
<b>Economic</b>	estimated enterprises/ employment generated
<b>Product enhancement</b>	estimated numbers of stay over visitors

### **Management Systems and Minimum Standards**

The SLHTP identified a need within the community-based sector for the development of tourism products and ultimately the marketing of the same. Environmental management systems and minimum standards have been used as mechanisms for both product development and marketing, however the majority of these approaches have been developed for use by conventional tourism and more often specifically for the accommodation sector. The SLHTP is in the process of assessing how these kinds of approaches can be adapted for use by the community-based sector.

Environmental management systems for tourism have evolved from those developed specifically for the manufacturing sector, which has given rise to misgivings about their suitability for a service industry. Most environmental management systems for hotels have to date focussed on minimising the environmental impacts of their internal operations (specifically energy consumption, and both solid and liquid waste management). In addition to management systems, minimum standards have been developed by industry bodies to assure visitors that facilities will meet their expectations. In the accommodation sector these usually include factors such as the availability of hot water and air conditioned rooms.

The legitimacy of management systems and minimum standards is derived from the fact that those that comply or conform are recognised as such. There are three general approaches to accreditation:

- Fee-based: an establishment pays a fee to be included in a directory or as an affiliation to an association.
- Self regulation: in return for membership of an association an establishment agrees to conform to certain standards voluntarily.
- Compliance schemes: in return for a fee an establishment conforms to certain standards and is audited by an independent institution.

These approaches are often expensive and elitist. Furthermore the main emphasis is on certification of the accommodation sector. The major challenge for the SLHTP and other development agencies is to find approaches to systems, standards and accreditation that are on the one hand relevant to the circumstances and needs of community-based operators (for sites, attractions and activities as well as ancillary services such as accommodation) but also credible in the eyes of potential consumers.

### **Developing Community-based Tourism**

The workshop split into four groups to develop objectives and strategies that could help to meet the needs for community-based tourism. The groups focussed on:

- **Government** (including issues of policy and infrastructure)
- **Marketing**

- **Community capacity building** (including local and national institutional development)
- **Product development**

Summaries of the presentations made by the groups are included below.

### Government

<b>Need</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>
Inter-sectoral institutional framework.	To create local/ national guidelines for the development of community-based tourism.	Creation of task-forces aimed at networking and development of guidelines.
Informed decision making.	To sensitize policy makers to the needs for community-based tourism.	(a) Conduct formal briefings for policy makers (technocrats and politicians - the latter separately if necessary) at regional and national levels. (b) Position papers presented at Cabinet level - using case studies to demonstrate benefits.
Specific policies to ensure access to financial resources for community-based tourism.	To ensure that revenues collected from community-based tourism are re-invested in communities	“ ”
Giving people at the community level opportunities to influence policy making.	To create an atmosphere for greater involvement of people in issues that impact their lives.	(a) Participatory planning, where each player has a chance to get involved. (b) Use institutions (e.g. NGOs) to facilitate these processes.
Wide-ranging legislation and regulation.	a) To create incentives (in addition to those given to mainstream tourism) to encourage and foster community-based initiatives; b) To manage the sustainable use of natural resources; c) To establish minimum standards throughout the tourism industry; d) To protect the built and cultural heritage.	Research existing relevant legislation regionally and internationally with a view to adapting where appropriate to suit local circumstances.

### Marketing

The existing structure of the tourism industry is inappropriate and inadequate to meet the marketing needs of the emerging heritage/community-based tourism niche. In the short term existing networks and resources should be used to develop and market this product, while targeting local and international visitors as part of a long-term integrated marketing strategy for

heritage community-based tourism. The principal market segments are:

- cruise (current community-based tourism target);
- conventional stay-over visitor (current community-based tourism target);
- local (medium-long term community-based tourism target);
- emerging eco-traveler niche (medium-long community-based tourism target).

Short-term and long-term marketing goals should focus on particular market segments, for example through:

- packages and linkages between the traditional tourism industry's accommodations and services with community-based initiatives (e.g. large hotel chains providing clients with the option to stay in community-based satellite accommodations); and
- campaigns to sensitise and attract local markets.

