

# The BroadCAST

A Quarterly Newsletter of the  
Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism



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## Director's Cut

**I**n behalf of all at CAST, we "thank you" for your continued support throughout 2006.

In review, CAST had a busy 2006. It began with the delivery of the keynote address on "Tourism and the Environment" at the 9<sup>th</sup> Special Session of the UNEP Governing Council/ Global Ministerial Environment Forum in Dubai February 7-9 2006. In his follow up letter of appreciation, Klaus Töpfer the now retired UNEP Executive Director described it as an "...insightful and inspiring keynote address...".

In March 2006, with the Caribbean Epidemiology Centre (CAREC), we commenced discussions in Trinidad with the IADB's Multi-Lateral Investment Facility (IADB-MIF) and regional stakeholders for a 2<sup>nd</sup> Quality Tourism for the Caribbean (QTC) project, implementing the 7 QTC health, safety & environment standards in the region. We expect implementation in 2007.

In May 2006 we inaugurated a new Green Globe Caribbean Benchmarking award with the first winners being all hotels in Aruba.

Between May and July 2006, CAST continued its hurricane training in the Dutch islands of Aruba, St. Maarten & Curacao.

Also in July 2006, 25 persons received proficiency training under the Green Globe Company and International Ecotourism Standards in Puerto Rico.

The course was sponsored by the Puerto Rico Tourism Company, EcoXcursion Aquatica, CAST and Green Globe

In November 2006, CAST, Green Globe, and the USAID REACT Project co-hosted the combined *Green Globe International and Caribbean Green Tourism Conference* in Montego Bay, Jamaica. All technical sessions received over 85% approval ratings from participants from Caribbean, North America, the U.K. and Asia-Pacific.

In late November, CAST also delivered an address at an IADB Renewable Energy/ Energy Efficiency Forum in Washington D.C. describing the successes of Caribbean hotels.

The year 2006 ended with Environmental Walk-Through (EWT) assessor training by CAST in Nassau, Bahamas for 16 participants supporting the Bahamas Hotel Association's Sustainable Tourism and Entrepreneurial Management & Marketing (STEMM) Project for small and medium sized enterprises.

What's in store for 2007 – our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year? We will pursue various fund raising initiatives, a carbon emissions strategy and project, QTC regional health, safety & environment standards implementation and much more. Stay tuned!

Send your questions &/or comments to [cast@cha-cast.com](mailto:cast@cha-cast.com).

# Feature: Climate Change...how will the Caribbean Tourism industry respond?

The tenor of debate on Climate Change was considerably increased towards the end of 2006. This was perhaps brought on by:

- Al Gore's provocative 2006 documentary, "An Inconvenient Truth", which has had the most profound impact yet on policy makers abroad.
- The US elections results of November 2006, where both houses of Congress changed from Republican to Democratic control with consequent re-ordered House priorities on climate change.
- The November 2006 report on the economic impacts of climate change by Sir Nicholas Stern for the UK government, concluding that urgent action was needed to mitigate impacts on growth and investments and to reduce the potentially huge costs of doing "business as usual".
- The 4<sup>th</sup> assessment report of the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released in February 2007, which concluded with 90% certainty that humans are responsible for increases in global temperature.

The significance for Caribbean tourism relates to the longevity and serviceability of the natural resources on which our industry hinges. With temperatures potentially increasing 2<sup>o</sup> – 5<sup>o</sup>C according to the estimates, the impact on our coastal areas including many capital cities, forests, reefs, beaches and economies could be devastating.

Whilst we are still uncertain of the complete impacts of a warmer earth on the Caribbean, we have all witnessed the devastating hurricane seasons of 2004 & 2005.

These storms can set our development thrust back several years, as our neighbours in Grenada, Cayman Islands, Haiti and the Bahamas know well. The losses have amounted to billions in destroyed infrastructure and property.

How will our small island economies and ecosystems cope with a warmer earth? How can we make our economies and businesses more resilient to the impacts – some of which will manifest gradually while others catastrophically?

