



MAKING BIODIVERSITY WORK FOR YOUR TRAVEL BUSINESS
INCREASING PROFITABILITY WHILE PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Event Report

Event organized by:

**Conservation International's Center for Environmental
Leadership in Business (CELB)
and Center for Applied Biodiversity Science (CABS),
Center for Environmental Research and Conservation (CERC),
Punta Cana Ecological Foundation,
Punta Cana Resort and Club**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | | |
|-------------------|---|--------------|
| SECTION I | EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | 1-9 |
| SECTION II | SUMMARY OF THE PROGRAM | 10-34 |
| 2.1 | Welcome Reception and Guest Speakers Former U.S. President Bill Clinton and Senator Hillary Clinton Mr. Theodore Kheel, Co-Founder & Chairman, Punta Cana Resort & Club Dr. Thomas Lovejoy, President of The H. John Heinz III Center for Science, Economics and the Environment | 10 |
| | <i>DAY ONE OF PROGRAM</i> | |
| 2.2 | Program Opening and Keynote Address Mr. Frank Rainieri, Founder & President, Punta Cana Resort & Club Hon. Gordon “Butch” Stewart, Chairman, Sandals and Air Jamaica | 10 |
| 2.3 | Panel Discussion – Proactively Creating Business Value While Addressing Conservation Concerns | 14 |
| 2.3.1 | Marine Parks: Key Travel Destinations in the 21st Century, Kalli de Meyer, Director Coral Parks, CORAL | |
| 2.3.2 | Tour Operators: Integrating Sustainability Principles into Operations and Management, Professor Nico Visser, Director of Sustainable Tourism Development, TUI Netherlands | |
| 2.3.3 | Travelers Philanthropy: Engaging Guests in the Conservation Needs of the Community and Region, Andrew Fairley, Director, Turtle Island Resort, Fiji | |
| 2.3.4 | Discussion | |
| 2.4 | Biodiversity in the Caribbean Basin: Priority Areas for Tourism Michael Smith, Caribbean and Freshwater Fellow, Center for Applied Biodiversity Science, Conservation International | 18 |
| 2.5 | Sector Specific Working Groups | 19 |
| 2.5.1 | Theme 1: Environmental Education and Awareness Building | |
| 2.5.2 | Theme 2: Destination Partnerships | |
| 2.5.3 | Theme 3: Supply Chain Management | |
| 2.5.4 | Theme 4: Tourism Development Planning | |
| 2.5.5 | Theme 5: Protected Areas—Establishment and Management | |
| 2.6 | Evening Reception and Guest Speaker Dr. Jeffrey Sachs, Director, The Earth Institute at Columbia University | 25 |

DAY TWO OF PROGRAM

| | | |
|--------------------|---|-----------|
| 2.7 | Keynote Address | 26 |
| | Captain William S. Wright, Senior Vice President of Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd | |
| 2.8 | Panel Discussion | 27 |
| 2.8.1 | Successful Destination Management , June Marie Mow, Executive Director of Coralina and Stephen Edwards, Tourism Specialist of the Andes Region with Conservation International | |
| 2.8.2 | How Environmental Reporting Can Enhance Your Company's Reputation , Mr. Bill Burton, Director of Corporate Affairs, InterContinental Hotels Group | |
| 2.8.3 | Building alliances with the conservation community , Mr. Glenn Prickett, Executive Director, The Center for Environmental Leadership in Business | |
| 2.8.4 | The Marine Realm – The Caribbean Natural Asset , Dr. Sylvia Earle, Executive Director, Global Marine Program, Conservation International | |
| 2.9 | Cross Sectoral Working Groups: How can we protect and Preserve Caribbean Destinations | 30 |
| 2.9.1 | Theme 1: Environmental Education and Awareness Building | |
| 2.9.2 | Theme 2: Destination Partnerships | |
| 2.9.3 | Theme 3: Supply Chain Management | |
| 2.9.4 | Theme 4: Tourism Development Planning | |
| 2.9.5 | Theme 5: Protected Areas—Establishment and Management | |
| SECTION III | CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION | 38 |

Section I: Executive Summary

Ninety tourism and environmental professionals from the English, Dutch and Spanish Caribbean and the United States of America met in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic on April 24 and 25 at the first ever workshop on “Making Biodiversity Work for your Travel Business – Increasing Profitability while protecting the Environment.” The event was organized by Conservation International’s Center for Environmental Leadership in Business (CELB) and Center for Applied Biodiversity Science (CABS), along with the Center for Environmental Research and Conservation (CERC), the Punta Cana Ecological Foundation and the Punta Cana Resort and Club. Sectors represented were tour operators, hotel owners, developers, and managers, cruise lines, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations. The latter group was diverse representing conservation, consulting, education, landscaping and architecture concerns.

In welcoming the participants, Director of Travel and Leisure of CELB Mr. Jamie Sweeting, acknowledged that the critical question to be addressed by the participants over the two days of the workshop was, “How can civil society and business work together to protect biodiversity so that it (biodiversity) can be an asset to business?” He also shared the objectives of the workshop, namely:

Objectives

1. To focus on how biodiversity can work for the travel industry.
2. To support partnerships within the private sector and between the private sector and civil society and government.
3. To encourage tourism companies to improve their operations both on as well as off property, to protect biodiversity (a key Caribbean Tourism product).
4. To assist Conservation International in the definition of their Caribbean agenda.

A number of critical issues arose during the course of the two days that participants identified as germane to incorporating biodiversity in the tourism industry and for creating partnerships and alliances between the industry and other stakeholders in civil society. These issues were categorized in five areas and for each category the participants produced a set of solutions or actions designed to deal with the issues identified. These are summarized below and discussed in more detail in section two.

I. Environmental education and awareness building

The group of participants who reviewed this thematic area determined that an agreed and practical joint approach to the education of Government officials in the key ministries of Tourism, Environment, Health, and Education within the Caribbean coupled with the education of customers, crew, and local representatives, was critical.

This education effort would focus on placing biodiversity on the CARICOM and ACS agenda; work at improving the image of public and private sector institutions in relation to environmental matters; identify role models to consistently share messages of environmentally responsible business practices and establish a system of benchmarking that would facilitate the measurement of progress in the implementation of environmental programs in the tourism industry.

II. Destination partnerships

The selection of destination targets based on the number of ports of call and direct impact of the industries in the area was seen as a means of identifying priority environmental issues in destinations for which a sustainable destination action plan could be implemented. Critical components of this would be the study and improvement of the interaction of all-inclusive resorts with the local economy and environment, and the advancing of the Blue Flag certification within the region. Two initial locations recommended for pilot project of this sort were Antigua and the Romana and Bayahibe clusters.

III. Supply chain management

Within the context of supply chain management, the participants recommended the introduction of sustainability criteria (with a focus on biodiversity) in excursion providers contracts' procedures. This was seen as requiring the selection of one key excursion per main group, looking at its potential impact on biodiversity as well as maximizing the interests of all stakeholders. Guidelines would be necessary to achieve this, and would entail, a survey of existing guidelines already in use; a gap analysis; compilation of draft guidelines; and a consultation of all relevant stakeholders to develop finalised guidelines.

IV. Tourism development planning

The recommendation from the group that considered tourism development planning was the incorporation of sustainability principles in tourism master planning & development. This would of necessity require the strengthening of the capability of civil society to participate meaningfully in multi-sectoral councils for tourism development & tourism master planning. A critical first step in achieving this was the enlisting of regional governmental support for physical master plans that incorporate sustainability.

V. Protected areas – establishment and management

Replicating the Bonaire national Marine Park example in other parts of the Caribbean, and making an effort to expand the Caribbean Marine Protected Areas was one of the recommendations of this group. In addition, they highlighted the need to produce a series of Caribbean maps overlapping biodiversity conservation hotspots and tourism development as a means of improving the planning of the Protected Areas network for both conservation and tourism. This groups also wanted to see more private sector involvement in the planning, declaring and managing protected areas; the development of protected areas that are financed and operated by certified entrepreneurs; and more hotels promoting protected areas as part of a their package.

In addition, several participants made commitments for action after the workshop.

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENTS:

Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Travel (CAST):

We are committed to be team members on the following:

- The Cruise ship (Carnival) led initiative on destination management.
- The La Romana-Bahayibe initiative.
- GTZ proposal mentioned at the meeting.

Even though not defined at the meeting, and if required we would also be happy to contribute to the BATours Antigua initiative. The other groups mentioned CAST as a team player and we have no difficulty in doing so, once we have a better understanding of these initiatives.

Caribbean Latin American Action (CLAA):

CLAA commits to make bio-diversity a critical part of its Tourism Business Team Agenda and to work with CELB to make available the 27th Annual Miami Conference on the Caribbean Basin (Dec 7-10, 2003 at the Loew's Miami Beach) as a potential forum to bring our agenda to a broader constituency from across the region.