<b><i>Need</i></b>	<b><i>Objective</i></b>	<b><i>Strategy</i></b>
Market information (e.g. statistics, demographics, pricing information and competition).	To have a better knowledge and understanding of the tourism industry and its different market segments.	Contact existing institutions such as the St. Lucia Heritage Tourism Programme and Caribbean Action for Sustainable Tourism for information.
Mechanisms for collaboration between the various actors central to the development of community-based tourism.	To foster collaboration between (and integration with) traditional tourism industry and national marketing strategies (where these exist).	Collaborate with Tourism Boards and network at forums and workshops.
Standards for community-based tourism sites, attractions and accommodations.	To develop and implement appropriate standards for community-based tourism.	Facilitating institutions to gather information on minimum standards and systems especially that have international recognition, and are applicable to community-based tourism.
Skills, methods, technology and equipment to market community-based tourism products and services (e.g. via the internet).	To increase the capacity of communities to market their own products.	Develop training and technical assistance programmes to increase the capacity of community-based tourism developers and communities to market their attractions, accommodations, and services.

### Community Capacity Building

<b>Need</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>
Identification of community needs.	To achieve sustainable community development.	Group discussions. Community meetings. Consultation/lobbying. Workshops/seminars. Needs assessments.
A tourism vision for the community.	To achieve sustainable community-based tourism.	"
Organise/strengthen community structure.	"	Formation of a broad-based stakeholders group.
An inventory of available resources in the community (including human resources).	"	Group discussions. Community meetings. Consultation/lobbying. Workshops/seminars.
An understanding of community social, cultural, economic and heritage background.	"	"
Technical support for activities at the community as well as the national level.	"	Group discussions. Community meetings. Consultation/lobbying. Workshops/seminars. Needs assessments.
Community awareness/self pride/sensitisation.	To facilitate community involvement in tourism on their terms.	" Community mapping/signage, historical research.
Funding/financial support.	"	Consultation/lobbying. Needs assessments.
Collaboration of all service providers.	"	Facilitated consultations and negotiations.
Training.	"	Workshops/ seminars.

### Product Development

<b>Need</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Strategy</b>
Funding.	To enable communities to finance community-based tourism projects.	Grants and loans from external donors while strengthening local non-traditional lending agencies.
Technical assistance.	To enable communities to appraise and design projects.	Seek alliances with institutions that have technical expertise.
"	To develop the management capacity of communities.	"
Monitoring and evaluation.	To ensure that the product will endure.	Collect baseline data and develop social/ economic and environmental indicators.
Inventory.	To identify classify available resources.	Conduct surveys of resources available with stakeholders
Product infrastructure.	To ensure that infrastructure compliments the product.	Bring together technical agencies with communities in the development process.
Knowledge of market.	To understand the market structure and demand.	Conduct market research.

## **Appendix A**

### **Community-based Tourism in the Caribbean Workshop Key Elements**

**Monday, 1 February**                    **Objective:** To discuss and clarify the basic concepts that underpin community-based tourism.

- Structure of the tourism industry and trends for the Caribbean, presentation (*Agnes Francis, tourism consultant*) followed by discussion.
- The growth of eco-tourism and the development of community-based tourism in the Caribbean (presentation and discussion) (*Tighe Geoghegan, Associate Director CANARI and Felix Finisterre, Coordinator SLHTP*).
- Defining concepts (group work with feedback).
- Presentations of participants cases, examples and experiences.

**Tuesday, 2 February**                    **Objective:** To provide exposure to field examples that can be used as reference points during the workshop.

- Tour of Latille Falls site and meeting with developer, discussion on issues and needs for community-based tourism development.
- Travel to Laborie to meet with members of the Environmental Conservation and Heritage Organisation of Laborie (ECHO - Lab) together with other stakeholders in development of tourism in the village.

**Wednesday 3 February**                    **Objective:** To match the demonstrated needs of communities that want to participate in tourism with capacity building programmes.

- Introducing capacity building (presentation and discussion) (*Tighe Geoghegan*).

