



The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

**MINISTRY OF TOURISM, CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

**Trinidad and Tobago National Tourism Policy**

**2021-2030**

*(June, 2021)*

## NATIONAL TOURISM VISION

The following depicts the overarching tourism vision for the country by 2030:

*A travel and tourism sector which is a significant contributor to the social and economic resilience, growth and development of Trinidad and Tobago. It would reflect the innovation, creativity, entrepreneurial spirit, cultural richness, unparalleled beauty, tremendous regional diversity, environmental stewardship and natural hospitality of the people of the twin-island Republic. In its entirety, it would be characterised by a deep commitment to adhering to world class standards of excellence that ensures the satisfaction of our international and domestic customers, stakeholders, and other Industry partners.*

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## List of Abbreviations

CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CARPHA	Caribbean Public Health Agency
CDA	Chaguaramas Development Authority
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
EMA	Environmental Management Authority
eTeck Company Limited	Evolving TecKnologies and Enterprise Development Company Limited
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoRTT	Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
HNV	High Nature Value
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
MTCA	Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NDS	National Development Strategy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NTP	National Tourism Policy
OJT	On-the-Job Training
PATT	Port Authority of Trinidad and Tobago
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
THA	Tobago House of Assembly
TPD	Tourism Product Development
TPDC	Tourism Policy Development Committee
TTAL	Tobago Tourism Agency Limited
TTL	Tourism Trinidad Limited
UDeCOTT Limited	Urban Development Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago Limited
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



## **Preface**

Given the prevailing local, regional and international trends in the tourism industry, the revised National Tourism Policy (2021-2030) seeks to provide an overarching policy framework that addresses key areas of tourism development in Trinidad and Tobago at the macro level. This revised Policy is aligned with the National Development Strategy (NDS) - Vision 2030 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda, particularly with Goals 8, 12 and 14.

The revised Policy does not prescribe measures on tourism-related issues at the micro level such as specific tourism niche market development (ecotourism, community-based tourism, sport tourism, film tourism, the home-sharing economy et al). However, these niche specific areas will be articulated in dedicated Sub-policies aligned with this revised National Tourism Policy.

The drafting of the revised policy for the period 2021 to 2030 is informed by good practice inclusive of idea ventilation/policy dialogue among stakeholders over several months (agenda setting, policy development, etc.). Great care has been taken to ensure that the document reflects the valued inputs, aspirations and commitment of the many stakeholders, consultants, and researchers.

## Executive Summary

As articulated in the National Development Strategy (NDS) - Vision 2030, the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (GoRTT) has declared, as a priority, its intention to transition Trinidad and Tobago towards a more diversified economy in order to achieve greater socio-economic prosperity. The tourism sector, though currently disrupted by the coronavirus pandemic, has been identified as one of the sectors with the potential to significantly contribute to achieving this goal. Given its resilient and dynamic nature, as evidenced by the sector's ability to bounce back from past global disturbances, the tourism sector is expected to recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and this is the opportune moment for Trinidad and Tobago to reposition itself and advance the tourism sector to support the country's post-COVID-19 recovery and growth agenda.

Accordingly, the revised Policy outlines the new approach of defining and promoting Trinidad and Tobago as separate (but complementary) destinations and aligns with all five themes of the National Development Strategy (NDS) Vision 2030, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda – within which *Goals 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth)*, *12 (Responsible Consumption and Production)* and *14 (Life Below Water)* are of particular importance to tourism.

The revised Policy addresses the macro issues related to the Sector's ongoing development and sustainability, such as, but not limited to: spatial and physical planning, human resources, financial resources including investment; and destination management. Additionally, the key challenges which impact the future of the local tourism sector were identified, and mitigation measures were considered and elaborated in the document.

The Policy also examined and developed seventeen (17) critical aspects of the travel and tourism sector which are geared towards its sustainable growth and development, and therefore the Policy has focussed on these specific areas, namely: Regional Development Administration; Land-Use Planning and Spatial Development; Cluster Development; Tourism Product Development; Tourism Investment; Super Structure; Transportation; Cruise Tourism Development; Heritage; Events and Festivals; Digitalising the Tourism Sector; Education and Training; Standards and Quality; Climate Resilience, Disaster Risk Management and Environmental Sustainability;



Marketing, Research and Planning; Taxation, Revenue Generation and Funding; and Border Control, Frontier Reception, National Security and Public Safety.

The revised policy included the views of key influencers, other Special Interest Groups and the Regional Corporations. The information gleaned from the engagements with these stakeholders influenced the policy initiatives to be incorporated into the revised National Tourism Policy and resulted in three (3) substantial policy shifts, namely: the adoption of a regional management approach, support for cluster development and recognition of the increasingly important role of digital technology and the impact of innovation on the global tourism industry.

In determining the positioning of the destination, each island's unique selling proposition, natural endowments and distinct assets were considered. Trinidad and Tobago's rich and distinct heritage is reflected in its diverse ethnicities, arts, culture, cuisine and religious traditions which contribute to the uniqueness of the twin-island Caribbean nation and which can act as a motivator for travel to the destination. A diverse portfolio of events and festivals can generate tourism business growth directly and indirectly, thus the policy endorses the attraction and support of major international events, including carnival, culinary, sport, music, fashion, art and cultural to be locally-hosted in accordance with established policies and prescribed criteria. Based on the foregoing, Trinidad will be positioned as *'The Place That's Always in Season'* whereby each season offers residents and visitors alike, the opportunity to share in memorable experiences by partaking in the island's world-class festivals and events<sup>1</sup>, and Tobago will be positioned as *'The unspoilt, untouched Caribbean island where the undiscovered waits around every corner'* thus promoting the island's authentic and imaginative experiences. Research has indicated that the range and calibre of tourism product offerings are key determinants that attract tourists to a destination, and successful destinations are able to consistently deliver on visitor dreams and expectations. The Policy therefore advocates for the adoption of national, regional and international standards for the development of high

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<sup>1</sup> Trinidad is not a traditional tourism destination. As such, the reasons for visiting the island are generally not driven by the natural features of sun, sand, and sea, which typically define traditional tourism destinations and which are commonly referred to in the mass leisure market as the three S's.

quality products and services to satisfy the expectations of the discerning visitor.

A paradigm shift is being proposed for the governance structure of the tourism sector, one that is innovative, integrated and participatory in its approach to destination planning and management. This approach, seeks to effectively manage tourism development and business activity within the five (5) Regional Tourism Provinces in Trinidad and two (2) in Tobago, and entails a greater level of autonomy and accountability for each region. The shift of tourism development and management from Central Government to local government bodies would have a positive impact on local economies, and allow for significant improvements and development of local tourism and hospitality activities based on each region's unique assets. The tourism regions proposed for Trinidad are: Region 1 - North West; Region 2 - East; Region 3 - Central; Region 4 - South West; and Region 5 – Chaguaramas and for Tobago are: East and West Regions.

The Policy is cognisant that tourism activities must ideally promote and enable sustainable use of the scarce land resources of the country. It therefore advocates for the establishment of Tourism Zones throughout the destination which will address issues related to the accessibility, functionality, character, and density of tourism and hospitality superstructure development. The Policy advocates adherence and enforcement of land use planning and spatial development policies to ensure suitable, quality, sustainable tourism development. A coordinating mechanism and framework will be established and utilised to enable the efficient and effective development of zones for tourism use.

As previously mentioned, one innovative feature of the revised Policy is the development of sustainable tourism clusters. The destination already possesses pockets of cluster development characterised by the proximity of tourism agencies, attractions, interconnected activities and support services in a concentrated geographic space. This configuration can be found in the environs of Crown Point, Castara, Roxborough, Speyside and Buccoo in Tobago; and in Trinidad, Balmain, Couva (Sport), Port of Spain (historical buildings, entertainment, arts), the beaches and bays along the north coast, the cocoa plantations along the North Coast and Central Range, San

Fernando (historic), Lopinot (cocoa historic plantation) and the Chaguaramas peninsula (leisure, entertainment, ecotourism).

Critical to the development and growth of the tourism sector is the level of private sector investment injected within the sector's economy. The Policy's intention is to create a favourable investment environment, inclusive of incentives and supported by legislation for investors. The Policy also recommends an efficient tax system that will create opportunities and favourable conditions for investment and tourism development. It is with this in mind that Government will facilitate initiatives to modernise and improve the performance of the accommodation/lodging sector so that it becomes more competitive, profitable, and sustainable. In addition, Government will look at key infrastructural requirements to support tourism economic development, which will include a reliable, effective and efficient transportation system (land, air and sea) for both destinations that match international standards for safety and quality of service at the highest levels of passenger satisfaction. Attention is also focussed on cruise tourism development and expansion, therefore the Policy recommends augmentation of port infrastructure to accommodate new cruise lines, additional vessels and larger ships to the destination.

At the turn of the century, automation, digitalisation, interconnectivity, big data and new sophisticated business models have been transforming the breadth of the tourism sector and giving rise to the concept of SMART destinations. Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) through the use of digital technologies is driving tourism innovation and causing disruption along the tourism value chain. Acknowledging this ICT revolution in the tourism sector, the Policy encourages the thrust for greater use of technology to transform business models and enhance efficiency within tourism businesses to create and deliver memorable visitors' experiences.<sup>2</sup> Globally, the Internet and the availability of a wide range of digital marketing tools and platforms have determined how destinations are marketing and promoting their places/destinations. The Policy advocates for the strategic and optimal use of this technology to target existing and new source markets for the destination.