Carnival Cruise Lines:

1. Continue to develop and strengthen the relationship with Conservation International where CI facilitates the expansion of Carnival's existing onboard environmental programs and specific sustainable initiatives to the ports of call by the following:
2. Destination Partnership:
 - Selection of destination targets based on frequency of visits / biodiversity characteristics.
 - Identification of priority environmental issues of concern at the selected destinations.
 - Identification of local partners among NGO and the local government at the selected destinations.
3. Development and implementation of best management practices for Tour Operators.

The Center For Environmental Leadership in Business

- Facilitate an Alliance for Business and Biodiversity in the Caribbean.
- Work with industry partners to develop a "Portfolio of Protected Area Attractions" in response to the gap analysis CI is leading at the World Parks Congress.
- Work with IHEI, CAST and CTO on "Tourism Planning and Development."
- Work with both Tour Operators and Cruise Lines on several initiatives developed by the break-out groups: (1) Guidelines for Excursion Providers; (2) Education of passengers/customers; and (3) Destination Management.
- Conduct a RAP with SSDI in Baruco.
- Support development of a web portal on best practices for protected areas management and tourism.
- Continue our work with CORALINA in the Seaflower Biosphere Reserve.

Center For Environmental Research and Conservation (CERC):

The Center For Environmental Research and Conservation, Columbia University is offering in Winter 2004 an "Executive Certificate in Environmental Conservation, Economics and Policy." This one-week executive program combines instruction from recognized environmental scientists and policy makers with the accommodations of a tropical luxury resort dedicated to the philosophy of conservation. Participants will gain

an understanding of the scientific, economic and policy issues affecting biological conservation, focusing on implications for business and the private sector.

Courses include Diversity and Conservation, Environmental Policy, and Environmental Economics as well as field-based or technical courses. There will be optional marine & terrestrial field trips, an opportunity to explore the Punta Cana Nature Reserve, and access to modern scientific facilities at the Punta Cana Biodiversity Lab.

Conservation International and CORANLIA:

Stephen Edwards, Conservation International's tourism expert in the Andes Region, and June Marie Mow, Executive Director of CORALINA, are committed to, and are working towards, securing a group of graduate students for the Kellogg School of Business (one of the premier U.S. business schools) to support destination management efforts in the Sea Flower Biosphere.

Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL):

CORAL commits to working with CELB and TOI on development and testing of a comprehensive Supply Chain Guideline for marine recreation tour operators.

CORAL commits to assisting partners in building better consumer awareness through the cruise ship industry by encouraging lines to distribute coral safe guidelines for diving, snorkelling, turtle watching, and marine mammal watching.

Ministry, Netherland Antilles:

Translation of information into English.

Ministry of Tourism, Dominica:

The Government of Dominica, through the Ministry of Tourism, Industry and Enterprise Development and with financial and technical support from US-AID and PA Consulting Group, was in the process of working towards Green Globe Certification. It is anticipated that this objective will be realised within the next year, and would result in Dominica being the first Green Globe certified destination in the Caribbean region.

One Step Beyond:

Any organization/company in the Caribbean region, whether private or public, that wants to develop and implement a sustainable tourism/responsible business action strategy and doesn't have the financial resources to do so, will have the opportunity and chance of receiving guidance, facilitating and hands on assistance at no charge at all (except paying direct travel expenses). The areas that we will commit to assisting include:

- Preparing, developing and implementing sustainable tourism/responsible business project initiatives and programs.
- Developing and implementing sustainable tourism, environmental management and responsible business action programs (Green Globe, Red Flag, etc.)

- Developing and implementing (via “hands-on” approach) local community, organizational and company awareness and training programs.
- Creating branding, holistic image building and green marketing strategies for hotels, resorts, spas, retreats, golf courses, nature reserves, etc.

Punta Cana Resort & Club:

- To sponsor/ host the next Biodiversity Meeting (not necessarily in tourism, but whatever the topic we elect next year is.)
- To participate in and/ or support the creation of a regional network of tourism officials working on conservation issues as both Punta Cana as well as the Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism,
- To work with UNEP on the destination management project,
- To distribute information about the event to colleagues and journalist in the region.

Royal Caribbean Cruises, Ltd.:

- Working with CI on developing standards for shore excursion operators Utilizing the developed standards during the selection of shore excursion operators and eventually as a condition of doing business
- Working with CI on developing onboard educational media for promoting biodiversity and individual responsibilities
- Considering applications for funding of specific projects related CI initiatives

Tiamo Resorts:

Tiamo Resorts is totally committed to and would continue to commit to the sustainability of biodiversity in all that we do. I offer our support in whatever way possible to CELB and CI and encourage the consortium of NGO's, government representatives, business leaders etc. to take advantage of the passion, flexibility and ability of the small hotels operations throughout the Caribbean for what perhaps might be a faster approach to implementing change within the tourism industry. Within this sector there is often a closer connection to the biodiversity of the region and it is my opinion that with small hotels you may have many "David's" who can help conquer the "Goliath" of conserving sustainability.

We were certainly glad to be a part of your efforts and commend you on your work. It was an impressive, well organized weekend and I look forward to future endeavours by CI and CELB within the tourism industry and the Caribbean.

Tour Operators' Initiative:

Facilitate with the Tour Operators' Initiative, and the support of Duetshe Gesellschaft fur Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) and The Center For Environmental Leadership in Business, a partnership at the destination level between the TOI and Caribbean destinations. Dominican Republic, because of Punta Cana Resort and Club's interest, may be the first destination.

Disseminate widely in the Caribbean the booklet “Practical Guide of Good Practice”, developed by CELB and TOI for the accommodation sector.

Consult TOI members on the natural areas in the Caribbean that they would recommend for protected areas status.

West Indian International Tours Ltd:

Disseminate destination information to hotels.

Section II: Summary of Program

2.1 WELCOME RECEPTION AND GUEST SPEAKERS

The event began with an evening reception and dinner that was very generously hosted by Mr. Theodore Kheel, Co-Founder and Chairman of Punta Cana Resort and Club, at his private residence.

Former U.S. President Bill Clinton and Senator Hillary Clinton opened the reception with remarks on the urgent need to counteract the growing environmental crisis facing the world and the Caribbean. Host Mr. Theodore Kheel then provided a warm welcome, and introduced the guest speaker Dr. Thomas Lovejoy, President of The H. John Heinz III Center for Science, Economics and the Environment (a non-profit institution dedicated to improving the scientific and economic foundation for environmental policy through multi-sectoral collaboration among industry, government, academia, and environmental organizations). Dr. Thomas Lovejoy gave remarks in a speech entitled “Teaming with Life.”

DAY ONE OF PROGRAM

2.2 PROGRAM OPENING AND KEYNOTE ADDRESS

At the opening ceremony Founder and President of Grupo Punta Cana and co-host of the workshop Mr. Frank Rainieri, offered his welcome to the participants and focused their attention on the goals and objectives of the workshop, using his experience in the development and operation of Punta Cana Resort and Club to clearly indicate that proper use of biodiversity was critical to the survival of the tourism industry. Punta Cana Ecological Foundation is home to a 5000 square foot laboratory that facilitates research on indigenous Caribbean plants, animals and marine life, aimed at discovering new medicines.

He acknowledged that there were a number of challenges to be met in achieving the objectives, including governments that are slow to recognize the value of tourism and therefore have not invested in the requisite infrastructure, e.g. the provision of water and adequate waste management; the fact that there are unclear development master plans that inhibit developers; the need to develop standards; the dependency on foreign investment; the cruise industry that is requiring infrastructure development but not providing the necessary returns.

Mr. Rainieri called for a united Caribbean, pointing out that “*Our environment binds us together – the Caribbean Sea is a lake that surrounds us all.*” He used the comparison of the European Union, noting that if countries that have fought against each other in various wars can unite, the Caribbean should be able to, since there has never been a Caribbean war. He reiterated that conservation is economically feasible.

The keynote address was aptly presented by Chairman of Sandals and Air Jamaica Hon. Gordon “Butch” Stewart. He chose as his topic “*Securing the Corporate Bottom-Line: The Environmental Imperative.*” He started by stating that the survival of the industry

depends on our ability to preserve the integrity of both the natural and man-made environments. He pointed out that whereas tourism involves many activities that can adversely impact the environment, it also has the potential to contribute immensely to its protection.

Mr. Stewart said that there is a tendency to discuss environmental matters in a way that makes it appear abstract and technical to ordinary people, and offered an initial challenge of *de-mystifying this concept of environmental preservation*.

He also stressed that the idea of the *triple bottom-line* is relevant, as it challenges the notion of measuring corporate success purely in financial terms. In the emerging business culture, social and environmental performance is equally important to financial performance, in the assessment of corporate success.

