On June 17th 2007 at the Caribbean Hotel and Industry Conference in Miami, FL, Sandals Grande Ocho Rios Beach & Villa Resort was awarded the 2007 American Express Caribbean Environmental Award. We describe below, the achievements of the winner and extend our heartiest congratulations to the management and staff of the Resort for its performance!

We also feature in this issue of the BroadCAST, the work and dedication of a committed group of persons in destination Curaçao who are working assiduously towards making this Dutch island a “green” destination and one that is proud of its heritage resources. We encourage other groups in Caribbean destinations to share your good works with us.

It bears mentioning that we are also concerned about the number of unfavourable reports of hotel and resort developments ongoing in the Caribbean. There is really no excuse for any hotel or resort not to be adhering to the highest possible standards of responsible tourism development, even if the rules of engagement at the destination are ineffective or non-existent. There is a lot of guidance information available to hoteliers and resort investors on sustainable siting and design and operations, with some readily available from CAST or other international agencies such as Conservation International and UNEP.

We therefore make an urgent call to prospective resort developers to do the utmost to protect not only your investment, but the Caribbean island in which you choose to operate. This not only makes sound business sense, but is a moral imperative.

As usual, we invite you to share your stories and best practices with us.

Send your questions &/or comments to cast@cha-cast.com.

NOTA BENE
• AMERICAN EXPRESS CARIBBEAN ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD 2007
• DESTINATION CURAÇAO
• RESPONSIBLE HOTEL & RESORT DEVELOPMENT

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Lively discussions among the attendants have resulted in follow-up actions in to be implemented to improve hotel operations and profitability.

One of the main conclusions of the seminar is that many hotels still have the potential to improve their operational aspects. Benchmarking is one option which could further stimulate improved environmental performance.

The seminar was opened by Mr. Karel Tujeheut, acting chairman of BPM (who works full time as Manager Aqaulectra Multi Utility), who explained the goals and objectives of BPM.

Mrs. Frouweke Smit (student intern at the Department of Public Health and Environmental Hygiene (VOMIL)) and Mr. George Kraaikamp (Director of Arbo & Milieu Consult Curaçao) provided an overview of the current state of environmental practices in hotels in Curaçao.

Mr. Tim van den Brink (Director of the Curaçao-based consultancy, EcoVision) addressed potential obstacles that hotels may face implementing environmental management systems and discussed solutions to these challenges.

The keynote speaker, Ms. Deirdre Shurland (Director of the Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism in Puerto Rico), spoke on the benefits of environmental management systems, updates to the Green Globe standards and about CAST’s experiences in the Caribbean.

In the afternoon session, participants heard from persons working in the Curaçao hospitality sector, who shared their practical experiences. Mr. Rogier van de Meer, Manager of the Papagayo Resort described his experiences attaining the Green Key certification. This program has had a definite impact and has added value to the management of the Papagayo Resort. The hotel is determined to achieve the program’s ‘gold’ status.

The final speaker, Ms. Tamara Croes, Director of Green Island Products, gave practical tips on the use of organic cleaning products. She also showed participants how in some instances these cleaning products could be produced by the hotels themselves.

Following this informative seminar, BPM will continue to work with hotels to promote environmentally responsible practices. Based on the seminar results, BPM plans to organize a practical workshop together with CAST and certain hotels in Aruba that have been Green Globe certified for a number of years. The purpose of this follow up workshop will be to present innovative and environmentally relevant technologies that are available to hotels today.

Some examples include solar foils, T5 high frequency fluorescent lights, solar-powered boilers, several types of occupancy sensors, waste water treatment, propane air conditioners, power factor correctors, and much more. Hotel managers will be able to experience these new technologies hands-on and also exchange ideas with fellow managers. After all, seeing is believing!

Article submitted by BPM – a multi-company volunteer initiative on Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles, involving Aqaulectra (utility company), Selikor (waste company), the National Medical Laboratory (ADC), Maduro and Curiel’s Bank, Arbo & Milieu Consult Curaçao (health and safety consultant), EcoVision (environmental consultant) and the Royal Dutch Navy. BPM strives to promote the implementation of best environmental practices within businesses, demonstrating that environmental responsibility and company efficiency go hand in hand.

Send your questions &/or comments to: cast@cast.com
Excerpt from the Green Partnership Guide: A Practical Guide to Greening Your Hotel. "With this third edition of [the Guide], we celebrate the environmental accomplishments we’ve made since the Green partnership program began in 1990. This program is core to Fairmont’s brand; it is how we demonstrate our corporate – and personal – responsibility and commitment toward the environment. The collective successes of the Green Partnership could not happen without the hard work of the many Fairmont colleagues who make up our Green Teams."

Chris Cahill, President and C.O.O., Fairmont Hotels & Resorts. For more see: www.fairmont.com.

Regarding tourism sustainability in Curaçao:
"...The conclusion has been drawn that, although a significant amount of policy preparation and implementation has been done, some elements are still missing. More research is needed on carrying capacity, the socio-economics of the tourism industry and the psychology and behaviour of the local society as well as the decision makers in relation to the concept of sustainable tourism."