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<sup>2</sup> Such as use of Quick Response (QR) codes on signage linked with augmented reality (AR) or virtual reality (VR) to access digital content; interactive technologies; digital video recording with drones or action cameras, etc.

The environment and its natural assets are critical components to the local economy and livelihood of its citizens. Sustainable tourism, which generates income through the non-destructive use of natural resources, can help to promote environmental conservation and decouple economic development from environmental degradation. Cognisant of the aforementioned, the Policy renders support for initiatives geared towards the preservation and conservation of our unique flora and fauna and for the Government to embark upon a number of environmentally conscious initiatives aligned to the green and blue economy. In addition, the Policy supports the elaboration and implementation of climate mitigation and adaptation strategies that provide for the development of a resilient, climate smart tourism destination. Additionally, in its quest to ensure that the destination offers a diversified portfolio of products and experiences, the Ministry has embarked upon the development of various Sub-Policies to provide strategic direction to various niche markets that have been identified as having significant growth potential, and where the destination has demonstrated competence and a competitive advantage. Based on the aforementioned, the Sub-Policies that are being developed include, but are not limited to, Sport tourism, Ecotourism, Community Based tourism and Business tourism in the first instance.

One of the key determinants for travellers, especially those seeking out new destinations is the aspect that relates to their personal safety. Tourism relies on the ability of people to travel safely and freely across borders and hence the Policy recommends the implementation of policies and practices that enable greater traveller mobility and confidence while maintaining or enhancing security and border integrity in adherence to national and international protocols.

Given the cross-cutting nature of the activities and initiatives within the Policy, its execution will require the collaboration of key Ministries/agencies and stakeholders. Additionally, the monitoring and evaluating of the NTP 2021-2030 will be facilitated through the development of an Implementation Plan that specifies strategies, identifies responsible persons/organisations and establishes suitable time frames for its completion. Subsequent to the revised NTP 2021-2030 entering into force, a Tourism Master Plan (TMP) for Trinidad and Tobago will follow.

In summary, the primary objectives for Trinidad and Tobago's tourism industry is ultimately to attract more visitors in a sustained manner; and with a higher spend per head. The policy prescriptions outlined in this Revised National Tourism Policy, 2021-2030 coupled with the amalgamation of areas with natural synergies under the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, all represent the best possible opportunity to realise the objective of developing a 21st century tourism sector.

# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Rationale for the Revision of the National Tourism Policy

The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (GoRTT) has identified economic diversification as a key objective and critical enabler of Trinidad and Tobago's economic competitiveness and sustainable development. In this context, though currently disrupted by the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), the virus which causes Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, the development of the tourism sector, both in Trinidad and Tobago has, and can continue to contribute significantly to the country's socio-economic growth.

In a post-COVID-19 world, with tourism as with all other sectors, aspects of the business operations will have to be altered to ensure the health and safety of all stakeholders. Travel, tourism and hospitality services will rebound, as they did after 9/11 and the 2008/2009 global economic crisis, given that the sector remains the 'circulatory system' for commerce and connectivity for every country on the planet, notwithstanding the accelerated digitisation of several businesses.<sup>3</sup>

Recognising the resilience and dynamic nature of the tourism industry, Trinidad and Tobago must now reposition<sup>4</sup> itself to recover and advance its tourism sector to support national recovery and the post-COVID-19 growth agenda. Benefits to be accrued include job creation and employment; foreign exchange earnings; tax and other income generation; foreign investment; cultural preservation; preservation of natural assets; demand for local agriculture; manufactured goods, art and entertainment products; and new, additional opportunities for innovation in art, business and science.

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<sup>3</sup> Tourism has been one of the world's dominant sectors, with the global market for tourism and international travel experiencing almost uninterrupted growth since the 1950s. Events that have impacted the sector including the September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks, the SARS outbreak in 2003, the world financial crisis of 2007- 2008, along with other subsequent threats have shown the sector's resilience in successfully emerging from the negative impacts and continuing to contribute as an economic driver worldwide. It is anticipated that the sector will also recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

<sup>4</sup> Adjusting the sole positioning of Trinidad and Tobago, to the Island of Trinidad (with multiple regional destinations) and the island of Tobago.

Over the past decade, the National Tourism Policy, 2010 (NTP 2010) had served as the overarching policy framework for the development of tourism in Trinidad and Tobago. During that period, there were gains as well as challenges. However, going forward, adjustments, many of which have been driven by COVID-19, must now become mainstream, the 'new normal'. The revised National Tourism Policy is timely in providing a pathway to the National Vision laid out above, responding both to the immediate requirements for recovery of the local (and Caribbean Regional) tourism and hospitality sector post-COVID-19, as well as longer term requirements for sustainability, resilience and success, evidenced, in part, by a growing contribution to the country's gross domestic product and foreign exchange earnings.

Beyond the considerations of the coronavirus pandemic however, there have been other considerable forces for change in the global environment such as:

- the shift in power from producers to consumers who are demanding destinations which demonstrate environmental protection and/or conservation, as well as harness and promote local culture and traditions, to provide more unique and intimate travel experiences;
- the proliferation of technology including digital platforms and the marketing and distribution of data analytical tools; and
- the almost seamless movement of persons and information.

Certainly, this revised policy seeks to position Trinidad and Tobago as a globally competitive tourism destination at a time when the market is likely to be fierce as the world redefines tourism and hospitality in real time. Moreover, given the tremendous economic fallout experienced in 2020 as a result of the global shutdown aimed at managing the pandemic, resources will be significantly diminished and must be carefully invested. In addition, the revised Policy fully articulates the new approach of defining and promoting Trinidad and Tobago as separate (but complimentary) destinations. In that regard, the Policy recognises the discrete and unique characteristics of the tourism product of Tobago, and the statutory responsibility of the Tobago House of Assembly (THA) for Tobago's overall development including the sustainable development of the island's tourism

sector. Given the implications for planning and implementation, collaboration and cooperation between the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts (MTCA) and the THA will constitute key cornerstones of the NTP 2021-2030.

In this context, **the NTP is an agenda for a new reality** to facilitate the development of a 21st Century tourism product for Trinidad and Tobago, characterised by local innovation, local and global partnership, and community leadership. Thus, the Policy aligns with all five themes<sup>5</sup> of the NDS Vision 2030, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda – within which ***Goals 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and 14 (Life Below Water) are of particular importance to tourism***<sup>6</sup> (see *Appendix 1*).

## **1.2 Review of the National Tourism Policy, 2010**

The NTP 2010 underscored the need for a more focused approach to the development of the national tourism sector. Prior to the NTP 2010, the Tourism Master Plan 1995 (TMP) served as the primary tool for advancing the sector's growth and development. The Plan entailed moving beyond the traditional concept of sun, sand and sea to include integration of related economic sectors, establishment of a competitive investment climate, development of a comprehensive destination management strategy, and extension of benefits to citizens.

Consequently, the NTP 2010 provided a policy framework within which several guiding principles and goals<sup>7</sup> were identified as being essential to the sustainable development of the sector while ensuring that it was people-centred, innovative, investment-driven and supported by the private sector. The Policy framework cited various elements as drivers for industry success,

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<sup>5</sup> Five Themes of the NDS - Vision 2030 1. Putting People First: Nurturing Our Greatest Asset; 2. Delivering Good Governance and Service Excellence; 3. Improving Productivity through Quality Infrastructure and Transportation; 4. Building Globally Competitive Businesses; and 5. Placing the Environment at the Centre of Social and Economic Development.

<sup>6</sup> In addition to the SDG's identified, and with its wide reach and impact, the tourism sector can contribute – directly and indirectly – to the achievement of SDG's 5 (Gender Equality), 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 7 (Affordable Clean Energy), 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), 13 (Climate Action), 15 (Life on Land) and 17 (Partnership for the Goals).

<sup>7</sup> The NTP 2010 identified 11 Guiding Principles and 48 National Tourism Policy Goals – (8 Overall Goals, 12 Socio-cultural Goals, 15 Economic Goals and 13 Environmental Goals).



including a sustainable tourism product; private/public partnerships (PPPs); customer focus; a well-trained workforce; and a distinctive brand.

Although no implementation plan was prepared in conjunction with the Policy, five (5) targets were set which focused on increasing contribution to gross domestic product (GDP), visitor arrivals and expenditure, the quantity and quality of jobs, the multiplier effect throughout the economy and monitoring the implementation of the NTP 2010. Consequently, during the period 2010-2019, several key initiatives, informed by the NTP 2010, were developed and executed by the then Ministry of Tourism<sup>8</sup> and its respective implementation arms. The initiatives focused on areas such as human resource development, community development, infrastructure and transportation development, investment promotion, accommodation; product development; and marketing; **Appendix 2** provides a summary of these initiatives.

Revision of the Policy addresses the macro issues related to the Sector's ongoing development and sustainability, such as, but not limited to: spatial and physical planning; human resources; financial resources including investment; and destination management.

### **1.3 The Policy Formulation Process**

As shown in **Figure 1**, the first step in the development of the 'National Tourism Policy, 2021-2030', was the establishment, in June 2019, of a Cabinet-appointed Committee, the Tourism Policy Development Committee (TPDC) comprising local and international experts (**Appendix 3**). Officials from the Division of Tourism, Culture and Transportation who were nominated by the THA, as well as representatives from Tourism Trinidad Limited (TTL) and the Tobago Tourism Agency Limited (TTAL) were also members of the TPDC. Staff<sup>9</sup> of the then Ministry of Tourism provided Secretariat and other support services to the Committee.

