



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES, MONA

PRESENTATION SCRIPT

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The Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies (SALISES) at the University of the West Indies hosted the 19th Annual SALISES Conference, at the Holiday Inn Resort in Montego Bay, St James from April 25-27, 2018.

Minister the Honourable Edmund Bartlett delivered the keynote presentation on **Day Three (April 27)** of the Conference under the theme: 'Sustainable Futures for the Caribbean'.

Sustainable Futures for the Caribbean

MONTEGO BAY, JAMAICA — *The attainment of sustainable development has become the main long-term policy goal of most countries across the world. At the heart of the notion is the question of how increasingly scarce natural resources can be prudently managed and how economic growth can be aligned with the social and economic needs of local populations and communities and the preservation of the natural environment.*

In 2016, the United Nations launched its global sustainable development agenda through the establishment of The Sustainable Development Goals (SGDs) which expanded upon the Millennium Development Goals (MGDs) previously established in 2009 and expired in 2015. 193 World leaders to date have already adopted the 17 Sustainable Development Goals indicating their commitment to mobilize efforts to eradicate poverty, fight inequalities and tackle climate change while ensuring that no one is left behind.

Countries adopting the SDGs have committed to a timeline of 2030 to achieve the targeted goals. The attainment of the SDGs will require stakeholders and policymakers across all segments and sectors of society to build partnerships, strengthen collaborations and promote overall inclusiveness in the pursuit of broadly-defined national objectives.

Tourism has been identified as one of the main catalysts for the promotion of the SDGs. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) recognized 2017 as the Year of Sustainable Tourism and used the opportunity to focus on key issues of sustainability such as: inclusive and sustainable economic growth; social inclusiveness, employment and poverty reduction; resource efficiency, environmental protection and climate change; cultural values, diversity and heritage and mutual understanding, peace and security.

The tourism sector has been specifically aligned with the promotion of:

SGD 8 *(decent work and economic growth;*

SDG 12 *(responsible consumption and production) and*

SDG 14 *(life below water).*

SDG 8.9 directly references tourism - "By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products." So too does SDG 12.B- "Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products." And also 14.7- "By 2030, increase the economic benefits to Small Island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism.

The tourism sector continues to contribute invaluable to the generation of decent jobs and economic growth. Globally, tourism continues to be one of the fast growing industries, it is one of the leading contributors to global Gross Domestic Product (GDP), it accounts

for more than 30 per cent of trade in services, it is the world's third largest export category and it directly employs 10 per cent of the global workforce (1 in every 10 jobs).

Tourism is a labour-intensive sector that creates jobs for people of all ages and skills levels, not only in the sector, but through its value chain in many other sectors such as cultural industries, agriculture, construction, manufacturing, transportation, handicrafts, health, financial services or information and communication technologies.

Tourism also has the power to accelerate community development and reduce inequalities if it engages local populations and all key stakeholders in its development. Tourism can contribute to urban renewal and rural development and reduce regional imbalances by giving communities the opportunity to prosper in their place of origin.

Tourism development strategies and practices are being increasingly designed with the view of promoting more resource efficient initiatives that are in-keeping with the aim to achieve sustainable consumption and production which can be defined as the use of services and related products, which respond to basic needs and ensure a better quality of life while minimizing the use of natural resources and toxic materials as well as the emissions of waste and pollutants.

Finally it is a well-established fact that the tourism sector is heavily tied to coastal areas- most hotels and other tourism infrastructure are situated along coasts; beaches, sand and sea are essential components of the tourist experience; and tourists also engage in a wide range of other marine life activities. Tourism development must therefore be a part of an integrated policy framework for coastal zone management in order to help conserve and preserve fragile marine ecosystems.

Jamaica was invited to attend A Meeting of Tourism Ministers of the G20 Economies which was convened in Buenos Aires, Argentina to discuss tourism's role in sustainable development specifically with regards to the promotion of strong, sustainable, balanced and inclusive growth. When the meeting ended it was unanimously decided that the participating countries would among things:

- *Encourage sustainable and socially responsible policies that promote full and productive employment*
- *Establish favourable tourism framework conditions to stimulate innovation, entrepreneurship and connect ecosystems linking start-ups, main companies, investors and governments along the tourism value chain.*
- *Consider the importance of SMEs in the tourism, heritage and cultural sectors due to their contribution to job creation as well as their role in preserving and promoting cultural resources.*

Before the meeting in Buenos Aires The Ministry of Tourism in Jamaica and its network of public and private partners had already initiated strategies and programmes to accelerate sustainable tourism growth in Jamaica. Our Strategic Business Plan 2016-2019 which aims to strengthen linkages with other sectors of the economy particularly the agricultural and manufacturing sectors, strengthen the benefits derived from the industry by local residents and communities, promote broader participation by all Jamaicans; and ensure the safety, security and sustainability of the natural and built environments .

We are also seeking to increase understanding of the supply chain for the industry, identify specific constraints and limitations hindering tourism linkage with the domestic economy and also determine the receptivity for use of local goods and services within the sector.