A few Caribbean hotels have led the regional private sector in mitigating environmental impacts through their participation in Green Globe or ISO 14001 certification programs. Their operations have become more efficient and competitive by reducing waste and consumption volumes (energy and water). It is now time for other industry laggards to get on board.

The sustainable approach to achieving consumption efficiencies through energy or water conservation – is not by merely changing light bulbs or turning off faucets – but by changing patterns of wasteful behaviour, training and re-training staff, and ensuring the most effective use of efficiency technologies.

This, coupled with inspired leadership at the business enterprise have produced the best and most consistent results at Caribbean hotels. The achievements of the Sandals and Beaches group of hotels, Tiamo Resorts in the Bahamas, Almond Casuarina in Barbados, the Amsterdam Manor Beach Hotel in Aruba, 3 Rivers Ecolodge in Dominica and others pay tribute to their exemplary leaders.

To address climate change concerns, however, businesses also need to measure their "carbon footprint" i.e. measure and determine the sources of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) release from operations – the main culprit that contributes to atmospheric warming trends – and implement actions to reduce it.

The Caribbean Hotel Association (CHA) has embraced the climate change issue and will soon articulate a policy for action. CHA has mandated its environmental subsidiary, CAST, to pursue the elaboration of a carbon emissions and energy efficiency project.

Stay tuned for more information on this topic in later issues of the *BroadCAST!*

So as a tourism business how will you respond? Whatever it will be, "business as usual" is no longer a credible option. Don't fall behind. Do your part to reduce your carbon footprint. Get informed and act now!

For more on global climate change see the website of the International Panel on Climate Change of UNEP and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) at: [www.ipcc.ch](http://www.ipcc.ch)

Send your questions &/or comments to [cast@cha-cast.com](mailto:cast@cha-cast.com)

## Leading Lights...in their words



**P**eter Odle, President of the Caribbean Hotel Association speaking on climate change at a recently concluded CHA Board of Directors meeting at Caribbean Market Place in Aruba, January 14<sup>th</sup> 2007:

"This is the single most important emerging global environmental issue which Caribbean hotels cannot afford to ignore. I urge all hoteliers to pay attention to the issues and respond when CAST comes calling for your support and participation"

**D**avid Jessop, Executive Director of the Caribbean Council in his weekly column "The View from Europe" published in the Caribbean media January 8<sup>th</sup> 2007:

"The Caribbean is a globally known and a recognised brand name and destination because of its environment. Its uniqueness provides it with an extraordinary opportunity to re-engage with the world if it can develop and promote a clear message on climate change."

## CAST News...



**A**s part of our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary fund raising activities, we raffled a cruise prize for two on a Carnival fun ship at the recently concluded CHA Caribbean Market Place held in Aruba January 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> 2007. The grand prize winner was Trina Brown of OBM International Limited in Miami, Fl. Congratulations Trina! Thanks to all who supported our fund raising cause and especially to the Carnival Corporation and the Florida Caribbean Cruise Association for their generosity! We are continually raising funds. Join our *Friends of CAST* program. Donate just \$25. See [www.cha-cast.com](http://www.cha-cast.com) for details.



**B**lue Flag National Coordinators' met in Barbados January 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> 2007 at the Divi Southwinds Resort for their 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting. In attendance were participants from the operating NGOs in Puerto Rico, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic and the Bahamas, now all members of the Foundation for Environmental

Education (FEE) owners of the program based in Denmark. Finn Bolden Thomsen, Blue Flag International Coordinator also attended. The meeting was opened by Alvin Jemmott, President of the Barbados Hotel and Tourism Association, with Sue Springer, Executive Vice President also in attendance.

Loreto Duffy Mayers Vice-Chair of CAST and Chair of the BHTA's Environmental Committee served as meeting chairperson. The meeting welcomed the participation of Ms. Marie Bredy of the Ministry of Tourism in Haiti which has expressed interest in the program. For more information contact us at: [cast@cha-cast.com](mailto:cast@cha-cast.com).