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<sup>8</sup> Gazette No. 158 Vol 59 of September 9, 2020 provided for the establishment of the Ministry of Tourism and Culture and the Arts, which replaced the Ministry of Tourism.

<sup>9</sup> The former Ministry of Tourism, staff from the Tourism Advisory, Research and Planning, Investment Facilitation, Monitoring and Evaluation Units.

The revision process included a review of several pertinent documents including, but not limited to: the NTP 2010, the Tourism Master Plan 1995 (TMP), the Rolling Three Year Tourism Plan (2002-2004), the Comprehensive Economic Development Plan (2013-2017) for Tobago, the NDS – Vision 2030, Tourism Sub-policies (Eco-tourism, Community-based Tourism and Sport Tourism), other Government Policies, and any other relevant regional and international tourism policies and reports.

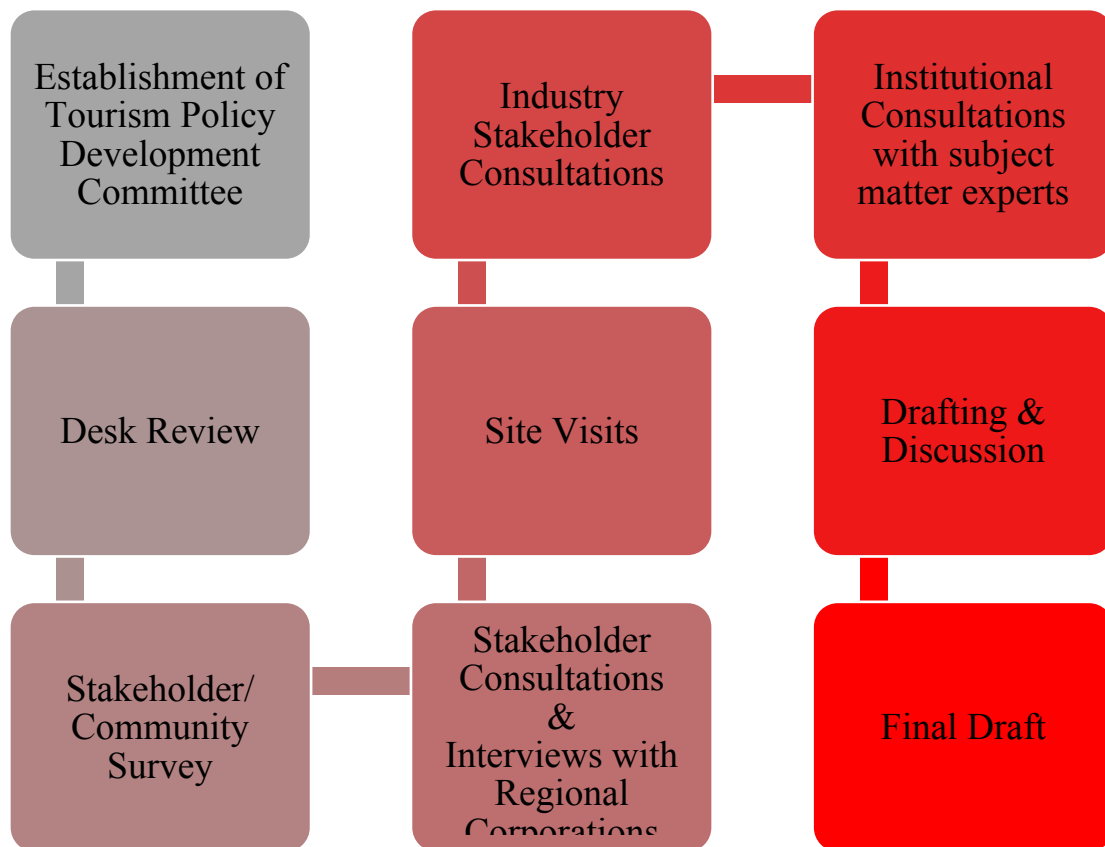
The Ministry sought the opinions of stakeholders throughout Trinidad and Tobago. Information was gathered through stakeholder consultations (referred to as stakeholder contribution sessions),<sup>10</sup> an online survey, discussions between Officials of the former Ministry of Tourism and Representatives of the respective Regional Corporations in Trinidad; and approximately fifty (50) bilateral meetings with Ministries and Agencies, public bodies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the private sector on various subject matters that impact tourism, during the period August 2019 to February 2020 (**Appendix 4**).

Further, this policy seeks to strike a balance between the policies of other Ministries and Agencies which have responsibility for tourism assets/content or otherwise impact the sector (e.g. planning, health and national security) and the Policy directives for which the MTCA is directly responsible. Tourism touches every Ministry and a large number of Agencies, and their roles and interests are reflected in the Policy following on the extensive consultative process.

**Figure 1: The Process for Developing the Revised National Tourism Policy**

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<sup>10</sup> Five (5) Stakeholder Contribution Sessions were held in Trinidad (Chaguaramas, Couva, Port of Spain, San Fernando and Toco) during the period 11 – 20 September, 2019 with a total of 190 stakeholders; and three (3) sessions were held in Tobago (Castara, Scarborough and Speyside) with a total of 90 stakeholders.



### 1.3.1 Structure of the Policy

The structure of the Policy is in keeping with the seventeen (17) critical aspects of the travel and tourism sector approved for inclusion in the revised Policy. These are:

1. Regional Development Administration
2. Land-Use Planning and Spatial Development
3. Cluster Development
4. Tourism Product Development
5. Tourism Investment
6. Super Structure (Accommodation/Lodging and General Infrastructure)
7. Transportation (Air, Ground and Sea Transportation)
8. Cruise Development

## 9. Heritage

10. Events and Festivals
11. Technology Platforms
12. Education and Training
13. Standards and Quality
14. Climate Resilience, Disaster Risk Management and Environmental Sustainability
15. Marketing, Research and Planning
16. Taxation, Revenue Generation and Funding
17. Border Control, Frontier Reception, National Security and Public Safety

## 2.0 National Tourism Policy Context

### 2.1 International Tourism Performance and Trends

Prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic, tourism was one of the world's dominant economic sectors, with the global market for tourism and international travel experiencing almost uninterrupted growth since the 1950s. The United Nations World Tourism Organisation's (UNWTO) forecast before the pandemic had estimated that by 2030, international tourist arrivals would reach 1.8 billion.

For many countries, tourism is the leading sector for economic development, job creation and poverty reduction.

**Table 1: Global Tourism Sector Performance 2019**

2019 International tourism receipts*	US\$1.7 trillion
2019 Total international tourist arrivals*	1.5 billion tourists (+4%)
Total GDP contribution**	10.4% (Direct contribution = 3.8%)
Total Contribution to employment in tourism worldwide**	319 million jobs (Direct contribution = 118.5 million jobs or 3.8% of global employment)

Data source: \*UNWTO World Tourism Barometer (Jan, 2020) and \*\*WTTC, *Travel & Tourism Economic Impact - World (2019)*<sup>11</sup>

### The Caribbean

The Caribbean Region, within which Trinidad and Tobago is located and competes, is regarded as the most tourism-dependent region in the world although it accounts for only 1.9% of global tourist arrivals. For many Caribbean countries, tourism is the principal economic sector as evidenced by the fact that in almost half of the countries, the tourism sector accounts for over 25% of GDP, more than twice the global average of 10.4%<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> Where 2019 data is unavailable, 2018 figures have been used.

<sup>12</sup> World Travel & Tourism Council: Minimising the impact of the 2017 hurricane season on the Caribbean's tourism sector - April 2018. All rights reserved.

**Table 2: Caribbean Tourism Sector Performance 2019**

International tourism receipts*	US\$33.7 billion
2019 Total international tourist arrivals*	27 million tourist (+4.9%)
Total GDP contribution**	15.5% (Direct contribution = 4.8%)
Total Contribution to employment in tourism in the Caribbean**	2.4 million jobs (Direct contribution = 758,000 jobs or 4.3% of total employment)

Data source: \*UNWTO World Tourism Barometer (Jan, 2020) and \*\* WTTC, Caribbean 2019, Annual Research Key Highlights (2019)

## 2.2 Overview of Tourism Development in Trinidad and Tobago

Despite being one of the larger countries in the English-speaking Caribbean, Trinidad and Tobago captures less than 2% of the estimated 27 million international tourists who visit the region. Unlike neighbouring countries, Trinidad and Tobago is less dependent on tourism owing to its energy sector.

**Table 3: Trinidad and Tobago Tourism Sector Performance**

International tourism receipts*	US\$429 million
2019 Total international tourist arrivals***	388,576 tourists (+3.5%)
Total GDP contribution**	7.8% (Direct contribution = 2.6%)
Total Contribution to employment in tourism in Trinidad and Tobago**	52,700 jobs (Direct contribution = 17,500 jobs or 2.8% of total employment)

Data source: \*UNWTO World Tourism Barometer (Jan, 2020) and \*\* WTTC, Trinidad and Tobago 2019, Annual Research Key Highlights (2019), \*\*\*Ministry of Tourism (2019)

Although tourism accounts directly for only 2.6% of the country's GDP, its importance is seen in job creation and employment, generating

approximately 17,500 jobs or 2.8% of total employment,<sup>13</sup> compared to the energy sector which employed 12,600 people in 2019.<sup>14</sup> **Appendix 5** provides greater detail on Trinidad and Tobago's tourism sector performance.