Based on his considerable experience he identified the main environmental challenges in the region as:

- How to reduce energy and water consumption?
- How to treat and dispose of the waste that we produce without creating ecological damage?
- How to better manage chemical usage?
- And importantly, how to slow down beachfront erosion?

He feels that for the industry to have a viable future, strategic focus on these issues is not optional, but a necessity. These are not line items, but fundamental principles of operations management.

Mr. Stewart then shared Sandals' Green Globe Experience as an example of how an environmental management program can make a difference to the bottom line. He explained that Sandals initiated an environmental management program in 1997 by adopting the Green Globe 21 environmental management standard as the tool for efficient management of their environmental practices. To date, 14 of their hotels are fully green globe certified. Another was due for auditing the following Monday and the remaining hotels are all expected to be certified by August of 2003.

Mr. Stewart shared some impressive figures to emphasize his point:

Cost savings

Cost savings is the most obvious benefit of a sound environmental strategy. Sandals **spent some US\$200 thousand over the last five years** to implement the EMS program. As a result, they have **realized group-wide savings of US\$1.5 million in the last two years alone**. They have projected savings of US\$ 2 million, for this year, as a direct result of implementing the environmental management system.

They have saved 73.3 million litres or 19 million gallons of water in the last two years. This was achieved by putting nozzles on hoses, setting specific irrigation times, and using water saving devices on showers and faucets. These initiatives

resulted in a 30% reduction in the water flow at the hotels and a corresponding 30% reduction in water usage and cost. ***It should be noted that the amount of water that was saved is enough to run their largest resort, Beaches Turks and Caicos, for at least six months***

In terms of energy usage, they have saved 3.6 million kilowatts of electricity and reduced group wide lighting costs by 75%. This was achieved by installing timers on Jacuzzis; installing security and walkway lighting; and replacing incandescent bulbs with florescent bulbs. Most importantly however, these results were achieved through improved staff education and awareness.

They have also embarked on a program to phase out the use of diesel, and to replace it with LPG units. Under the EMS program, they have saved some 30 thousand litres of LPG over the last two years.

Mr. Stewart proudly stated, "If anyone had any doubts about how a sound environmental management program can make a difference to the corporate bottom line, there is ample proof."

He went on to point out that the benefits of environmental responsibility extend far beyond savings on cost. There are benefits with regards to customer satisfaction, employee performance and improved company image. He explained that there is a clear link therefore between a hotel's embrace of good environmental practices and its ability to attract business in the future, and warned that to miss the link is to punch a hole in the corporate bottom-line.

Mr. Stewart informed the participants that environmental program have become a central part of the staff motivation program at Sandals' hotels. He stressed that company image or corporate reputation cannot be precisely measured, yet it is one of the most valuable assets that any business can have. The hotel industry is particularly vulnerable, since guests usually equate environmental pollution with poor hygiene practices. A hotel that is perceived to be unhygienic, will pay dearly in terms of its image, as people will simply take their business elsewhere. Tour operators are also increasingly dropping environmentally unfriendly hotels from their portfolio.

Mr. Stewart advised that hotels located in environmentally sensitive regions have a particular responsibility to maintain good environmental practices, as NGOs and other social groups can seriously undermine their image. Hotels in the Caribbean would be well advised to inform themselves about developments such as the Kyoto Protocol on Greenhouse Gas Emissions as well as the various regulations pertaining to atmospheric, water and soil pollution, and to be proactive in adopting these international standards which will apply to the region sooner or later.

With regards to cooperation between governments and the tourism industry, Mr. Stewart made the following recommendations:

Governments can help to promote environmental responsibility, by offering tax and duty waivers for the procurement of environmentally friendly technologies. The process can

be further encouraged by the offering of tax relief to companies with documented, measurable and proven environmental management systems.

Several European governments are encouraging the voluntary adoption of environmental standards, through incentive programs. Caribbean governments should adopt this practice, particularly for the implementation of ISO fourteen thousand and one (14001) and Green Globe 21 standards.

Governments and the private sector can also cooperate in the maintenance of environmental attractions. A percentage of revenues from parks, falls and other environmentally sensitive areas, should be used to maintain selected natural attractions. Alternatively, user fees should be levied on these attractions to fund their maintenance.

There is room for greater cooperation between governments and the tourism industry, in the area of environmental management and planning.

Given that waste disposal and treatment are often long term environmental problems, government and the private sector should be working closer to develop waste minimization and pollution prevention techniques.

The issue of beachfront erosion poses one of the most serious threats to the industry at this time. Many of the beaches have been lost, or have been significantly affected by coastal erosion. This exposes most of the region's tourism facilities that are close to the sea, to flooding, particularly during hurricanes. However, government's and the private sector can collaborate to affect a long-term solution, by ensuring that no ozone depleting substances are used in, or are generated by our manufacturing processes.

While aware that some of our reef damage has been caused by ozone depletion, it must be acknowledged that the majority of reef damage in the Caribbean has resulted from human impact on the marine environment. There is an opportunity here for government and the private sector to work together to halt marine degradation, through more environmental awareness initiatives.

Mr. Stewart closed his presentation with a quotation from the United Nations Secretary General Kofi Anan:

“ Without the private sector's active commitment and support, there is a danger that universal values will remain little more than fine words or documents, whose anniversaries we can celebrate and make speeches about, but with limited impact on the lives of ordinary people ”

In the discussion that followed the following points were raised:

1. The Barbados Government has offered tax relief for Green Globe certified hotels.
2. There is a need for political will to integrate the Caribbean and Latin America.
3. The large hotel chains need to buy into the triple bottom line concept.
4. All-inclusive properties do contribute to the local economy.

2.3 PANEL DISCUSSION – PROACTIVELY CREATING BUSINESS VALUE WHILE ADDRESSING CONSERVATION CONCERNS

The first panel of the meeting comprised three representatives from the marine parks, tour operators, and hotel sector of the tourism industry. They offered some practical examples of the integration of environment with tourism and pointed out the many benefits that were accruing in their projects.

2.3.1 Marine Parks: Key Travel Destinations in the 21st Century -- Kalli de Meyer, Director Coral Parks, Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL)

This presentation focused on ways in which tourism can support the creation and management of coral parks and about some of the associated business benefits of doing so. The Bonaire National Marine Park was used as the case study. The BNMP receives over 60,000 visitors and 25,000 divers per year, and is considered a model marine protected area, being one of only four sites selected by UNEP as demonstration sites in the Caribbean. It therefore provides an excellent example of tourism and conservation working hand in hand.

The reasons offered by Ms. Meyers for supporting tourism as a conservation partner included the fact that coral parks, the tourism industry and tourists want many of the same things, including clean and clear water, intact coral reefs teeming with fish, reefs which are protected from harmful activities, reliable, safe access to the reefs, and few conflicting activities.

Moreover, dive operators have a vested interest in protecting reefs because in setting up and running tourism facilities there is a considerable investment, and therefore it makes sense to protect coral reefs as any other business asset.

A number of concrete examples were provided of how dive operators support BNMP:

- Funding of coral reef conservation which provides for maintenance of moorings, shore marker stones; patrolling assistance (saving fishing boats); unbiased law enforcement of rules and regulations permitting; education and information for islanders, tourists, stakeholders, local community; and research and monitoring.
- In kind donations such as time, equipment, boats, materials.
- Support for the mooring systems. The dive operators do this by:
 - advocating for moorings;
 - assisting in setting up and maintenance;
 - ensuring moorings are used conscientiously and correctly; and
 - reporting wear and tear on moorings.
- Taking a front line in guest education. Coral reefs are fragile and poorly trained and poorly educated visitors can physically harm the reefs they visit. The dive operators run orientations for arriving guests about reefs and reef fragility; on how to behave in coral reef environments and on the rules and regulations. They also run free buoyancy workshops to improve diver skills and minimize inadvertent contact, and they disseminate Marine Park materials such as brochures, leaflets.

- Performing a “Watch Dog” function. Coral Parks are frequently understaffed. Therefore, dive operators have a strong role to play in enforcement by taking responsibility for divers and snorkellers in their care; by reporting suspicious activity.

Many lessons have been learnt in the process of operating the BNMP:

- tourism can actively and effectively support coral reef conservation;
- tourism can provide an essential continuing source of funding;
- dive tourism is particularly good at minimizing its own DIRECT IMPACTS on coral reefs:
 - i. anchoring and boat grounding;
 - ii. diver impact through contact, breakage;
 - iii. poor diver behaviour such as feeding, touching, molesting;
- tourism is well positioned to take a front line in educating visitors; and
- tourism can provide enhanced protection for protected areas.