**Thursday 4 February**                    **Objective:** To introduce techniques that can be used to assist the development of community-based tourism.

- Using an inventory of sites, attractions and activities as a tool to develop community-based tourism (presentation and discussion) (*Sylvester Clauzel, Programme Officer, SLHTP*).
- Policy needs and implications for community-based tourism (presentation and discussion) (*Felix Finisterre*).
- Maximising community based linkages with tourism (presentation and discussion) (*Felix Finisterre*).
- Introducing environmental management standards - review of current schemes and implications for community-based tourism (presentation and discussion) (*Felix Finisterre*).
- Identifying opportunities for applying techniques and opportunities to cases and examples (group work and feed back ).

**Friday 5 February**                    **Objective:** To achieve an understanding of the policy requirements for community-based tourism.

- Presentation of main points from workshop and discussion.
- Final remarks (*Honourable Philip J. Pierre, Minister for Tourism Civil Aviation and International Financial Services*).

**Appendix B**  
**Community-based Tourism in the Caribbean**  
**List of Participants**

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**Appendix C**  
**Community-based Tourism in the Caribbean**  
**Summary of Participants' Evaluation**

The following is the evaluation of the workshop by the participants:

1. The objectives set were achieved.
2. The programme (presentations, field trips and discussions) were organised to enable everyone to appreciate the complex issues associated with community-based tourism.
3. The content was sufficiently detailed and relevant to the topics.
4. Everyone contributed to discussions and participated as required. This reflected the level of interest by the participants.
5. The field trips represented diverse perspectives of community-based tourism and focussed our attention on approaches in developing this form of tourism.
6. The workshop created an awareness of ways in which communities can participate and benefit from this form of tourism provided that they develop a vision for such activities.
7. The workshop demonstrated that discussion and consensus building is the key to agreeing on the way forward. The participants represented diverse backgrounds with different views but discussions lead to agreement on issues.
8. All presentations were very well made and provided relevant information which put all issues in proper perspective for discussion and consensus.

Special mention was made of the following:

- (a) the growth of eco-tourism and the development of community-based tourism in the Caribbean and;
  - (b) sessions on capacity building, accommodation, minimum standards and inventory.
9. Community-based tourism is designed to attract a relatively new market, eco-tourists. Emphasis on accommodation within communities was stressed. This is innovative and requires much work and discussion.
  10. Generally, facilitation of the workshop was done very well, logistics, meals catering, lodging - everyone was satisfied.

Rolax Frederick  
(Participant and summariser of group's evaluations)

**Appendix D**  
**Community-based Tourism in the Caribbean**  
**Summary of a presentation by Ms. Agnes Francis, Tourism Consultant:**  
**Structure of the Tourism Industry and Trends for the Caribbean.**

As an economic activity, tourism is governed by laws of supply and demand. The demand is determined by consumers with varying demographic, psychographic and geographic profiles and that:

- have an interest in traveling;
- have the ability to travel;
- can be segmented into markets compatible with the receiving destination.

The supply is characterised by four primary segments: transportation, travel distributors, tourism promoters, and destination products.

### **Transportation**

The Caribbean is heavily dependent on tourism, yet has no or unfamiliar brands in the generating markets. The fate of tourism is always uncertain as the international airline operators determine which routes to fly, based on their financial interests. Low-cost operations are spreading and in addition, airlines are slowly reducing their high distribution costs.

Cruise lines, in the face of declining profit margins and economies of scale are reducing their operating costs. There are now three companies that command nearly 70% of the market and dictate the terms of their use of a destination. Expenditure attributable to cruise tourism is low, and while important, cannot be the primary means of generating economic development.

### **Travel Distributors**

The primary travel distributors are tour operators/wholesalers and travel agents.

- Tour operators/wholesalers: create vacation packages and organise trips for groups. They have direct links with the product suppliers, and purchase airline seats and hotel rooms at a discounted price, which are packaged for sale at a significantly higher price. Their marketing might cannot be matched.
- Travel agents: advise customers about destinations and options, make reservations for travel and accommodation, generally on behalf of tour operators. They earn commissions from the providers of the tourism products and their strengths lie in their knowledge of and acceptance in their geographic area.