The value of Trinidad and Tobago's tourism's potential has always been recognised. As early as the 1960s, fiscal incentives under the Hotel Development Act 1963 were introduced to stimulate growth in the sector. Over the years, various actions have been taken to stimulate the tourism sector. Some of the early actions include the establishment of the Tobago House of Assembly, and by extension, the then Division of Tourism, Enterprise Development and Settlements, and the formation of the Tourism Development Authority. The Tourism Development Act, *"An Act to facilitate the development of the Tourism Industry by providing to investors, incentives and concessions and to make provisions for matters incidental thereto"* was passed in October 2000.

The most recent initiative to boost the country's tourism development occurred in 2017 with the establishment of two new entities premised on the unique characteristics of each island. As such, the TTAL was charged with developing, marketing and promoting Tobago's tourism offerings while TTL had a similar responsibility for Trinidad; with the THA and MTCA having oversight of the respective agencies.<sup>15</sup>

**Figure 2** provides a chronological sequence of key tourism development plans, policies and administrative/operational milestones from the 1960s to 2019 superimposed on international tourist arrivals to Trinidad and Tobago.

Between the years 1990 to 2006, the country experienced a steady average annual growth rate of 5.6% in international tourist arrivals, due in part to the early initiatives undertaken by GoRTT. However, after peaking at 461,000 tourists in 2006, there was a major fallout resulting from the international financial crisis of 2007 to 2008. Although tourist arrivals grew between 2010 and 2012, the sector has experienced an average annual decline of 5.1%

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<sup>13</sup> "This includes employment by hotels, travel agents, airlines and other passenger transportation services (excluding commuter services). It also includes, for example, the activities of the restaurant and leisure industries directly supported by tourists" (WTTC, 2020).

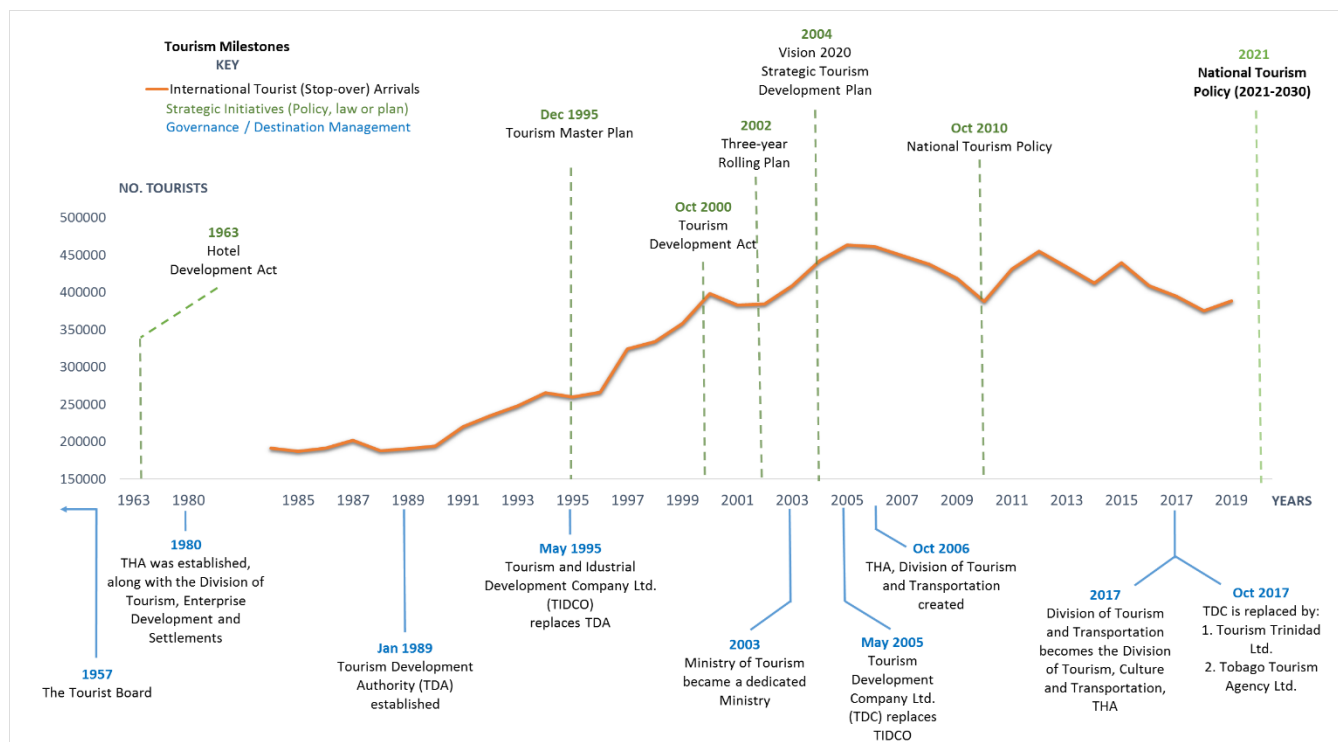
<sup>14</sup> Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago, Review of the Economy 2019, p.149.

<sup>15</sup> Ministry of Finance: "Budget Statement 2018".

from 2015 to 2018, rebounding moderately by 3.5% to 388,576 tourist arrivals in 2019.



**Figure 2: Timeline of Tourism Initiatives by Government and Annual Tourist Arrivals to Trinidad and Tobago**



We should also speak to the \$50M injection for Tobago somewhere.

## 2.3 The Key Challenges

A rapid scanning of the environment revealed a number of considerations as it relates to the future of tourism in Trinidad and Tobago:

- 1. The need for support of a Consensus Vision.** A general consensus on a vision for tourism supported by Government, industry, labour, civil society and tourism stakeholders is required.
- 2. The need to mitigate risk to the Destination's Image.** A long-term commitment to vigilance with respect to the reputation of both destinations is essential for future success. This will involve among other things, specific actions to ensure environmental sustainability, reduced crime and the health and safety of visitors and nations post COVID-19.
- 3. Striving to meet International Standards.** A structured mechanism that facilitates and promotes product enhancement and upgrades to international standards is required. This is especially important to

ensure that both destinations can guarantee plant and service quality post COVID-19.

4. **Renewed and sustained efforts in protection of the Environment & Resources.** The natural, cultural and historical resource base requires continuous safeguarding and protection; and efforts to ensure sustainable resources require adequate support and finance.
5. **Opportunity to enhance Tourism Visitor Experience.** The quality and effectiveness of the customer service delivery throughout the entire value chain are all examples of irritants to the consumer experience.
6. **A very competitive Investment Climate.** Investors in hotels and resorts seek to reduce risk and obtain assurances of Governments' commitment to tourism. Investors also consider incentive programmes and the ease with which development can proceed. Incentive regimes and approval processes should therefore be seamless and facilitative.
7. **Inconsistent International Airlift to Tobago.** Airlift is the lifeblood of island tourism destinations. The frequency and reliability of airlift service between Trinidad and Tobago needs to be addressed.
8. **The need to strengthen Public – Private Sector Partnerships.** While there are many opportunities to leverage both Government and private sector marketing budgets, consistent and transparent policies need to be in place to facilitate the development of an on-going, cooperative working relationship between Government and industry.
9. **Create more efficient and effective Communication Channels.** At present, effective, on-going communication among Government, other agencies and the business is sporadic and this can affect the proactive development and marketing of initiatives.

## **3.0 National Tourism Policy Framework**

### **3.1 Objectives of the Policy**

The overall objectives of this Policy are to:

- present a formal statement by GoRTT that provides a clear path for advancement of the tourism sector, addresses changing circumstances that impact the sector, and helps achieve national objectives;
- inspire greater confidence among prospective investors and entrepreneurs;
- act as a platform for policy coherence across the several sectors that contribute to a successful tourism and hospitality product; and
- provide a basis for sensitising the general public on the direction of tourism in Trinidad and Tobago.

### **3.2 Guiding Principles**

The NTP 2021 - 2030 provides a framework that shall allow for the sustainable development and management of the tourism industry, guided by the following key principles:

#### **i. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

- Tourism development that is conducted in a sustainable manner and ensures that the economic, social, cultural, and environmental characteristics of sustainable development are met and serves to benefit Trinidad and Tobago.

#### **ii. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROSPERITY**

- The visitor economy must be a source of economic and social benefit for the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago, thereby improving the quality of life through job creation, income generation, entrepreneurship, and personal and community growth

#### **iii. STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION AND PARTICIPATION**

- An essential component that must be employed in the decision making, planning and development of the tourism sector is collaboration and participation by all stakeholders including: proactive communities; the private sector; tourism associations; and NGOs; as doing so leads to increased competitiveness and future prosperity.

#### **iv. REGIONAL TOURISM MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING**

- A regional approach to tourism place management and marketing will serve as the hallmark of the development of the country's tourism sector.

#### **v. EXPERIENCE-DRIVEN, DISTINCT 'SENSE OF PLACE'**

- Every region across both destinations – Tobago, Trinidad – has a distinct natural beauty, power and complexity and these features must be wisely developed to create renowned experiences for visitors and, at the same time, be celebrated by locals.

#### **vi. VIBRANT SECTOR LINKAGES**

- Furthering the creation and maintenance of inter-industry linkages, particularly agriculture, technology, entertainment, culture, manufacturing, construction, sports, and other related industries is vital in adding value to the product and deepening visitor experience.

#### **vii. VISIBLE INTERNATIONAL BRAND**

- Developing a destination brand identity that embodies Trinidad's culture, products and services (bearing in mind the regional approach) must be developed, and aid in the communication of the brand promise to the global marketplace across all target segments and platforms. Tobago's brand identity inclusive of its intrinsic characteristics, must be maintained and widely publicised in a similar manner.

