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CHTA LAUNCHES LINKAGES TASK FORCE TO FOSTER TIES BETWEEN TOURISM AND KEY REGIONAL INDUSTRIES

Caribbean Travel Marketplace 2025 to feature inaugural Linkages Showcase, connecting buyers with suppliers of locally sourced products and services

Fort Lauderdale, Fla. – April 10, 2025 – The [Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association](#) (CHTA) is intensifying its focus on regional economic integration. The association has launched a new **Linkages Task Force** aimed at strengthening relationships between the Caribbean's tourism industry and key local sectors, including agriculture, manufacturing, and the creative economy, among others.

Immediate Past President of the CHTA, Nicola Madden-Greig, has been appointed to lead the taskforce. "This Linkages Task Force was created to forge stronger economic linkages across the Caribbean, ensuring that more of the benefits of tourism extend beyond hotels and positively impact local communities," said Madden-Greig.

Madden-Greig is also a member of Jamaica's Tourism Linkages network and will be joined by other key business and tourism leaders to include Aswad Morgan, Ali Ramsey, Clifton Reader, Jeremy Jones, Ivan James, Jules Sobion, Frank Comito, Vanessa Ledesma, and Sanovnik Destang.

Tourism is a vital economic driver of the Caribbean's blue economy, contributing around 22 percent of the region's gross domestic product (GDP) in 2019 and 2.75 million total jobs in 2023 (WTTC, 2024); however, the region is yet to fully capitalize on its potential. Therefore, deepening the impact of tourism in the wider economy will include identifying opportunities for collaboration, reducing barriers to entry for small businesses, and promoting policies that encourage local sourcing and innovation specifically focusing on manufacturing, agriculture and the creative industries.

The task force will draw upon the successful efforts of destinations like Jamaica, Saint Lucia and the Dominican Republic in cementing deeper economic linkages. It will also work with other regional organizations such as CARICOM and other governmental and non-governmental organizations, leveraging existing programs and collaborating on new initiatives.

"The Caribbean is brimming with creative and entrepreneurial talent," said CHTA President Sanovnik Destang. "If we want to grow a more inclusive tourism economy, we must build stronger bridges between tourism providers and the small-and medium-sized businesses that support them. Linkages are a tangible step in that direction."

In addition to fostering partnerships, the Linkages Task Force supports education and capacity-building initiatives, including best-practice sharing between destinations and industry leaders. It

is also developing long-term solutions for integrating regional businesses into the tourism value chain.

Linkages at Marketplace

As its first activity under the new taskforce, CHTA will unveil a refocused Linkages Showcase at **Caribbean Travel Marketplace 2025**, scheduled for **May 18–22** in Antigua and Barbuda. The Showcase will provide a dedicated platform for regional suppliers—ranging from artisans and food producers to manufacturers—to make appointments and meet directly with hotel and tourism buyers seeking authentic, locally sourced products and services.

This year's Linkages Showcase will spotlight Caribbean-made goods and services with high potential for integration into the tourism supply chain. Participating buyers will have the opportunity to engage with suppliers, place orders, and cultivate long-term business relationships that support more sustainable procurement.

"By bringing key players together under one roof at Caribbean Travel Marketplace, we're creating opportunities for long-term partnerships that strengthen regional resilience and empower our people," added Madden-Greig.

A limited number of exhibitor spaces are available for the Linkages Showcase, with discounted rates for CHTA member businesses. For more information, visit www.chtamarketplace.com to [apply here](#), or contact CHTA at membership@caribbeanhotelandtourism.com.

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About the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA)

The Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) is the Caribbean's leading association representing the interests of national hotel and tourism associations. For more than 60 years, CHTA has been the backbone of the Caribbean hospitality industry. Working with some 1,000 hotel and allied members, and 32 National Hotel Associations, CHTA is shaping the Caribbean's future and helping members to grow their businesses. Whether helping to navigate critical issues in sales and marketing, sustainability, legislative issues, emerging technologies, climate change, data and intelligence or, looking for avenues and ideas to better market and manage businesses, CHTA is helping members on issues which matter most.

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