The dive operators have benefitted from the marine park. There has been no drop in tourism arrivals and the tourists do not object to the rules and regulations and are willing to pay the admission fees that further the tourism development of the park. In addition there is excellent publicity, a marketing advantage, moorings, Marine Park information in the form of brochures and leaflets and most importantly reef protection from things like coral collecting and spearfishing .

In the final analysis the tour operators recognise that good reefs are good for business and that:

- reef conservation costs little or nothing (requires more thought than money);
- packing up and moving on is no longer an option;
- conservation is a cheap insurance policy;
- there are strong marketing advantages – coral parks are a positive marketing tool; and
- divers are keen to “vote green” with their tourism dollars.

The Coral Reef Alliance has been taking these lessons and passing them on to other Coral Parks around the world through the following projects and initiatives:

- a direct support program aimed at sharing knowledge with and supporting coral parks around the world e.g from Bunaken and Fiji to Cozumel and San Andres;
- training courses that are run for both Coral Park staff and dive operators and their staff on reef conservation techniques and dive operation “greening;”
- hands on assistance provided to individual parks: Cozumel, Bunaken;
- materials developed such as guidelines for tourist activities including coral friendly standards for divers and snorkellers;
- on-going project support provided for the Bonaire National Marine Park – helping to train the new manager and developing management plan; and
- Guidelines and good practices for marine recreation activities being created in partnership with CELB and TOI which will be piloted throughout the Caribbean.

2.3.2 Tour Operators Integrating Sustainability Principles into Operations and Management – Professor Nico Visser, Director of Sustainable Tourism Development, TUI Netherlands

Prof. Visser reminded the participants that visitors' appreciation for the environment is enhanced by the experience they obtain at the destination. He focused his presentation on supply chain management and internal operations.

Creating a matrix which showed the interactions between the planet, the people and the profit, and the destination at three levels namely– transportation, accommodation and activity, Prof. Visser explained about the global effects which were taking place, the need for better management of protected areas and public involvement at the local level, and the urgency of selecting figurehead species that stand for the health of nature, and ensuring strict control over souvenir trade.

He explained that tour operators lead by example. They buy, sell, share and are green through the pre-selection in purchasing and offering to customers. For example, the tour operators represented by TUI do not support jet skiing, but encourage responsible diving as well as dolphin and whale watching.

The tour operators work with a wide range of stakeholders both at the destination and in the country of origin, including:

- Country of origin: customer, tourist boards, tour operators, travel agents, outbound governments, and international transporter.
- Destination: incoming tour operators, tourism destination, developers and financing institutions, governments in destinations, accommodation owner/manager, excursion provider, local guides, NGOs.

Among the many services they provide and activities they undertake are health and environment destination audits, focusing on energy, water, wastewater, waste, nature conservation; eco-labeling; and education, e.g. on the benefits of energy conservation.

The participants were informed that all 200 Dutch outbound tour operators have committed themselves in the ANVR/VRO framework to introduce a product and environment program (PMZ) by 1 November 2003. It will include a mission statement and policy on sustainable tourism; a PMZ coordinator who is educated and certified; a list of forbidden activities; and the implementation of five concrete measures.

In concluding Prof. Visser told the participants that the tour operators are willing to contribute, to put pressure on destinations and accommodations and to inform customers. He stressed that what is needed are milestones and champions.

2.3.3 Travelers Philanthropy: engaging Guests in the Conservation Needs of the Community and Region – Andrew Fairley, Director, Turtle Island Resort, Fiji

In his presentation Mr. Fairley defined Travellers Philanthropy as a response to travellers feeling a desire to engage with, be committed to, and empowered by a community's needs and wanting to play a role in meeting some of those needs.

He went on to inform the participants about providing opportunities for guests at the Turtle Island Resort to understand and experience the needs of the people in the region, so that they are given the opportunity to see first hand the needs of particular communities, whether it be in healthcare, education, sanitation, potable water, resource management, or in a host of options. He said that very often the guest is often moved to ask: “How can I help?”

Mr. Fairley explained that the motivation for becoming involved with communities includes a recognition that they have the capacity, in a less developed country, to truly make a difference with a very modest contribution; connecting to a sense of place, and the people that are in that place; the special nature of the experiences the guests have enjoyed; or the desire to support a particular project – a new roof on the school, some library books, funding a child to the US or Australia for a specialist operation – the list of possibilities are endless.

The assistance comes in a variety of forms: a donation of money with a specific or generic outcome sought; the donation of an item of equipment or goods – a machine for a medical centre or library books for a school, which that particular community needs; commitments made by travellers who want to give their own time, with their specialist skills, to have a “busman’s holiday.”

At Turtle Island resort the approach is to allow guests who want to be involved in programs to self-select. No hard-hitting material is provided, nor is any call to action collateral distributed. They have found that if people are interested in finding out more about our community work, they will ask.

Numerous benefits accrue from this program. The engagement by guests and the property in the community issues and needs can assist in achieving the optimal occupancy level at the highest possible rate, and to do so in a strong, supportive community which values the presence of the operator. The property has maintained a robust presence in the media despite all of the competition.

Mr. Fairley reminded the participants that businesses rarely succeed in failed communities. This is particularly so in communities in which there is a significant amount of interdependency at a cultural and experiential level. By creating enduring job opportunities for the region, Turtle Island Resort continues to attract the best and brightest, after their tertiary education, back to the village to provide real leadership, and to reinforce the benefits and protocols of traditional Fijian village life.

2.3.4 Discussion

In the discussion that followed, the following issues were raised:

1. How do we address carrying capacity in the region? Where do we cut off?
2. Education planning and management is key to dealing with carrying capacity issues.
3. How do we get government and industry working together so that sustainable development has an end?

4. Why does Bonaire not charge higher rates for the marine park? *Bonaire has not charged higher rates because the industry will not tolerate it.*
5. Have benchmarks been set to measure whether the Bonaire Park is really good or just better than average? *Yes such benchmarks have been set and the park is assessed.*
6. The community in Fiji has been subjected to assessment questionnaires to determine the usefulness of the program.

**2.4 BIODIVERSITY IN THE CARIBBEAN BASIN: PRIORITY AREAS FOR TOURISM --
MICHAEL SMITH, CARIBBEAN AND FRESHWATER FELLOW, CENTER FOR
APPLIED BIODIVERSITY SCIENCE, CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL**

Dr. Smith made a presentation on the Caribbean Biodiversity Initiative. The objectives of the initiative are to conduct research to guide strategies for conservation and to build alliances to carry out the strategies.

Dr. Smith informed the participants that there are a number of Caribbean terrestrial and marine biodiversity hotspots, and indicated that the marine ones are the Florida Straits and the Southern Caribbean. He explained that there are two opportunities that make it possible to create a regional strategy:

1. The revolution in information technology -- it is now possible to map all species in many groups of organisms and there is the virtual museum of Caribbean Biodiversity.
2. The World Park Congress meeting in Durban, South Africa which takes place in September 2003 with the theme "Building Comprehensive Protected Areas Systems: Creating the Strategy to Fill the Gaps in the System."

Dr. Smith explained that a Caribbean Gap Analysis would be undertaken that would analyze the adequacy of the existing Caribbean network of protected areas in representing species diversity. This analysis is expected to provide recommendations for where protected areas would be needed in order to complete the coverage of all species and facilitate the development of a strategy to complete the regional system of protected areas.

He suggested that the question to be answered at the workshop is: "As the system is completed, how should it be fine-tuned to promote tourism as well as protect biodiversity?" Dr. Smith pointed out that in the Gap analysis the species and protected areas maps will be overlaid to determine areas of congruence and non-congruence. Decisions will then be taken on how best to create protected areas that will affect the species not lying within existing protected areas.

As part of the process, there will be a need to set appropriate conservation targets for each species. This will involve looking for reserve networks that are complementary in species representation; investigating surrogates for non-mapped biodiversity; integrating information on land use and human density to minimize conflict; and addressing socio-economic concerns.

In closing Dr. Smith said that ultimately the question is one of "Can the regional system of protected areas be completed in a way that enhances Caribbean tourism?" This will

mean a fine-tuning of the new system to adjust the locations of new protected areas to cover both touristic targets and conservation targets. Therefore, protected areas should be created as joint ventures between business and conservation. In this way it should be possible to complete a Caribbean tourism portfolio, i.e. add new kinds of protected areas that contribute to the Caribbean profile as a region of diverse touristic attractions.