#### **viii. TARGETED HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS**

- New emphasis will be placed on health and personal safety protocols and the promotion of a safe and secure country for residents and visitors alike, particularly due to the fact that as it relates to travel, the perception of health and safety will impact tourism flows to the destination in the 'new normal'.

**ix. PROTECTION OF RESOURCES**

- Mechanisms that are well established and implemented through effective partnerships and collaboration, to protect the country's natural, heritage and cultural resources which are vital for the longevity of the Tourism sector.

**x. ROBUST INVESTMENT CLIMATE**

- Investment in the tourism sector is fostered and enhanced through the establishment of a competitive regulatory and financial environment and the intent is to pursue the creation of and support such a climate.

**xi. STRATEGIC CAPACITY BUILDING AND HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

- A strong commitment to human resource development and fostering coordination between educational institutions and the tourism sector, to rationalise and strengthen training and development programmes.

**xii. COMMITMENT TO DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION**

- Provision of an enabling framework to support comprehensive and ongoing investment in digital technologies for the Tourism sector and requisite infrastructure and interconnectivity ranging from mobile technologies/cloud computing to automation and data analytics.

**xiii. ESTABLISHED LAND USE FRAMEWORK**

- A tourism land use framework which Government establishes, through its town and country planning agency, for guidance and approval of tourism super-structure and infrastructure.

**xiv. COMPETITIVE, HIGH QUALITY PRODUCTS AND SERVICES**

- Contribute to the creation of a thriving industry through strategic upgrades to product quality for all aspects of the tourism product and service.

**xv. ETHICS AND TRANSPARENCY**

- Tourism must be underpinned by adherence to ethical principles which can serve to increase levels of societal trust as they guide norms and behaviours within the Sector, for example in delivery of service. The desired ethical principles are comprehensively outlined in the UNWTO Code of Ethics for Tourism.

## 4.0 Policy Statements

The Policy seeks to achieve the vision and objectives through the following policy statements, which are identified under strategic areas of intervention. The Policy addresses both the supply side of tourism as well as the demand for tourism products.

### 4.1 Visioning: Overview

The visioning statements outlined below, guide the Policy and, in some cases, support a “brand image” of the destination/place.

In the volatile and ambiguous context of tourism ‘new normal’, such visioning is necessary for intelligent foresighting, and facilitates the development of a common ideal that stakeholders can fully endorse and then work towards. Notably, the vision statements have emerged from the responses of the range of stakeholders who participated in the consultative process.

#### Trinidad – Position:

Trinidad will be positioned as *‘The Place That’s Always in Season’*. This positioning will ensure that stakeholders are not confined by the traditional Caribbean market-driven tourism seasonality (focused on the winter months from December through April in the main) which can negatively impact the industry’s ability to maximise annual revenues. Stakeholders will therefore benefit from a financially healthier visitor economy that operates on a year-round basis.

Trinidad’s tourism, through the Regions, “seasons” will be divided into distinct periods, with each season offering residents and visitors alike, the opportunity to share in memorable experiences by partaking in the island’s world-class festivals, music, culture, cuisine, sports, natural heritage, and its general joie de vivre during the year.<sup>16</sup>

#### Tobago – Position:

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<sup>16</sup> Trinidad is not a traditional tourism destination. As such, the reasons for visiting the island are generally not driven by the natural features of sun, sand, and sea, which typically define traditional tourism destinations and which are commonly referred to in the mass leisure market as the three S’s.

Tobago will be positioned as *‘The unspoilt, untouched Caribbean island where the undiscovered waits around every corner.’* This positioning will be the basis for developing and promoting authentic, sustainable tourism experiences to generate a strong travel demand, and stimulate on-island development for the benefit of the people of Tobago.

## **4.2 Regional Development Administration**

The paradigm shift being proposed as it relates to tourism is the devolution of land-use planning and management of heritage and cultural sites to the local government bodies, which with the appropriate devolved autonomy and empowerment will require regional corporations in the five (5) Tourism Regions in Trinidad (**Appendix 6**) to efficiently manage their respective tourism programmes and budgets. This is in keeping with the GoRTT’s policy position for local government reform, as outlined in the recently tabled Local Government Reform Bill.<sup>17</sup> This is already the case in Tobago, as the THA has the responsibility for the management of the affairs and the provision of goods and services in Tobago. Therefore, matters related to regional development administration in Tobago will continue through the Division of Settlements, Urban Renewal and Public Utilities, the entity with responsibility for Destination/Place Management on the island.

This shift away from the central Government’s role in areas such as development control and planning is expected to positively impact local economies and allow for significant improvements and development of local/regional tourism and hospitality activities. The physical space, natural attributes, and heritage and cultural assets will allow for the creation of a wide range of product offerings, and the development of a more structured and productive tourism and hospitality plant in the respective regions, based on each Region’s unique assets.

Regional tourism destination development and management will address specific issues that affect a sub-national area. However, any option chosen at the regional level should not detract from the overall aims and objectives of the national plan or that of another local/regional organisation; and should be considered sub-sets of the national tourism plan, guided by the overarching national policies.

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<sup>17</sup> This takes into account having approved statements for an approved policy for the next 5-10 years.



Effective management and oversight of tourism-related activities at the local/regional level can be conducted by a range of governance options, such as:

- Department or Single Authority;
- Partnership of public authorities - serviced by partners;
- Partners of Authorities - serviced by joint management unit;
- Public Authority - outsourcing delivery to private companies;
- Public/Private Partnership (PPP) for certain functions - often in the form of a non-profit company; and
- Association or Company - funded purely through a private sector partnership and or trading for certain functions.

### **Policy Statements:**

GoRTT will ensure that:

- i. develop an innovative, integrated and participatory approach to destination planning and management (i.e. an appropriate governance model) to effectively manage tourism development and business activity in the five (5) Regional Tourism Provinces in Trinidad, based on their respective goals and objectives;
- ii. establish Regional Tourism Destination Management Organisations (DMOs), using an appropriate business model for accountability and sound fiscal management;
- iii. ensure tourism planning and management is pursued through consultation, collaboration and coordination among key stakeholders within and between Regions; and
- iv. build capacity at the community and regional level through Regional Authorities, with support from MTCA, for the successful and sustained establishment and management of tourism and hospitality organisations.

### **4.3. Land-Use Planning and Spatial Development**

Land-use planning is the process of regulating land use to promote more desirable social and environmental outcomes and provide for more efficient

use of resources. Land-use planning and environmental responsibility are therefore two very important factors in the area of sustainable tourism development. It is through systematic and consistent application of such practices that a 'sense and respect of place' can be accomplished while significantly enhancing the economic value and touristic appeal of a destination/place.

Appropriate spatial development, by way of agreed Tourism Zones, can address issues related to the accessibility, functionality, character, and density of tourism and hospitality superstructure development.<sup>18</sup> As with any large scale industry, it is important that clear spatial policy guidelines are established to minimise any potential adverse impact of tourism on the residents of a specific space and/or the wider society.

Therefore, the MTCA will engage the Ministry of Planning and Development on development issues related to proposed physical and spatial development of tourism projects and sites. The primary objective of such engagement between the two Ministries, and any other relevant Ministries, is to arrive at a consensus that will best meet the long-term social and economic benefits for the communities in proximity to the space being proposed for tourism development.

Regarding spatial development for Tobago, the THA has authority over State Lands on the island.<sup>19</sup> The existing tourism spatial development policy position of the THA remains for Tobago (**Appendix 7**).

A viable and successful tourism sector is predicated on a high quality, well-maintained physical environment, with complementary rather than competing land use in proximity to tourism assets. Moreover, tourism activity must, ideally, promote and enable sustainable use of the scarce land resources of the country.

## **Policy Statements:**

GoRTT will:

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<sup>18</sup> National Spatial Development Strategy for Trinidad and Tobago: Surveying the Scene (2013), provides background information and the key issues which support a spatial development strategy for the country.

<sup>19</sup> THA has authority under the Tobago House of Assembly Act No. 40 of 1996 over State Lands, as a subsect under the Fifth Schedule of the Act.

- i. pursue collaboration amongst the relevant state entities for the revision and alignment of the National Spatial Policy to include regional tourism zones, tourism clusters, and relevant areas and sites within regional communities;
- ii. establish a coordinating mechanism of key stakeholders to enable efficient and effective development of zones for tourism use;
- iii. pursue coordinated and strategic development within the areas designated for tourism land use, to enable collective success;
- iv. ensure that land use is appropriate for, and consistent with the respective tourism visions of the proposed designated areas while carefully and sustainably managing competing uses;
- v. consider the inclusion of non-traditional tourism land use for areas such as agricultural and conservation land, that have the potential for product and activity offerings for niche visitor markets.

#### **4.4. Cluster Development**

A tourism cluster is a concentration of companies, institutions, authorities, supporting services, infrastructure, attractions and resources, interconnected in tourism and related activities within a specific geographic space. It is characterised by high quality facilities and services and social cohesion, strategic linkages between productive chains, companies' exchanges and networks, and inter-dependence among the actors to maximise comparative and competitive advantages. Members of a cluster exhibit a symbiotic relationship of collaboration and cooperation, but still remaining competitive to achieve individual benefits for all members.