Dino R. Daal & Dr. Leon Pors in an article entitled: "Sustainable Tourism in Curaçao: Current Status and Future Expectations". For more information contact: ddaal@curacao.com.

CAST News...

CAST Director, Deirdre Shurland participated in a panel discussion on the implications of global warming and climate change at the Caribbean Hotel Association’s Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Investment Conference (CHTIC) 2007 held at the World Trade Center in Curaçao, May 8th - 10th 2007. The panel was moderated by David Jessop, Executive Director of the Caribbean Council and featured Thomas Scheutzlich, GTZ’s Principal Advisor to the St. Lucia-based Caribbean Renewable Energy Development Programme (CREDP) of CARICOM and Michael C. Apel, Senior Trust Fund and Technical Assistance Officer, Inter-American Investment Corporation (IADB Group) as co-panelists. The panel discussed global warming issues and imperatives, and the technology options available to Caribbean investors.

The CAST Governing Council convened its 10th Annual Meeting on May 15th 2007 at the Punta Cana Resort & Club hosted by resort owners and CAST foundation members, Grupo Punta Cana. The Council approved a new 3-year business plan and strategy for CAST. The 2007/2009 strategy will focus on region-wide programs primarily targeting the CHA membership and providing solutions to chronic environmental issues; consolidate data and information on hotel sustainability efforts and practices; and solidify CAST’s alliances of regional and international partners. The latter is an important source for performance tools and guidance information for industry. For more information: cast@cha-cast.com.

CAST also conducted a workshop for participants at the Caribbean Tourism Organization’s 9th Annual Caribbean Conference on Sustainable Tourism Development, May 21– 24 2007 in the Cayman Islands. The Workshop entitled, “Greening Your Business”, identifying key strategies for better partnerships and communication between the public and private sectors and highlighted best practices in action at award winning Caribbean hotels.

Continued ►
CAST News cont’d

Global warming & climate change was also on the agenda at the annual Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Conference hosted by the Caribbean Hotel Association during June 17th – 19th 2007 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Miami, Fl. CAST hosted a panel discussion on the topic featuring Christian Gischler Blanco, Infrastructure Specialist at the Inter-American Development Bank in Washington D.C., who discussed a potential project opportunity in energy conservation and efficiency for CHA members. A second panel discussion featured environmental management systems (EMS) as the framework available to businesses for effective response and in measurable ways to environmental issues. For more information: cast@cha-cast.com.

News! News! News!

Do you have a news item to share? Send a brief summary to: cast@cha-cast.com

Or contact us at:
Tel: 787-725-9139; Fax: 787-725-9108

The BroadCAST is a quarterly publication of the Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism, the environmental division of the Caribbean Hotel Association

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Website: www.cha-cast.com

Sustainable Tourism Round Up...

JAMAICA


The Award was presented by the President of CHA, Peter Odle at the Conference opening ceremony on June 17th 2007.

The Resort is Green Globe certified and benchmarked and previously received a commendation for “Outstanding and Dedicated Service to the 2004 International Coastal Clean Up and Profound Commitment to Marine Environment” bestowed by the Ocean Conservancy.

The Resort has been implementing its environmental management system since 2001 with goals to minimize impacts on the surrounding environment. It has implemented a program which impressively monitors water and energy use, solid, hazardous & air emission waste generation, water and noise pollution, and ecosystem vitality. The property achieved a 4% savings on water use over the prior year.

Reuse and recycling programs are in place in the kitchens, maintenance and other property areas. Waste-waters are typically recycled and used for irrigating the grounds usually during early morning periods; while other items such as food scraps for compost, glass, paper, plastic, batteries and cardboard are also recycled or reused.

Over 1000 litres of waste oil is recycled locally to produce soap.

The Resort has developed a re-use and recycling awareness campaign designed to spur action among staff and guests to conserve. Information is communicated via a fortnightly newsletter and the hotel mascot ‘Skippy’ serves as the symbol of responsible behaviour.

Staff are recognized annually for their achievements, awareness and initiative. Guests participate in the Resort’s environmental activities e.g. Marine Park coral reef restoration projects and tree planting exercises. Beach clean up activities, community projects, environmental education and theme days are regularly organized for both guests and staff.

Congratulations to the 2007 American Express Award winner, Sandals Grande Ocho Rios Beach and Villa Resort – a Caribbean leader!

GRENADA:

More success for the recently opened Paradise Bay Resort and Spa in Grenada, which in March 2007 installed a utility-grade windmill that produces more energy than the resort needs.

The resort is aiming for a zero-carbon footprint. It will buy carbon certificates to compensate for the CO2 emissions of flights made by guests to the property as well as from its transportation fleet. Guests will not have to pay extra in resort prices. The program will also be externally validated. Contact resort owner James Post for more information at: paradisebay@spiceisle.com.