**C**AST welcomed two wonderful interns during the summer and fall periods in 2006. Jennifer M'vouama from France and Carolin Stamm from Germany provided excellent technical assistance during the summer and fall of 2006 respectively, at the CAST office in San Juan, Puerto Rico and we thank them both for their service.

Applications for the 2007 summer and fall internships are pouring in. See the CAST website ([www.cha-cast.com](http://www.cha-cast.com)) for more internship details.

**S**ign up your youth candidates for the 2007 Virgin Island Environmental Resource Station (VIERS) program at Lameshur Bay in St. John, USVI. This program presents a one week living and learning outdoor environmental laboratory for high school students at the VIERS camp in St. John, USVI. Don't wait, act now! Spaces are limited.

Contact: Randy Brown, Program director at Clean Islands Organization via email: [rb@islands.org](mailto:rb@islands.org).

*News! News! News!*

Do you have a news item to share? Send a brief summary to:

[cast@cha-cast.com](mailto:cast@cha-cast.com)

Or contact us at:

Tel: 787-725-9139

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# Sustainable Tourism Round up...

## CURAÇAO:

The Curacao Hotel and Tourism Association (CHATA) through the work of their recently recruited intern Edyta Sedzimir will explore the feasibility for making the island of Curacao into a "geotourism" destination. The first step will be a proposed lecture and presentation to be delivered by Jonathon Tourtellot, Director of the Center for Sustainable Destinations, at the National Geographic Society and Geotourism Editor for the National Geographic *Traveler* magazine. It is anticipated that this lecture will drive the geotourism initiative on the island.

For more details contact Don Werdekker Executive Vice President of CHATA: [don@chata.org](mailto:don@chata.org).

## DOMINICA:

The Dominica Hotel and Tourism Association has also expressed interest in hosting a lecture and visit by Jonathon Tourtellot in Dominica for a similar purpose of pursuing geotourism objectives. Dominica, with its reputation as the "nature isle" is currently the only Green Globe Benchmarked destination under the Green Globe *Community* Standard. For more details contact Jennifer Laudat:

[jayjaylaud@yahoo.com](mailto:jayjaylaud@yahoo.com)

Looking for more information and great websites on "sustainable tourism"? Check out [Sustainabletourism.net](http://Sustainabletourism.net). According to Rachel Dodds:

"Even though we are always talking about more responsible and sustainable tourism – we often don't know where to find the information when we want to participate – e.g. go and stay in a locally run hotel with an environmental policy, go to a local restaurant and meet the locals..... well now there is – a new site – STEP UP TRAVEL – provides small tourism providers in developing countries a way to increase their visibility and revenue. Click here for more info [www.sustainabletourism.net](http://www.sustainabletourism.net) or go directly to [www.stepuptravel.org](http://www.stepuptravel.org)."

## PUERTO RICO:



We congratulate our friend and colleague Jerry Bauer of the International Institute of Tropical Forestry (IITF) of the USDA Forest Service. The IITF recently received the prestigious MarCom Creative Awards for 2006. IITF won six awards, four Platinum and two Gold, for the production of marketing and tourism promotional materials for Puerto Rico and Nicaragua.

The MarCom Creative Awards are sponsored by the Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals, and is an international award competition that annually recognizes the creativity and outstanding achievements for writing and design of marketing and communications programs, print, visual and audio materials.

Two platinum awards were given for the IITF Promo Brochure and for a multimedia program on the El Toro Wilderness located in the Luquillo Experimental Forest – "El Yunque", both of them coordinated by Jerry Bauer, Program Manager for International Cooperation at IITF. Bauer has more than 30 years of experience working in the Latin America and Caribbean Region, developing conservation programs in parks and protected areas.

He has written several scientific articles and he is also an accomplished photographer who uses his photography "as a tool to help create awareness for conservation needs and the protection of natural resources".

For more information, please call Helen Cortes at 787-766-5335 x 217 or email Helen at [hcortes@fs.fed.us](mailto:hcortes@fs.fed.us).

The BroadCAST is a quarterly publication of the Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism (CAST). To unsubscribe: reply with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line

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