Trinidad and Tobago currently possesses pockets of Cluster Development that lend themselves to tourism offerings. Cluster examples include, but are not limited to, the environs of Crown Point (inclusive of Store Bay and Pigeon Point Heritage Park), the environs of Castara, the environs of Roxborough or Speyside and the environs of Buccoo in Tobago; and in Trinidad, public performance spaces in Port of Spain such as the Theatre District (Queen's Hall, NAPA, Central Bank Auditorium, Little Carib Theatre), spectator and training sporting facilities in Balmain, Couva and surrounding areas, the historical buildings around the Queen's Park Savannah, the beaches and bays along the north coast, the cocoa plantations along the North Coast and

Central Range and the Chaguaramas peninsula. The aforementioned clusters allow opportunities for reframing the brand of the destination.

Clusters play a key role in regional development and the revised NTP 2021 - 2030 is founded on a regional approach in which tourism assets are identified, developed and managed by the communities in which they are located. Regional bodies and the THA will play an integral part in the development of tourism clusters both in Trinidad and Tobago, with proper spatial planning, land use and sound sustainable environmental practice<sup>20</sup> at the forefront.

### **Policy Statements:**

GoRTT will:

- i. identify and characterise tourism clusters, based on the local area development plans of the regions and discussions with the respective regional stakeholders;
- ii. support the development of products with the potential to contribute to the development of tourism clusters; and
- iii. support clusters and circuits of attractions and activities based on niche/thematic areas or geographic regions (may or may not include flagship attractions)
- iv. pursue the provision of institutional support services and infrastructure to aid in the development of tourism clusters

## **4.5 Tourism Product Development**

Tourism product development (TPD) is a process by which the assets of a particular destination are moulded to meet the needs of national and international customers/guests.

TPD is a wide inter-linked and continuing process which should not be considered in isolation; and which can be defined in many ways. On one

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<sup>20</sup> Sound sustainable environmental practice as guided by the provisions of the Environmental Management Act, the Environmentally Sensitive Areas Rules, the Environmentally Sensitive Species Rules and the National Environmental Policy (NEP).

hand, it can be seen as embracing all elements with which the visitor comes into contact, including infrastructure (e.g. transport, utilities); service personnel; places of lodging; attractions and activities; facilities; and amenities. On the other, it can be defined as comprising only those attractions, activities and facilities specifically provided for visitors.

TPD and experiences are the most important and most complex aspects of destination/place management because they are an amalgam of many experiences from the perspective of the visitor. The range and calibre of tourism product offerings are key determinants that attract tourists to a destination.

The tourism product consists of three elements:

1. physical: infrastructure, natural resources, accommodation, restaurants;
2. experiential: festivals, activities, community events, dining and entertainment, shopping, safety, security, and service at all visitor encounters;<sup>21</sup> and
3. emotional: human, cultural, and historic resources, hospitality services.

The identification of TPD opportunities will be informed by the understanding of tourists' market trends; tastes through market research; and the identification of those areas that would require capital investment and marketing.

Emphasis on the development of tourism products and visitor experiences cannot be underestimated, because the more successful a tourism destination/place is in delivering on visitor dreams and expectations, the greater the opportunity for sustaining the market through repeat visits and free endorsements via electronic platforms. Therefore, experiential projects and initiatives borne of collaborative efforts between the public and private sector which seek to refine existing products such as the Ariapita Avenue Entertainment Zone, Chinatown shopping zone and the Theatre District, among others would be pursued and implemented.

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<sup>21</sup> Visitor encounters include virtual reality and augmented reality.

There must be an established link and clear alignment between the market and the product as the issue of demand and supply is fundamental and critical to success.

### **Policy Statements:**

Bearing in mind the regional approach to tourism development, GoRTT will:

- i. maintain an updated tourism asset inventory and categorise assets based on appropriate models for ownership, development and management;
- ii. foster a culture of sustainable tourism development;
- iii. conduct market research, including market sentiment and stakeholder engagement, using a 'market/product matching' process;
- iv. support the development of flagships that serve as attractions to the destination and hubs for visitors/tourists;
- v. establish Tourism Product Development Zones to inform spatial planning and development, in alignment with the wider national spatial policy;
- vi. support local administrations in their role of bringing TPD to fruition; and
- vii. utilise augmented reality and virtual reality applications to enhance the tourism experience of the destination prior to and while on location, where applicable.

## **4.6 Tourism Investment**

Private Sector investment is critical to the development and stimulation of growth of the Tourism and Hospitality Industry. An investment policy framework supported by legislation serves as a guide and provides critical tools to be used by investors to enhance place/destination relationship, reduce risk and provide guidance on the development and management process particularly for tourism accommodation/lodging projects.

## **Policy Statements:**

GoRTT will:

- i. create a favourable investment environment, inclusive of incentives, for investors;
- ii. ensure that the promotion and facilitation of investment is supported by appropriate research, market intelligence and analysis;
- iii. develop a catalogue of Shovel Ready Investment Projects for tourism development, in order to fast-track the development approvals process for these projects, and attract investors; and
- iv. market and promote Trinidad and Tobago as an attractive and distinctive location for tourism investment.

## **4.7 Super Structure**

### **4.7.1 Tourist Accommodation/Lodging**

This subsector of the Tourism and Hospitality industry serves as the primary economic contributor to the national economy in terms of Hotel Accommodation Taxes, Value Added Tax (VAT), Payroll Taxes (PAYE), Green Fund Levy, Property and Land Taxes, and Corporate Taxes. Additionally, other benefits are derived from employment generation, foreign exchange earnings and the multiplier effect of tourist dollar spend. In this regard, the Government will facilitate initiatives to modernise and improve the performance of the accommodation/lodging sector so that it becomes more competitive, profitable, and sustainable. The optimal accommodation mix including the type, range and quality of lodging offered, will assist in the market positioning of the place/destination.

Development of accommodation/lodging should be aligned to the market and operating environment.

GoRTT will:

- i. facilitate the development of 4-5 star internationally branded new hotel rooms in the City of Port of Spain, during the period 2021-2030, targeting the Meetings and Conferences market;<sup>22</sup>
- ii. facilitate the development of a state-of-the-art convention centre as a complement to the additional hotel rooms, also to be located in Port of Spain;
- iii. encourage the development of new hotel and lodging facilities<sup>23</sup> throughout Trinidad and Tobago, in alignment with the respective sense of place, market demand and overall development plans for the various regions, with an emphasis on high quality boutique and specially-themed facilities, including at least one branded five-star anchor facility;<sup>24</sup>
- iv. support the upgrade, rehabilitation, and enhancement of existing accommodation facilities to meet internationally, regionally and nationally acceptable standards; and
- v. provide support services and technical assistance to small, independent, and locally owned properties, including those that operate in the home-sharing economy, to enable them to become environmentally and economically sustainable.

#### **4.7.2 General Infrastructure**

Infrastructure comprises the essential services, facilities and structures needed for communal use within a destination/place by its citizens and residents. Infrastructure is needed to support tourism economic development. However, the positive economic impact of tourism is not without cost, as new tourism attractions, facilities, and services place additional stress on existing infrastructure.

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<sup>22</sup> The targeted number of rooms over the ten-year period for Trinidad is projected to be 6,000. This would be required to support the establishment of a world class convention centre.

<sup>23</sup> All categories of tourism accommodation as identified in the under the Tourism Development Act, Chapter 87:22, Act 9 of 2000.

<sup>24</sup> It is anticipated between 2,500 to 3,500 new hotel/lodging rooms, would be required over the next ten year period in Tobago to support the expected increase in air passenger arrivals attributable to the expansion of the ANR Robinson International Airport.



Expansion and improvement of water supply, waste disposal, electrical power, fuel systems, technology, roads, airports, seaports and marinas, communications, and sewage treatment are among the usual demands of tourism development; as well as expanded police services, fire protection and medical services. Overall improvement in infrastructure creates a favourable environment for investment in tourism superstructure.

### **Policy Statements:**

GoRTT will:

- i. determine infrastructural needs for tourism, in collaboration with relevant agencies;
- ii. ensure that sustainability considerations (economic, environmental, social) and smart technologies are integrated into the planning and development of new infrastructure;
- iii. facilitate access to funding for infrastructure needed for tourism development, with priority given to options based on renewable and green technology, climate change adaptation, disaster risk mitigation etc; and
- iv. adopt innovative strategies to ensure the delivery of quality infrastructure development.

### **4.8 Transportation**

The two main issues to be addressed in the area of transportation from a tourism perspective are (i) the movement of tourists to Trinidad and Tobago, and (ii) the movement of tourists within Trinidad and Tobago. It is imperative that transport and tourism development strategies are well synchronised. Failing this, the destinations may not be able to accommodate actual or potential visitor numbers and flows, and mobility will be restricted, potentially lowering the quality of visitor experiences.

#### **4.8.1 Air Transportation**

Island destinations require reliable and scheduled market-driven air services, particularly sustained two-way directional traffic. Consequently, island destinations with small domestic markets have less propensity for outbound traffic and are faced with high and often sustained market development costs for scheduled air services from selected tourists generating markets.

#### **Policy Statements:**

GoRTT will:

- i. encourage and support the development of new airline routes with the potential for generating two-way directional traffic to/from the place/destination, and an expansion of new carriers to the destination;
- ii. support the national carrier and negotiate routes with other international airlines in accordance with current and potential demand to ensure the provision of competitive services;
- iii. establish an international travel/in transit desk and area for visitors travelling on to Tobago;
- iv. provide an efficient safety and health management system to safeguard the well-being of travellers;
- v. review the existing policy with respect to seat guarantee agreements for scheduled airline services from tourist-generating markets to Tobago, in light of prevailing economic circumstances;
- vi. improve the quality and efficiency of air transportation infrastructure;
- vii. encourage the development of a General Aviation Centre at Piarco to capture a portion of the global private jet travel market, by facilitating traveller and equipment services; and
- viii. encourage the development of US bond preclearance immigration and customs facilities at Piarco airport which provides for greater air passenger throughput and revenue generation.