Travel distributors sell 80% of international tourism, dictate price, product and level of exposure which any single product gets. Destinations have been known to die overnight when a tour operator switches its marketing and distribution efforts to other more profitable destinations.

### **Tourism Promoters**

At the destination level, these public sector bodies, provide the institutional, policy and regulatory framework as well as infrastructural support for the development of tourism. In the market place, they promote the destination to attract visitors compatible with the product offered. They work alongside the tour operators, whose marketing budgets they cannot match. Tourism promoters are driven by a need to generate economic development. However, in the Caribbean, tourism has generally out-paced the development of mechanisms that ensure equity and adequate filtration of benefits. Their efforts are usually concentrated on increasing the volume of tourism arrivals. They are generally aware of the potential of tourism, but often lack the technical expertise to develop products compatible with the economic needs of the destination.

## **Destination Products**

The most important link in the supply chain is the destination and its products. These include accommodation, attractions and amenities, ground transportation, infrastructure and in-bound tour operators (i.e. ground handlers).

**Accommodation** is a critical element of the product. In many Caribbean islands, it is the larger, foreign owned hotels which, as a result of their marketing might, dictate the type of tourists that visit the destination. In order to have greater control over revenue generation and profit maximization, vertical integration is becoming widespread with tourism interests owning tour operators, hotels, airlines and other elements of a vacation. With new non-traditional markets emerging, opportunities exist for the generation of employment via the provision of bed and breakfast accommodation at the community level, especially near a natural resource.

**Ground transportation** includes taxis, car rentals, tour buses and water taxis, and is a source of self employment for local entrepreneurs. There is increasing pressure to reduce costs through the use of larger vehicles moving increased numbers at one time.

**Attractions, amenities and activities** which visitors participate in are the key ways of differentiating a destination and ensuring participation by local communities. The landscape and other natural resources are developed into tourism products.

**Ground handlers** manage the packaged visitor stay on the island. They represent the international tour operators, and are therefore seen by the visitor as their custodians and have significant influence on the type of activities that visitors participate in.

## **Trends**

Trends that should be factored into any discussion on community-based tourism include:

- The Caribbean is a mature tourist destination and is becoming increasingly challenged to remain competitive as new entrants come into the market.
- The sameness of the Caribbean product is causing destinations to look for alternative means of differentiating itself in the market place. Natural resources are the basic tools being used.
- The growth in demand for ecotourism provides a ready market for the community-based approaches.
- Travel is the fastest growing area of commerce on the internet. Currently, it is estimated that approximately 10% of nature heritage vacations are booked via the internet.

Other global trends which have significant impact on Caribbean tourism include:

- **Branding:** Island destinations are seeking distinct and definable positioning in order to succeed in tourism.
- **Research:** Successful destinations are collecting and analysing information about customer needs, trends and competition.
- **Senior Citizens:** Significant growth rates in senior citizens travel are being recorded worldwide.
- **Women:** Over the last five years, the number of women travelers has risen dramatically. Further, 70% of all travel decisions are made by women.
- **Product quality:** The product itself, and its surrounding attributes, i.e. the service, atmosphere, delivery, responsiveness will be decisive in selection and purchase.
- **Cultural tourism:** This is becoming a formidable marketing tool for major destinations.
- **Mergers:** Especially in the area of marketing, pooling of resources are becoming the trend in order to have substantive impact.

### **The Inevitability of Tourism Development**

It is my view that tourism development in the Caribbean is inevitable. The socio-demographic reasons include rapid population growth, high unemployment and surplus unskilled labour. The restricted natural resource base has resulted in intensive land use causing deterioration of soils and nutrients. There is a heavy reliance on agricultural exports which have low elasticities of demand, suffer from price fluctuations, and are subject to fierce competition from alternative producers and substitute goods. Domestic economic development is hindered by small internal markets, the inability to compete in manufacturing even in terms of import substitution, by remoteness and high shipping costs which negates competitive market production.

This restricted economic horizon is characterized by limited options, rising economic expectations and an increasing demand for a higher standard of living. It is therefore imperative that tourism be developed in such a way as to promote economic development in a sustainable way.