2.5 SECTOR SPECIFIC WORKING GROUPS

In the afternoon the participants were divided into sector specific working groups to discuss the obstacles and practical solutions for supporting conservation. A noted professional in the specific sector led each group:

Tour operators: Ms. Guilia Carbone, Secretariat, Tour Operators' Initiative for Sustainable Tourism Development

Cruise Lines: Mr. Scott Wayne, Managing Partner, SW Associates

Hotel Development: Ms. Karen Fletcher, Director International Hotels Environment Initiative

Hotel Operations: Mr. Bill Meade, Managing Consultant, PA Consulting Group

Government: Mr. Oliver Hillel, Tourism Coordinator, United Nations Environment Program

Civil Society: Dr. Donald Hawkins, Eisenhower Professor of Tourism Policy, The George Washington University

Each group was asked to either propose a conservation initiative or identify an existing one, and to indicate the resources that would be required to start or sustain it, and to describe the commitments necessary by the industry and other partners as well as the actions that would have to be taken. The results were shared and discussed in the plenary that followed.

The facilitators reviewed the results of the sector specific groups and the comment that emerged from the plenary against the backdrop of the overall objectives of the workshop. When analysed in this way, it was recognised that the initiatives that had been discussed could be divided into five categories, namely:

1. Environmental Education/Awareness Building
2. Destination Partnerships
3. Supply Chain Management
4. Tourism Development Planning
5. Protected Areas – Establishment and Management

These categories or themes then formed the basis of the deliberations of the cross-sectoral working groups whose mandate was to identify actions that would protect and preserve Caribbean destinations.

2.5.1 Theme 1: Environmental Education and Awareness Building

Initiative: Incorporate biodiversity and environmental education within tourism degree programs, secondary and elementary curriculums.

Required resources:

- Training and capacity building for tourism staff and conservation educators.
- Development of materials – best practices, case studies, information on guidelines standardizations; inventory of available literature to support the initiative.

Commitments necessary:

- Commitments from Ministries of Education to support pilot program and from industry to support training and to build opportunities for educational programs in their destinations.
- Tourism industry builds opportunities for educational programs in their destinations that provides guidelines for both basic environmental education and tourism management.
- Commitments from universities and other educational institutions.

Actions:

- Pilot programs within universities and schools.
- Identify groups/ industry representation within the region with expertise to share lessons learned in order to develop broader educational guidelines from existing experiences and develop mechanism for networking (e.g. CAST)
- Train teachers, train the trainers.
- Provide learning opportunities to students/civil society (I.e. field trips).

Initiative: Develop a web-based resource to share experiences regarding hotel environmental initiatives.

This includes a compilation of success stories, a mechanism to solicit support (volunteers, funds) and examples on how to promote efforts (press releases, marketing materials).

Topics will include:

- Greening operations (energy, water, wastewater, chemicals)
- Community program
- Conservation/ biodiversity
- Poverty alleviation
- Guest involvement programs
- Purchasing policies
- Protected area management

Resources and commitments required:

- Case studies according to template
- Economic data/benchmark
- Classification by hotel site facilities, location, etc.
- Internet - website expertise: development and maintenance
- Promotion of site
- Searchable, key words
- Listserv and bulletin board
- Ensure up-to-date information
- Multilingual
- Resources from hotels (people)
- Develop a green team comprised of different hoteliers in the region

Actions:

- Compile success stories
- Develop mechanism to solicit support

Initiative: Tour operators raise consumers' awareness on Caribbean biodiversity

- Develop a database to share information on biodiversity among tour operators.
- Define core recommendations on responsible travel, consulting with local players.
- Produce information at regional and local level on biodiversity (including threats, and information on protected areas such as opening hours, resources available), to be then stored in a common database.
- Develop a common tool, such as an in flight video on Caribbean biodiversity and negotiate through a NGO with airlines for showing free of charge.
- Ensure that Tour operator's representatives are briefed on same information and then can become good ambassadors.
- Link with local education programs in order to ensure that recommendations presented to the customers are in line with local population behaviour (example: a recommendation not to throw rubbish on the beach would be not taken seriously by customers if then they see locals doing so).
- Provide incentives to consumers to be responsible ('certifications' etc).

Note: each tour operator would also develop individual communication tools depending on audience.

Initiative: Cruise industry environmental awareness initiatives

- Partnerships with local environmental groups such as MPAs and parks; material adapted to cruise passenger audiences.
- Cooperation agreements between industry and local groups.
- Develop or adapt materials according to cruise line passengers and destination needs, organize education sessions aboard ships for passengers.

Other initiatives:

1. Provide education awareness and training for governments, politicians, community, private sector and press on the theme of sustainable tourism development.
2. Integrate ISO and EMS training in university curriculums.
3. Create clearinghouse for sharing information.
4. Develop a web-based resource to share experiences regarding hotel environmental initiatives.

2.5.2 Theme 2: Destination Partnerships

Initiative: Institutionalizing the role of communities in preserving and valuing biodiversity through sustainable development

Required resources:

- Best practices involving the community.
- Training manuals on enterprise development.
- Technical assistance for tourism business development.

Commitments necessary:

- Partnerships between education organizations, communities and tourism industry.
- Travel Industry to engage the community in preserving biodiversity.
- Commitment from communities to support conservation related tourism where they see benefits.

Actions:

- Develop economic incentives; provide training and capacity building on business planning; create awareness of economic opportunities related to biodiversity; teach the business community the importance of social capital; enterprise opportunities.

Initiative: Implementation of Blue Flag Certification

Resources required:

- Funding (public-private)
- Government permits/ authorities

Commitments and actions

- Develop beach management committees
- Ongoing monitoring
- Promotion of program in North America and other markets
- Linkage to biodiversity through educational materials
- Signage
- Strengthen regional organizations – CASF, CCA, CTO

Initiative: Make the link between public health and the environment

Commitment:

- Outreach that is locally based and originated so as to ensure credibility.
- Joint action between the hotel and local community (example after a beach clean-up, gather the community to explain the significance to human health).
- Continuous outreach.
- Work within the existing community structure.
- Schools.
- Change common practices (e.g. – cleanliness of the streets, littering, hair-braiders).

Resources and actions

- Qualified knowledgeable resources (or hotel staff).
- Education material.
- TV/ radio.
- Live examples (to do; not to do).

Initiative: Tour Operators contribute financially to conservation efforts

- Develop a clearinghouse at the Caribbean level of existing projects related to biodiversity conservation, implemented by NGOs, to allow efficient use of tour

operators funds allocated to biodiversity conservation (from corporate budget as well as collected through customers contributions).

- Develop criteria for including of projects in database, and system to monitor funds received.

Note: Each Tour operator would chose individual mechanisms for fund raising

Initiative: Cruise industry Caribbean Destination partnerships

- Selection of destination targets; identification of priority environmental issues/areas in destinations; identify local partners among NGOs and government.
- Commitment of local partners for collaboration on priority issues within industry.
- Convene meetings among and between local partners and cruise industry. Prioritize issues and develop action plans building on existing industry and environmental standards.

Initiative: Focus on Social Components and indicators of Conservation, MPAs and Business

Resources required:

- List of indicators (% of corporate resources and employees dedicated to social concerns, labor relations, contribution to basic services and infrastructure).
- Sharing of lessons learned and good practices.
- Tools for social analysis – e.g., perceptions of communities, etc.

Commitments necessary:

- Integrating community and cultural background as a tourism asset.
- Opportunities for domestic travel.
- Remediate conflicts (harassment, drugs, prostitution) between locals and tourists with win-win situations.
- Government is more effective.

Actions:

- Build capacity of trade associations and destination management organizations.
- Guidelines for destination management with a pilot project.

Other initiatives

1. Develop guidelines for destination management with a pilot project.
2. Develop a sustainable destination action plan through multi-stakeholder workshops.
3. Support voluntary initiatives with resources, recognition and marketing.
4. Provide incentives for private sector to implement environmental regulations and standards – training, production of clear and stable regulations.
5. Initiative for river conservation and reforestation.

2.5.3 Theme 3: Supply Chain Management

Initiative: Introduce sustainability criteria (with a focus on biodiversity) in excursion providers' contracts' procedures

- Identify key excursion providers contracted by tour operators (land and marine based activities).
- Define guidelines of good practice in consultation with relevant excursion providers' sectors.
- Develop based on guidelines of good practice a check list (specific questions).
- Share the guidelines and check list with all tour operators through existing networks (Tour Operators Initiative, National and regional associations of tour operators).
- Tour operators should clearly define their contracting policy (in particular under which circumstances contracts would be called off).
- Include the selected 'questions' (i.e. the check list) in existing health and safety audit (active for the UK market in particular, to be defined how to 'deliver' these guidelines for tour operators that do not currently have a H&S audit).
- Develop training material for the auditors on the guidelines of good practice for the various excursion providers groups.

2.5.4 Theme 4: Tourism Development Planning

Initiative: Seeking regional governmental support for physical master plans, which incorporate sustainability

Resources Required:

- Scientific data analysis
- Trained staff
- Government support
- Site analysis
- Long range development plans for the area/ region
- Market analysis
- Analysis of legislation
- Cultural analysis

Commitments Necessary:

- Staff time.
- Commitment from the owners/ developer/ private sector – collaborative effort – to take a certain route.
- Ethical commitments by operators.
- Government and private sector collaborative effort to have a financial commitment.
- Senior/ cabinet level commitment – within the hotel industry FIRST (like CHA), to focus on sustainable planning issues.
- Hotel industry would challenge governments and heads of state to sign commitment statements.