#### **4.8.2 Ground Transportation**

Transportation is a critical component of the tourism product and is essential in three ways: (i) as the means of getting to the destination; (ii) the means of movement within the destination; and (iii) in some cases, the transportation is the actual tourism attraction or activity. The latter two mechanisms are vital in the case of Trinidad and Tobago. The road-based transportation network, including coaches and rental cars are strongly affiliated with the tourism industry. Road transport will continue to be the dominant mode of tourist's transportation within the destination. Once at a destination, visitors will make use of taxis/ hired vehicles, rentals, scheduled and pre-booked coach services.

#### **Policy Statements:**

GoRTT will:

- i. improve standards and quality control to internationally acceptable standards for all types and forms of ground transportation;<sup>25</sup>
- ii. advocate for uniformity in terms of look, style and colour for tourist taxi transportation, once the opportunity presents itself;
- iii. collaborate with stakeholders to reduce the transit time for tours;
- iv. seek to provide reliable public transport with strong safety features which will encourage visitors to use this as an alternative form of transport; and
- v. promote the integration of technology into the transportation sector to improve efficiency, reliability, safety and convenience.

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<sup>25</sup>The Ministry of Works and Transport, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, and the Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards should collaborate to develop standards for ground transportation.

### **4.8.3 Sea Transportation**

GoRTT, through the Port Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (PATT)<sup>26</sup> is committed to improving the ferry service operations to match international standards with the highest level of safety and quality passenger experience. The GoRTT has already purchased high quality ferry passenger service vessels and is committed to the expansion of this service to meet its domestic demand.

#### **Policy Statements:**

GoRTT will:

- i. ensure that there are convenient and efficient in-person and online systems for booking and purchasing of tickets for the ferry service;
- ii. promote the coordination of ferry services and schedules with the national airline to support improved connectivity between the two islands, especially during periods of high demand for travel between Trinidad and Tobago;
- iii. create a modern and functional terminal in keeping with international standards for ferry and cruise ship passengers; and
- iv. ensure that high quality customer service is provided at port facilities.

### **4.9 Cruise Tourism Development**

Cruise Tourism, (prior to the COVID-19 global pandemic), was the fastest growing sector of the Tourism Industry, a position it has held for most of the first two decades of this century. It is anticipated that Cruise Tourism will continue to remain a part of the industry in the future and will continue to represent the lion's share of visitors to the region. Going forward, Cruise Tourism will require greater focus on health and safety standards and procedures.

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<sup>26</sup> Port Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (PATT), has three (3) Strategic Business Units Port of Port of Spain (PPOS): Cargo Handling Services (main operations. Port of Spain Infrastructure Co. Ltd (POSINCO): Landlord port and maritime services; Cruise Shipping Trinidad; and Trinidad and Tobago Inter-island Transportation Co. Ltd (TTIT): Cruise Shipping Tobago, Inter-island Ferry Service.

Though cruise vessels are increasing in capacity and afford a larger number of passengers on board, the passengers' short duration onshore, limits their ability to fully explore the destination and partake in multiple experiences. The destination therefore has to review its onshore offerings with a view to diversifying its options and ensuring high-quality products and experiences as well as motivating the visitor to return as a stayover visitor.

Historically, Trinidad and Tobago's growth in Cruise arrivals has been constrained by inadequate port facility capacity, even though the destination's land-side offerings and experiences rank among the most outstanding in the region for cruise visitors. Cruise Tourism development and expansion will require augmentation of port infrastructure to accommodate new cruise lines, additional vessels and larger ships to the destination.

### **Policy Statements:**

GoRTT will:

- i. seek to increase cruise passenger arrivals in the short to medium term through increased calls;
- ii. seek to enhance cruise visitor experiences through the integration of high-quality cultural and artistic content into cruise activity offerings;
- iii. seek to partner with a major Cruise Line in the development of a dedicated Cruise port facility on the island of Trinidad;
- iv. seek to strengthen the economic contribution of cruise tourism through a review of the Head Tax, goods and services supplied, port dues and similar fees;
- v. stimulate economic activity within the terminal or port area through the establishment of a duty-free shopping area;
- vi. advocate for a (Caribbean) regional approach to cruise tourism within the Caribbean Community (CARICOM); and
- vii. encourage the establishment of centres and outlets providing the most memorable cruise visitor experience in the region by offering locally produced, high quality tourist products, keepsakes and host population encounters.

#### **4.10 Heritage**

Trinidad and Tobago's heritage is reflected in its diverse ethnicities, arts, culture, cuisine and religious traditions which contribute to the distinctiveness of the twin-island Caribbean nation. Public holidays and festivals are celebrated as inclusive affairs with participation by persons from all backgrounds, be they local, regional or international giving full proclamation to the National Anthem: "Here every creed and race finds an equal place..."

Festivals and public and religious holidays also celebrate the Indigenous Peoples and the arrival of African, East Indian, Chinese, French, Spanish, British, Portuguese, and Syrian-Lebanese, among others, all of whom have played, and continue to play, key roles in the country's cultural and socio-economic development.

Having invented the steel pan as the only new musical instrument of the 20th century, the country continues to demonstrate innovation and invention in the musical arena developing various genres such as calypso, soca, chutney (a blend of East Indian and soca beats) and tambrin and fiddle music. These are heard particularly during the country's national and annual celebrations, including Carnival, Tobago Heritage Festival, as well as various events throughout the year. Additionally, the country is acclaimed for its numerous literary greats and accomplished designers and artists.

In addition to the historical legacy, the country boasts of a number of cultural, natural, and built heritage sites that are irreplaceable and which currently serve as sources of identity and continuity providing inspiration to be passed on to future generations. The country's indigenous heritage, which reflects all aspects of traditional lifestyle of the First Peoples, ranging from art and craft creations, experiences such as dance and rituals, to the beliefs and values, continue to be reflected in Trinidad and Tobago's culture.

Heritage resources are often the main motivators for travel to destinations/places. The world's most visited attractions are natural features, natural parks, World Heritage Sites and other historic resources. Unlike products specifically developed for tourism, most heritage attractions were not originally intended for use by tourists and therefore require carefully considered product development and management strategies.

The development of heritage sites for tourism can be beneficial as this can raise awareness of the value and significance of sites, increase local pride and support the protection of areas. Visitors may also provide some income for the maintenance of sites through user fees with other forms of economic value derived from the purchasing of gifts and souvenirs, food and drink, transport and accommodation. Developing indigenous heritage for tourism can ensure that certain practices are preserved for future generations.

### **Policy Statements:**

GoRTT will:

- i. develop strategic relationships with local and international Heritage, Conservation, Cultural, National Parks, Indigenous Organisations, and other relevant organisations;
- ii. market and promote heritage tourism sites and attractions;
- iii. seek to have heritage sites and buildings designated as World Heritage Sites or buildings by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO);
- iv. fully explore the recent designation of Port of Spain as a UNESCO City of Music; and
- v. support the inclusion and utilisation of intangible forms of heritage through immersive experiences.

### **4.11 Events and Festivals**

Events and festivals are attractions that occur over a fixed period in one or more locations. Sport, culture, and other events can play a critical role in implementing the strategic product development of a place/destination. Events and festivals can fulfil important tourism functions, generating tourism business growth directly and indirectly while serving as "brand builders" and tactical levers to offset seasonal events.

## **Policy Statements:**

GoRTT will:

- i. prioritise the development of a portfolio of signature ‘home grown events’ and major international (flagship) events over the next 5-10 years;
- ii. attract and support major international events, to be locally-hosted in accordance with policies and prescribed criteria ;
- iii. prioritise events into seasons and develop and publish an annual calendar of events;
- iv. provide support for local community events that engender tourism in accordance with policies and prescribed criteria;
- v. create and support major national events that engender tourism in accordance with policies and prescribed criteria; and
- vi. provide incentives such as tax allowances for Event and Festival Producers based on their eligibility, as well as for private sector investment in festivals and events, in keeping with the Tourism Development Act, Chapter 87:22, Act 9 of 2000.

### **4.12 Digitalising the Tourism Sector**

Given the criticality of information and communication technology (ICT) to the country’s overall progress, global competitiveness and sustainable development, GoRTT, as outlined in the National ICT Plan 2018-2022, has identified the establishment of modern, and well-maintained ICT systems as one of its priorities. Tourism, given its information-intensive nature, has been impacted significantly by ICT, particularly in the area of digital technologies which are driving tourism innovation and causing disruption along the tourism value chain. Automation, digitalisation, interconnectivity, big data and new business models are transforming the breadth of the tourism industry. Technological disruption, including COVID-19 related shifts, has changed the planning and management of tourist destinations, giving rise to



the concept of *SMART destinations*.<sup>27</sup> ICT will enable resilient and cost-efficient tourism development in Trinidad and Tobago.