### **Rationale for Broader Distribution of Tourism Benefits and Opportunities**

Economic diversity requires the interlinking of sectors whose overall performance is of critical importance to local economic and social well being. Appropriate policy formulation, careful planning and effective monitoring can assure the proper use of resources, the minimization of conflicts between sectors using those resources, and the realisation of social and economic objectives. The growth in demand for ecotourism experiences, which depend on the natural and cultural environment, makes it possible to include communities with access to these resources in tourism development.

The pattern of ownership in the tourism sector is such that generally, the large scale investments are foreign owned, while local ownership is concentrated in the areas of small hotels/guest houses, ancillary products such as restaurants, ground transportation and souvenir holdings. With the increasing demand for nature heritage tourism, St. Lucia has attempted to tap into that market, using sites, attractions and other products in rural communities. Capacity building has become necessary for the effective participation of communities in the opportunities that arise.

### **The Ecotourism Market: Trends**

Community-based tourism must become more sophisticated and take account of the trends and key characteristics of the ecotourism market, defined by consumers seeking a vacation involving activities related to nature, outdoor adventure, or learning about another culture, generally in the countryside or in wilderness settings. Annual growth rates in ecotourism are projected at 25%.

Some significant emerging trends in the ecotourism market include:

- significant growth in the travel trade market;
- increasing interest in soft adventure;
- environmental concerns significant in destination selection;
- growth in education tourism.

## Visitor Profiles

<b>The experienced ecotourism traveler:</b>	<b>General consumers interested in ecotourism vacations:</b>	<b>General consumers and experienced ecotourism travelers seek:</b>
Is between 25 and 34 years of age	Primarily between 25 and 45 years	Scenery/nature(45%)
Primarily couples 44%, with 25% being families	Primarily couples with 33% being families	Casual walking/hiking/trekking rate highest as activities
Very highly educated - 82% being university graduates	Generally well educated	Multiple activities
Prefer summer travel but has some interest in winter travel	Prefer summer travel	Mid-range accommodation
45% willing to spend over US\$1500 per person on an ecotourism vacation	38% willing to spend US\$1500 per person on an ecotourism vacation	
50% belong to nature related organisations	11% belong to nature related organisations	
72% read nature related magazines	61% read nature related magazines	

These profiles have implications for the development of community-based tourism. Firstly, the natural setting is a critical factor in the delivery of a quality ecotourism product. Secondly, there is an expressed interest in multi-activity vacations (e.g. hiking, boating and touring), which has implications for product packaging. Thirdly, guides and interpretive programmes enhance the quality of the experience. General consumers wish to combine the ecotourism experience with other types of experiences.

## Future Directions

Tourism is not necessarily desirable or feasible for every place. Each community should ask:

- a) Are there adequate resources for tourism?
- b) Are there potential tourist markets that can be attracted to the community?
- c) Is tourism needed to attain economic development objectives?
- d) Is the cost of improving access to the area and developing infrastructure for tourism justified?
- e) Is there possible competition from existing or potential tourism projects in neighbouring communities?

If the answers to these questions determine that community-based tourism is a viable option, a coordinated effort should be made to effect its development. Community-based tourism, cannot happen in isolation from the broader tourism environment. There is need to take on board the role of tour operators who book blocks of seats on airlines, leaving little scope for the independent traveler; the hotel chains whose marketing activities command the attention of potential visitors, also taking up available seats; the local ground handlers who represent the international tour operators; and the government institutions whose focus is increasing the volume of visitors with little consideration for the dispersion of benefits.

In the face of these challenges, community-based tourism must be sustainable, for example by:

- demonstrating the ability to attract demand;
- minimising environmental impacts and promoting the sustainable use of the natural environment;
- including meaningful participation by the community in the identification of projects, planning and development including the development of regulations;
- providing opportunities for community capacity building including community institutional strengthening, skills training and community education;
- having the potential to generate self-employment through economically viable projects;
- making a contribution to the diversification of the tourism product;
- showing that it can be marketed outside of the traditional means.