Actions:

- Convening private and public sector stakeholders.
- For CHA, there must be a presentation to the heads of government (the influential ones) to agree to this.
- Lobby for this to be a role within CHA, for Heads of State to commit to sustainable development; and then to convene private and public sector to expand upon this.
- On going publicity and promotion.
- Create best practice examples and guidelines for design and planning to be used as a vehicle to convince governments.

Initiative: Create best practice examples and guidelines for design and planning to be used as a vehicle to convince governments

- Scientific data analysis
- Train staff
- Government support
- Site analysis
- Long range development plan for the area/region
- Market analysis
- Analysis of legislation
- Cultural analysis

Other Initiatives

1. Develop multi-sectoral councils for tourism development.
2. Undertake tourism zoning which allows for the provision of services as well as conservation of biodiversity.

2.5.5 Theme 5: Protected Areas—Establishment and Management

Initiative: Indicate terrestrial and marine areas that would – according to tour operators – need to be protected.

- Consult with key tour operators (using existing network such as Tour Operators' Initiative) about which are the terrestrial and marine areas that they would be keen to see protected.
- Recommend also what specific infrastructures would make protected areas good 'tourism parks.'

Other Initiatives

1. Produce series of Caribbean maps overlapping biodiversity conservation hotspots and tourism development.
2. Involve private sector in planning, declaring and managing protected areas.
3. Promote protected areas as part of a hotel package.
4. Develop protected areas that are financed and operated by certified entrepreneurs.

2.6 EVENING RECEPTION AND GUEST SPEAKER

The day concluded with a bus tour that showed the operations behind Punta Cana Resort and Club, specifically looking at components of the operations that complement

and support ongoing operations in an environmentally and socially responsible manner, lending to community development and good environmental management. The tour included a visit to Cornell Biodiversity Center and Ecological Foundation Nature Trails, Centro Educativo Punta Cana (primary and secondary school owned and operated by PC), PC Electric and Water Company, the waste-water treatment pond system, and their golf course with salt water resistant grass.

Following the tour, there was an evening reception generously hosted and sponsored by Mr. Frank Rainieri at his private residence. At the reception, Dr. Jeffrey Sachs, Director, The Earth Institute at Columbia University, gave a speech entitled “Achieving Sustainable Development in the 21st Century.”

DAY TWO OF PROGRAM

The focus of day two was on “Commitment and Partnerships with the tourism industry.”

2.7 KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Captain William S. Wright, Senior Vice President of Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd made the keynote presentation. It was entitled: “Above and Beyond Compliance – Setting a Higher Standard.”

Captain Wright started his presentation by showing the contrasts between cruise ships and cargo ships. He explained that cruise ships have very complex organizational structures with crew size ranging from 800 – 1250, representing over 60 nationalities and some 85 core professions.

He introduced the Save the Waves Program as the foundation for all of the environmental policies and procedures of the Royal Caribbean Cruises. He explained that it is a convenient medium for drawing attention to their environmental commitment to both guests and crew. Captain Wright pointed out that every crewmember is required to sign a personal pledge to uphold the principle of Save the Waves and indicated that every crewmember receives STW training every time they sign on a ship.

At Royal Caribbean Cruises, every ship has an environmental officer. The environmental management systems of all ships and shore based marine operations are certified to both the ISO 14000 and ISO 9000 standards, and exhaustive one week environmental compliance audits are conducted each year onboard every ship in the fleet by the reputable consultancy group Haley and Aldrich. Yearly management system audits are also conducted onboard each ship and all shore based support departments by the classification societies Den Norske Veritas and Lloyds Register.

Other initiatives undertaken by Royal Caribbean Cruises include the Ocean Fund, with over \$6 million given to environmental foundations, institutions and projects.

2.8 PANEL DISCUSSION

The panel discussion focused on examples of committed efforts at conservation being taken by hotel organisations and the destination.

2.8.1 June Marie Mow, Executive Director of Coralina and Stephen Edwards, Tourism Specialist of the Andes Region with Conservation International

Ms. Mow and Mr. Edwards presented a case study on successful destination management using the Seaflower Biosphere Reserve of San Andres. They defined Destination Management as an element of integrated regional planning, with the emphasis on bringing together tourism stakeholders to work collaboratively to encourage best practices and put management mechanisms in place within a destination to:

- limit negative impacts of tourism;
- improve environmental management practices;
- help protect key natural areas;
- generate positive contributions for conservation from tourism activities; and
- support the well being of local people.

The Seaflower Biosphere Reserve provides a useful case study because is a microcosm of the regional situation in that it has landscapes ranging from farm and pastureland to tourist centers; small traditional villages of Old Providence to the overpopulated urban center at the north end of San Andres; and inhabited islands to the vast ocean area.

Destination management requires the involvement of a diversity of stakeholder groups, including, artisan fishers, water sports and tourism, conservation NGOs, traditional users, education institutions and government agencies. The Seaflower project has attracted a number of partners such as Global Environment Facility (GEF), World Bank, The Ocean Conservancy, Island Resources Foundation (IRF), Conservation International, NOAA, FKNMS, CORAL, Christian University, Invemar, Ministry of Environment and others.

The Work Programs that have been embarked upon include:

- Data collection and evaluation - Collect the information needed for management planning.
- Legislation and policy - Enact the MPA system and establish legal and policy frameworks.
- MPA management - Design and implement the integrated management and zoning plan in cooperation with the community.
- Capacity building - Strengthen local institutions, train stakeholders, and produce communications.

Capacity Building is a critical component of destination management. At the Seaflower BP there has been:

- Technical training tour to FKNMS (11 project team members).
- Technical training tour to US National Ocean Service (GIS, economists).
- Stakeholder training tour to Bonaire Marine Park (Dive operators).
- Expert visits - water quality and mangroves.

- PADI community training.
- 2 Formal technical education programs with the Christian University and Infotep (Coastal and Marine Management and Sustainable Tourism).
- Community training courses - UNEP model.
- RECON - REEF community-based monitoring programs.
- Mangrove Action Project teachers guide and training course.
- Educational materials.

The projects that have been completed as part of this program include:

- Conflict resolution in use of island ecosystems (EU INCO-DC).
- Coral restoration (IDB, implemented by the Ministry of Environment).
- Marine habitat mapping (Darwin Initiative).
- Biosphere Reserve implementation (UNESCO).
- Waste management for small islands (EU Urb-AI program).
- Ecotourism Action Plan for OPSC (IDB, with Environment Ministry and CI).

In addition, there are a number of ongoing activities:

- Environmental education – Embassy of the Netherlands.
- Mooring buoy program to conserve coral reefs in the San Andres Archipelago, with FKNMS and SAI dive operators – NFWF.
- Black crab management - Darwin Initiative.
- Implementation of the Ecotourism Action Plan for Old Providence and Santa Catalina – Phase I – Lighthouse Foundation.
- Development of BMPs and actions to improve environmental health by means of information sharing activities (workshops, seminars, in-house training courses, inter-institutional meetings).
- Economic valuations of resource use and waste management with cost-benefit analyses of introducing BMPs.
- Technical team visits to regional islands to observe tourism sectors, activities of sustainable tourism and industry greening, alternative technology systems, community involvement programs, and functioning industry partnerships.
- Environmental Stars Program began in 1999 and stimulates changes in environmental attitudes and practices by awarding incentive prizes for environmental management and/or institutional programs in two areas of island life - tourist services and educational institutions.
- Introduction of specific on-site model operational activities.
- Beach Protection Program (Research, Management, Monitoring, Regulation, Education).

The presenters indicated that many lessons have been learnt during the process of implementation of destination management in the San Andres Archipelago including:

- There is no single model for destination management.
- Flexibility and adaptation are essential.
- Management processes are already underway in some sense in all destinations.
- Take advantage of previous efforts and studies.
- It needs to be viewed as a holistic approach.

- Trust needs to be built among government, civil society, private sector, and the community.
- Participation of the local population is critical to achieve buy-in and long term commitment.
- Actively involving relevant stakeholders implies added cost and time, Building local capacity is key for participation.
- An external facilitator can be useful, but needs to have a clearly defined role.
- Being a Biosphere Reserve provides tremendous benefits.
- Alternative livelihoods need to be developed (fishers as dive guides, etc.).