Our commitment to our strategic business plan is most evidenced through the work of our Linkages Network which has been entrusted with the responsibility of overseeing the coordination and implementation of effective and sustainable strategies, which strengthen and facilitate linkages to expand the benefit of tourism development to other sectors and more ordinary Jamaicans.

Among the most noted achievements of the Linkages Network which have provided valuable networking, marketing and business opportunities for local entrepreneurs (farmers, manufacturers, craft vendors and others) include:

- *The establishment of the **Jamaica's Supplier Directory** - a simple effective marketing tool for local manufacturers to connect with buyers from all across the islands*
- *Christmas In July - face to face networking and marketing expo for local manufacturers*
- ***Speed Network Event** - network and marketing opportunities for local entrepreneurs through 15 minutes session with CEOs, GMs, MDs,*
- *Naming of **Devon House as first of several designated gastronomy centres** across Jamaica.*
- *The Launch of the **Jamaica Blue Mountain Culinary Tour***
- *The recently-staged **Jamaica Blue Mountain Coffee Festival***

*The Linkages Network will continue to pursue strategies to promote the diversification of the island's tourism product to expand the country's potential to tap into new and emerging segments of the global tourism market. The five segments being targeted are **gastronomy, health and wellness, sports and entertainment, shopping and knowledge.***

We also proudly reaffirm our continued commitment to supporting the expansion of the micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in the tourism industry (MSMTEs) in-keeping with one of the recommendations coming out of the recent G20 meetings. The value of these enterprises to the vitality and vibrancy of the sector is uncontested. The vast network of MSMTEs constitute the backbone of the sector; contributing significantly to the authenticity and quality of the tourism experience, enhancing destination competitiveness and contributing to enhanced brand image, the forging of positive local networks and increased productivity.

We have been pursuing strategies to broaden the participation of these enterprises in the tourism industry. We strongly believe that the expansion of the MSME sector which will allow for many more average citizens to capitalize on the vast opportunities for supplying inputs to tourism entities catering to the visitor experience in areas such as accommodations, restaurants, cultural and creative enterprises, entertainment, attractions and tours, agriculture, manufacture, foreign exchange trading, duty-free shopping and other services.

We are helping these enterprises to overcome challenges in areas such as access to financing and credit (Our 1 billion-dollar revolving loan scheme); technological adaptation and innovation; identifying suitable niche markets; improving market information and market access and improving customer training.

*The Tourism Product Development Corporation (TPDCO) has been instrumental in providing assistance in product development and licensing. TPDCO has also supported visitor safety, destination assurance, training, craft development and product enhancement... Product enhancement initiatives include upgrades to the **Lyssons Beach, Fort Montego Bay, Lover's Leap Hiking Trail, Trench Town Culture Yard, 1907 Earthquake Monument and The Negril Police Station.***

*Finally we are proud to announce that as destination Jamaica and other Caribbean destinations seek to bolster their resilience against a wide range of imminent threats that could destabilize their open vulnerable economies without warning such as natural disasters, terrorism, cyber-attacks and epidemics and pandemics, the region's first **Disaster Resilience Centre** will be established at the **University of the West Indies.** The Centre which will assume responsibility for creating, producing and generating toolkits, guidelines to enhance and assist destination preparedness, management and recovery from disruptions and crises that impact tourism and threaten economies and livelihoods in the region.*

*The centre is aimed at enhancing regional capacity to manage a range of chronic challenges that can be destabilizing to our societies and its focuses will include: **Risk Assessment, Mapping and Planning; Cyberspace Policy and Counter-Terrorism; Resilience-Related Research Collaborations; Development of Innovation Systems; Coordinating resilience policies with government, Resource Mobilization, Capacity Building and Cross-Border Intelligence-sharing.***

The Centre will be staffed by internationally recognized experts and professions in the fields of climate management, project management, tourism management, tourism risk management, tourism crisis management, communication management, tourism marketing and branding as well as monitoring and evaluation. The Centre will also provide research fellowship opportunities for individuals seeking to either expand their knowledge or, gain experience in tourism resilience and crisis management, through postdoctoral research, and (2) internships for undergraduate and graduate students in fields of study related to tourism resilience and crisis management.

About The UWI

Since its inception in 1948, The University of the West Indies (UWI) has evolved from a fledgling college in Jamaica with 33 students to a full-fledged, regional University with over 50,000 students. Today, UWI is the largest, most longstanding higher education provider in the Commonwealth Caribbean, with four campuses in [Barbados](#), [Jamaica](#), [Trinidad and Tobago](#), and the [Open Campus](#). The UWI has faculty and students from more than 40 countries and collaborative links with 160 universities globally; it offers undergraduate and postgraduate degree options in Food & Agriculture, Engineering, Humanities & Education, Law, Medical Sciences, Science and Technology and Social Sciences. UWI's seven priority focal areas are linked closely to the priorities identified by CARICOM and take into account such over-arching areas of concern to the region as environmental issues, health and wellness, gender equity and the critical importance of innovation. Visit www.uwi.edu