2.8.2 How Environmental Reporting Can Enhance Your Company's Reputation – Mr. Bill Burton, Director of Corporate Affairs, InterContinental Hotels Group

In a presentation entitled “Hotels that don’t cost the earth – How environmental reporting can contribute to your business,” Mr. Bill Burton explained that corporate and social responsibility requires voluntary commitment by business to manage activities in a responsible way. Such responsibility refers to an organisation’s responsiveness and adaptability to the changing needs and expectations of corporate social, environmental and ethical behaviour held by investors and other stakeholders on whom the organisation depends.

Mr. Burton acknowledged that there are regulatory, market and commercial pressures that cause a company to act responsibly. These include: various laws, customer demands, energy savings and the overall competitive advantage that accrues as a result. He stated that being responsible enhances the brand and builds customer loyalty; motivates employees and enhances staff loyalty; improves brand perception with potential customers; builds a reputation with government and aids the competitive position.

At Inter-Continental the Strategic Business Committee is headed by the Chairman of the Board, that gives executive policy guidance to the Environmental Working Group. This Working Group meets quarterly under the chairmanship of the Company Secretary to set the corporate environmental vision and monitor progress in realising objectives. The Group Environmental Policy is published in the annual environmental and social report.

Among their environmental initiatives are: The Youth Career Initiative in Thailand; The Seawater Forests in Eritea; The Multi-grade schools in the Philippines; The Narok Safe House in Kenya; Change for Children in Europe; WaterAid in India, Nepal and Pakistan. He concluded the presentation by stating “The world is our community.”

2.8.3 Building alliances with the conservation community: Working together to promote your efforts: Mr. Glenn Prickett, Executive Director, The Center for Environmental Leadership in Business

Mr. Prickett shared with the participants many of the existing alliances that have been forged by CELB to promote conservation. Using an example of how such alliances have worked in the agriculture sector, Mr. Prickett emphasized CELB’s commitment to facilitating such alliances within the tourism industry in the Caribbean.

2.8.4 The Marine Realm – The Caribbean Natural Asset: Dr. Sylvia Earle, Executive Director, Global Marine Program, Conservation International

Following Mr. Prickett, Dr. Earle re-emphasized the importance of conserving the marine resources within the Caribbean. Citing statistics which gave a grim picture of how many species were already lost or on the verge of being lost, Dr. Earle called upon the participants to dream of a Caribbean Sea teeming with a rich abundance of fish species and implored them to take the necessary actions to make it so.

2.9 CROSS SECTORAL WORKING GROUPS: HOW CAN WE PROTECT AND PRESERVE CARIBBEAN DESTINATIONS

The participants resumed their small group sessions, this time working across sectors to address the issues that had been identified by the sector specific groups the day before. Each cross sectoral group focused on one of the five themes into which the issues had been categorized, with the objective of providing a recommended action or proposed solution to a conservation issue that had been identified the previous day.

For each recommended action or solution, the groups were asked to identify a possible champion; the team members and others who should be involved in its implementation; as well as the objectives of the action and the next steps to be taken in moving the initiative forward.

The results of the deliberations are provided below. They represent in each case, an initiative that could be taken to deal with an aspect of the relevant theme. For each initiative, the participants and agencies that have been named were seen as the best placed to move the initiative forward. In some cases, it is expected that the individual or agency that has been identified as the champion would look into what is required within its existing resource base to implement or advance the initiative.

Initiatives for Protecting and Conserving Caribbean Destinations

2.9.1 Theme 1: Destination Partnerships

Initiative: Selection of destination targets based on number of ports of call and direct impact of the industries in the area

Champions: Carnival Cruise Lines and Industry

Team Members: CI, UNEP, CAST, Utilizing Whitewater to Bluewater initiative by US Government (NOAA)/Caricom/UNEP-CEP to get attention of Caribbean governments, NGOs, private companies

Others: local government, local community

Objectives: identification of priority environmental issues in destination and develop action plans building on existing industry and environmental standards

Next Steps: identify three locations and the key local government, private sector and community in the area

Initiative: Study and improve interaction of all-inclusive resorts with local economy and environment

Champions: GTZ – Klaus Lengefeld

Team Members: UNEP, Asociacion de hoteles Romana y Bayahibe, CAST

Others: all-inclusive companies, tour operators, development projects, NGOs working in the surroundings

Objectives: all-inclusive resorts to sustain local economy and environment; local economy and environment to sustain all-inclusive resorts

Next Steps: conduct first case studies in two hotels in two countries

Initiative: Blue flag certification and develop and implement sustainable destination action plan

Champions: Romana And Bayahibe Association

Team Members: USAID, CAST, Costa Cruise line, GTZ

Others: Secretaria de turismo, Secretaria de Medio Ambiente, Gobernador Provincial, ONGs locales, grupos comunitarios, ground handlers, Miguel Franco

Objectives: to convert the destination into the regional leader in sustainable tourism development

Next Steps: to invite the team members and others to participate on May 7 in the Romana Bayahibe Clusters presentation to develop the partnership

Initiative: Destination Management workshop in Antigua

Champions: British Airways Holidays

Team Members: (to be determined)

Objectives and Next Steps: (to be determined)

2.9.2 Theme 2: Education and Awareness

Initiative: Education of customers, crew, and local representatives

Champions: Nico Visser

Team Members: Laury Saligman, Bill Wright, Andrew Fairley, Glenn Prickett

Others: Airlines with inbound flights into the Caribbean – charter and regular

Objectives:

- Development of on board videos from independent source of information (NGO or alliance of NGOs)
- Trailer for excursion bookings on environmental channels (cruise ships)
- Environmental channel on cruise ships
- Development of a featured project per destination that is generic
- Onboard talks / featured speakers including presenters
- Tag along message – please fasten seatbelts; please respect nature
- Donation – deductible from next trip, credit against next stay (sweepstakes)
- Merchandise
- Print add
- School visits for tourists

Next Steps: Steps/ stages to provide information to customer; Brochure; Ticket voucher/ booklet; On board video; Envelope; Hostess; Hotel books; Attractions

Initiative: An agreed and practical joint approach to education of Government officials in the key ministries of Tourism, Environment, Health, and Education within the Caribbean.

Champions: Sandals Resorts International, Association of Hotels of Bayahibe, Govt. of Antigua, CAST

Others: CARICOM, ACS, CDB, American Academy for the Advancement of Science (as a resource center).

Objectives

- Get the topic of biodiversity onto the agenda and therefore become involved in the next major regional meeting of either (or both) CARICOM and/or ACS.
- Involve media and the various ministries mentioned above with the aim of introducing or providing the framework for development of biodiversity education for government officials and senior private sector personnel.
- Acknowledge that many government and private institutions will have to undergo serious image building or image re-building to gain the trust of the respective communities and countries that they serve where it relates to matters of the environment.
- Identify role models and “cheer leaders” to consistently spout messages and reports about progress and benefits of environmentally responsible business practices from within the tourism sector, (Sandals and Punta Cana Resort & Club, other Green Globe 21 Certified hotels across the Caribbean).
- Generate an annual report explaining/outlining advances, progress, benefits, to guarantee continuous awareness and develop program energy for the progress of this mission (possible title “State of the Caribbean Environment Report”).
- Consider some form of benchmarking for systems of information so that companies and government institutions can compare their programs and progress against a baseline and against other similar organizations within the region.

The objectives can be summarized into four main points:

- Make a direct effort and commitment to fulfill the tenets of the Cartagena Convention beginning especially with the Specially Protected Areas & Wildlife (SPAW) Protocol.
- Adopt or at least consider the benefits of international standards and practices within local operations and decision-making processes, (ISO 14001 & Green Globe 21).
- Strengthen National Biodiversity Action Plans and analyze or generate the linkages with tourism and the tourism sector.
- Make a commitment to including biodiversity and environmental education in schools and university courses and as a mandatory module of training programs within all government institutions.

Next Steps

- Identify (from available information), various indicators and use this information to generate specific reports about the existing condition of the Caribbean environment, citing special areas (and locations) as well as ill-advised decisions that are now of concern.
- A report from this Punta Cana Conference on Biodiversity should be sent to the Chairpersons of the ACS and CARICOM with additional materials as suggested below;
 - Sandals Resorts International and Grupo Punta Cana should make available their annual Environment & Social Sustainability Program Reports
 - Reports or letters supporting this conference should be sent from at least two Caribbean governments in support of having biodiversity as a discussion point on the agenda of the meeting, (Dominican Republic, Antigua, St. Lucia, and Barbados were suggested).
 - A balance Scorecard should be prepared by CAST and also included

**Ms. Lisette Gil of the Hotels Association of Bayahibe has volunteered to keep our team on track to have this mission accomplished as per our commitment at the meeting.*

2.9.3 Theme 3: Marine Protected Areas

Initiative: Replicating Bonaire example to other parts of the Caribbean – making an effort to expand in the Caribbean MPAs

Champions: UNEP

Team Members: CORAL, CORALINA, Environmental Defense, CI

Others: Private sector (See list below)

Objectives:

- Fostering Protected Areas Investment with tourism
- Creative to finance PA (Entry fees, user fees, bed taxes, transparency, Private Sector such as Tour Operators and Hotels contribution)
- Government should provide conditions to enable PA
- Adoption of BMPs and Guidelines. Clearing house for best practices and resource
- Promote Partnerships among stakeholders (Gov, NGO Civil Society)
- Sharing of positive examples of Biodiversity and Tourism throughout the region (i.e. Installation of mooring buoys)
- Strengthen existing Train of Trainers programs for PA with the leadership of UNEP (bringing in the private sector)
- Establishing Benchmarks

Next Steps:

- Assessment of existing information on Financial sustainability of Caribbean Protected Areas (Successful Case Studies) and make it available via clearing house
- Making sure that targeted briefing papers get to the appropriate government departments and ministers and soliciting their commit to support protected areas as a resource for tourism

- Collecting existing BMPs and Guidelines (CORAL has it for diving, whale and turtle watching, snorkeling, underwater cleanup) CI can multiply and disseminate to Coral Parks throughout the region. CI commits to develop the portal for the Caribbean clearing house
- Buying from the tourist industry to support exchanges to disseminate positive examples of Biodiversity and Tourism
- 25% of trainers come from tourist industry. Tourist industry could finance logistics for training courses

| <i>SITES</i> | <i>LOCAL CHAMPIONS</i> | <i>TEAM PLAYERS</i> |
|------------------------|---|---|
| Cozumel (México) | PA Mgt. Authorities | Dive Operators, Royal and Carnival |
| Hol Chan (Belice) | Protected Areas Management Authorities (?) | Dive Operators Association, Dominica Hotel Associations, Tour Operators |
| Parque del Este (DR) | Grupo Jaragua | Hotel Association, Tour Operators |
| Dominica | Protected Areas Fisheries/Forestry | Carnival, Dive Operators Association, Water Sports Association, Dominica Hotel Associations |
| Cayman Islands | ? | Carnival and Royal Caribbean |
| Bay Islands (Honduras) | ? | |

Initiative: Conduct RAP in Baoruco

Champions: Grupo Jaragua

Team Members: Vista Paraiso, CI-CABS+CELB

Others: UASD, Jardín Botánico, Museo Nacional

Objectives

- Initiate data gathering for communities to delineate proposed corridor
- Provide baseline data to the resort to enable it to develop touristic facilities that have limited biodiversity impact
- Initiate training in biodiversity assessment for UASD students

Next Steps

- RAP Plan and Budget
- Discuss curriculum with UASD department of Biology

Initiative: Complementary planning of PA network for both conservation and tourism

Champions: WCPA (World Commission for Protected Areas) – Caribbean (or Royal Caribbean)

Team Members: Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines, CI, Environmental Defense, WRI, WCMC, Hotel Associations, CHA (Caribbean Hotel Associations)

Others: Hotels, Excursions operators, SPAW Secretariat / Members, Intercontinental, Governments, Hotel Associations, Tour Operators

Objectives

- Gap analysis will show gaps and/or concordance of PAs needed for conservation and tourism
- Fine-tune conservation network to enhance tourism
- Identify specific PAs that will be jointly promoted by conservation and tourism

Next Steps

- Plan and Budget
- Obtain GIS layers on existing and projected tourism targets

- Complete biodiversity gap analysis
- Integrate biodiversity and tourism analysis

2.9.4 Theme 4: Tourism Development Planning

Initiative Strengthen the capability of civil society to participate meaningfully in multi-sectoral councils for tourism development & tourism master planning

Champions: Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network (WIDECAST)

Team Members: George Washington University, UWI, UNEP Caribbean Environment Program, CHA/CAST

Others: Donors, relevant NGO's & civil society partners

Objectives:

- Strengthen the capacity of NGO's (including biodiversity, cultural & historic organizations) to partner w/ industry & government as trainers, implementation actors, fundraisers, watchdogs, community advocates, etc.
- Create & disseminate best practices for sea turtle conservation related to tourism development
- Create & disseminate best practices for Turtle Watching programs & nest protection for hotel properties

Next Steps:

- Solicit support of team members
- Develop programs of training
- Identify funding sources

Initiative: To incorporate sustainability principles in tourism master planning & development (Including pre-development, construction, operations/management)

Champions: CTO & CHA/CAST

Team Members: CI, IHEI, CLAA, EDSA, UNEP/CEP, Regional Developers, PA Consulting, WIDECAST, UNECLA, CCA/CREP

Others: OAS, UNDP & UWI

Objectives:

- Define Criteria
- Pilot and test guidelines
- Build Public/Private stakeholder coalition for advocating adoption at national government level
- Offer recommendation for implementation into the national regulatory process

Next Steps:

- Propose expanding scope of CI/IHEI guidelines.
- Create virtual working group of team members
- Compile reference materials/best practice examples within region and worldwide.
- Identify coalition partners.

2.9.5 Theme 5: Supply Chain Management

Initiative: Introduce sustainability criteria (with a focus on biodiversity) in excursion providers contracts' procedures.

Actions:

- Define 'demand' stakeholders (sectors that would use guidelines in their contracting processes), this will include for example international tour operators, local travel agents, hotels, cruise lines as well as tourists.
- Analyze the excursion providers sector, and in particular identify the most commonly used excursions for each of the following categories (marine, water based, land, air and man mad excursions).
- Select one key excursion per main category (max three), looking at its potential impact on biodiversity as well as maximizing interest of all stakeholders.
- Develop guidelines:
 - Survey existing recommendations/guidelines already in use by tourism sector (cruise lines, tour operators, etc) in the companies' selection procedures as well as developed by relevant NGOs.
 - Prepare an analysis of the impacts on the environment, in particular on biodiversity for the three selected excursions.
 - Conduct a gap analysis to identify which, if any, of the impacts are not addressed.
 - Compile a set of proposed guidelines based on existing ones, proposing additional ones for the impacts not addressed. Identify circumstances or particular locations where identified activities/excursions should not take place.
- Consult all relevant stakeholders (demand and supply side) both in a meeting setting and on line to develop a final set of guidelines
- Develop support material providing additional technical information (How to ..) for each of the guidelines agreed upon. Produce educational material (guide of good practice, handouts, PPT etc) to be used both by the contractors in the contracting phase as well as to be disseminated to the excursion providers.
- Support dissemination of the guidelines and encourage their use among all contracting operators (through trade associations, media etc), in particular with regards to cruise lines, hotels and tour operators, setting up demonstration destinations, which could eventually include development of common contracting policies and auditing systems.
- Support marketing of the guidelines.

Team Members:

Cruise lines: Royal Caribbean and Carnival Cruises: committed also with their cruise industry colleagues on ensuring the highest possible standards of responsible practices for the ground and marine tour operators with whom they work in the Caribbean.

Tour Operators: LTU Turistik, TUI NL, British Airways Holidays, First Choice, West Indian International and the Tour Operators' Initiative committed to contribute to the development of the guidelines and to disseminate them among ground tour suppliers in the Caribbean.

Excursion providers: Gamboa Forest: commits to abide by the guidelines, especially when a generating tour operator requires or recommends.

CORAL: committed to assist in the technical research linked to the development of water and marine based guidelines, as well as to involve the diving operators with which they are in contact.

UNEP / TOI Secretariat: committed to develop a full action plan to carry this initiative further.

CELB: committed to contribute to the development of the guidelines, starting from marine and water operators.

Section III: Conclusions and Recommendations

The workshop clearly identified five key areas for action that should be considered by the industry as it moves forward to incorporate biodiversity as a key component of its program, namely:

1. Environmental Education/Awareness Building
2. Destination Partnerships
3. Supply Chain Management
4. Tourism Development Planning
5. Protected Areas – Establishment and Management

By the conclusion of the workshop, many of the participants had agreed to champion the initiatives that had been discussed, assigning to CI/CELB a role that is largely facilitative. In summary, CI/CELB would be expected to:

- Facilitate networking between and among key stakeholders to ensure that the communication process necessary to implement the initiatives takes place.
- Assist in the creation of a clearinghouse for information.
- Provide and disseminate critical information in a variety of formats and languages that would move the process forward.
- Assist in the conducting of assessments where possible to create baseline information.
- Assisting in the identification of best practice case studies and disseminating the information.
- Participate in sector specific meetings to continue the process of appreciating the issues and to offer input where possible.
- Be a watch dog to ensure that the commitments are carried out.
- Host future events of a similar nature.

At the same time those present made commitments to build and improve upon existing partnerships and alliances; to improve the channels for the dissemination of critical information that would serve the decision making process; and to place initiatives such as certification programs high on their local agendas.