## **Policy Statements:**

GoRTT will:

- i. foster cross-sector and inter-Ministerial collaboration to harmonise and implement ICT regulations and policies, that are relevant to the tourism sector;
- ii. adopt appropriate technology for acquiring visitor information, such as electronic immigration cards and contactless data acquisition at airport and seaports, to enable real-time access to data;
- iii. optimise the use of big data and analytics to inform tourism planning and development;
- iv. create opportunities for new technologies and innovation in tourism by partnering with tertiary education institutions, through Memoranda of Understanding;
- v. utilise technology and innovation at tourist sites and attractions to increase safety, manage visitor access and control overcrowding;
- vi. encourage the use of technology (such as online transactions and contactless payment) to enhance efficiency within tourism businesses, and the visitor experience;<sup>28</sup>
- vii. promote knowledge transfer and strengthen digital competencies particularly among MSMEs and regional governance bodies; and

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<sup>27</sup> Smart destinations focus on the effective and efficient use of resources, a cleaner environment, and ultimately sustainability.

<sup>28</sup> Such as use of Quick Response (QR) codes on signage linked with augmented reality (AR) or virtual reality (VR) to access digital content; interactive technologies; digital video recording with drones or action cameras, etc.

- viii. encourage technologies which contribute to the development of a smart destination with smart mobility<sup>29</sup> and connectivity.

#### **4.13 Education and Training**

Professional development and training of the tourism and hospitality workforce are the primary drivers, directly and indirectly, of Trinidad and Tobago's competitiveness of a tourism destination. The country's tourism product offerings exist in a very competitive global tourism market, which is often driven by an increasingly aging population with sophisticated needs, desires and expectations. In this context, continuous improvement on the part of tourism and hospitality suppliers is required, if Trinidad and Tobago is to realise its fullest potential.

In strengthening its competitiveness as a tourism destination, a permanent programme-directed approach comprising professional development training and practical classes must factor among the actual objectives of secondary and higher education institutions and hotel companies.

Current trends in the hospitality and tourism sector and shifts in the nature of work due to COVID-19, demand continuous investment in education and programmes to enhance the quality of services provided. Investment in personnel is essential for the sector's resilience and profitability. Notwithstanding the opportunities afforded through digitisation, the travel and tourism industry will continue to rely on the human interface particularly as travellers yearn for more authentic experiences. Moreover, within the Caribbean, which is subject to natural threats, business continuity will rely on first-in-class human resources.

Investment in education and training of new and existing personnel will also have a positive effect on the delivery of quality customer service, guest experiences, satisfaction levels; and ultimately the destination's reputation.

In this regard, the proposed education and training policies focus on life-long learning through education and training across all visitor/guests touch points. This recognises that one-time skills training is no longer sufficient for

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<sup>29</sup> Smart Mobility provides for a multimodal transportation system (bus, taxi, water taxi, ferry, etc) that is convenient and accessible; and is based on an intelligent (technology) management system.

supporting the increasingly dynamic nature of the tourism and hospitality business environment.

### **Policy Statements:**

GoRTT will:

- i. institute measures to strengthen the vertical linkages between the tourism industry, government and educational institutions, with a focus on a curriculum responsive to the industry's evolving HR needs (non-degree, undergraduate and post graduate);
- ii. pursue the development and delivery of integrated educational programmes and internship placements at locally-approved tourism and hospitality businesses. Efforts will be made to secure regional and international internships where feasible;
- iii. encourage state-owned branded hotel properties to assign Trinidad and Tobago graduates/nationals to their overseas affiliated properties to obtain global experience in key areas of culinary and hospitality management;
- iv. pursue the establishment of agency-to-agency horizontal linkages between government and industry to facilitate work based competence and job placement for Tourism and Hospitality graduates through the national On-the-Job Training (OJT) Programme and Associate Professional Programme;
- v. promote the accreditation of local higher-education or technical institutions, which offer relevant certification in tourism and hospitality to ensure that students gain regional and international recognition from Caribbean and international agencies;
- vi. establish and maintain a register of Trinidad and Tobago nationals with relevant qualifications and experience in the areas of Tourism and

Hospitality Management, in order to readily identify suitable candidates for employment opportunities;<sup>30</sup>

- vii.require personnel engaged in visitor contact and customer service activities to complete approved customer care and destination product management certification, training and re-training, where necessary; and
- viii. initiate and develop tourism public education and awareness campaigns and programmes which can improve attitudes and behaviours towards tourism and which leads to an understanding of the importance of tourism to the economic, social and environmental development of the country.<sup>31</sup>

#### **4.14 Standards and Quality**

A standard is a technical document that provides requirements, specifications, guidelines or characteristics that can be used to ensure that materials, products, processes and services are fit for their purpose. Governments and regulators usually promote the use of national, regional and international standards to support technical regulations.

Most standards are designed for voluntary use, however if used and applied consistently, standards form part of the armament for ensuring the competitiveness at a destination. This is achieved through improvements in the quality of products and services, thereby enabling innovation, allowing for interoperability, lowering research and development risks, reducing technical and trade barriers, expanding markets and facilitating interconnectivity in the tourism sector.

Adoption and implementation of national, regional and internationally recognised and accepted standards provide greater assurance of acceptable service and reduces the risk of unacceptable service quality.

In addition, where tourism operators are certified, it may provide consumers with the confidence that the goods or services offered at a destination are

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<sup>30</sup> The register, for example, would ensure that Nationals of Trinidad and Tobago (including those who may be working overseas) can be engaged at higher management levels in the Tourism and Hospitality sector.

<sup>31</sup> These campaigns and programs will be conducted both within schools and among the wider population

safe, reliable, environmentally friendly and of good quality. Quality consciousness must be imbued in the minds of all stakeholders in the tourism sector. GoRTT recognises the importance of adhering to national, regional and international standards for the development of a robust, viable and competitive tourism sector in Trinidad and Tobago.

## **Policy Statements**

GoRTT will:

- i. support the development and implementation of national, regional and international standards for the tourism sector;
- ii. develop and implement a licensing scheme or similar mechanism to apply to all tourism operators;
- iii. ensure tourism products are developed in accordance with appropriate national, regional and international standards for the tourism sector; and
- iv. adopt and implement quality assurance programmes which can include certification programmes for the tourism sector.

## **4.15 Climate Resilience, Disaster Risk Management and Environmental Sustainability**

### **4.15.1 Climate Resilience**

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are prone and vulnerable to a variety of destructive events caused by natural and man-made hazards. Experts have attributed increases in storm surges, coastal erosion, coral bleaching, sea level rise, droughts, increased rainfall and flooding to climate change. The local tourism sector is also at risk since these phenomena will negatively impact tourism assets such as sites and attractions, biodiversity, cultural and heritage resources, and coastal areas inclusive of beaches and coral reefs. Climate change adaptation and mitigation measures are therefore critical to the local economy and livelihood of its citizens. In order to drive the commitment by the tourism sector, the following measures are being

recommended in support of the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC) towards achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

### **Policy Statements:**

GoRTT will:

- i. determine the impact of climate change on Trinidad and Tobago's tourism sector, as well as the sector's contribution to climate change, in order to set developmental priorities for adaptation and mitigation;
- ii. support the elaboration and implementation of climate mitigation and adaptation strategies that provide for the development of a resilient, climate smart tourism destination and which align with the policies of the National Climate Change Policy (2011) and the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC);
- iii. encourage investment initiatives that support climate resilience and mitigation in the tourism sector, including investments in nature-based solutions; and
- iv. conduct public education and awareness programmes on climate change mitigation and adaptation within the tourism context.

#### **4.15.2 Disaster Risk Management for the Tourism Sector**

The tourism sector continues to be negatively affected by natural disasters and manmade disasters, such as forest and bush fires, on an annual basis. The effect of these phenomena on the economy is noticeable as visitor arrivals plunge, foreign exchange and investment opportunities are jeopardised, and employment in the sector becomes at risk. In addition, destruction of tourism infrastructure such as accommodation facilities, loss of use of utilities and closure of air and sea ports, pose a huge challenge to the destination. Likewise, biological hazards (epidemics, pandemics, food borne illnesses and vector-borne diseases) and financial hazards (economic recessions) will have an exponential impact on the tourism sector and its supporting services. The GoRTT will seek access to grant funding (regional and international) for improving the delivery of comprehensive disaster

management plans and initiatives in an effort to reduce vulnerability and increase the destination's resilience to natural hazards and disasters.

## **Policy Statements:**

GoRTT will:

- i. institutionalise collaboration among key agencies responsible for emergency management from a tourism perspective through the establishment of a Tourism Emergency Management Committee (TEMC);<sup>32</sup>
- ii. establish a national Disaster Risk Management (DRM) emergency response plan supported by a crisis communication plan and contingency plan for the tourism sector;
- iii. develop resources and tools to support the implementation of the national DRM emergency response plan;
- iv. support the development of disaster risk management and business continuity plans for tourism facilities and operators;
- v. support the implementation of disaster risk management recovery projects;<sup>33</sup>
- vi. facilitate access by tourism stakeholders to various forms of financial instruments in the event of a loss; and
- vii. conduct public outreach and education programmes in vulnerable communities/groups.

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<sup>32</sup> TEMC to include the Ministry of National Security, the Environmental Management Authority (EMA), Office of Disaster Preparedness (ODPM) and Municipal Corporations.

<sup>33</sup> Partner with the Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO) to implement initiatives identified in the Disaster Risk Management Guide for the Caribbean Tourism Sector: A Practical Handbook for Tourism Business and Policymakers.

#### **4.15.3 Environmental Sustainability**

Where tourism development and activities are located in areas of high nature value (HNV) such as coastal zones, wetlands and forested areas which support rich biodiversity and provide key ecosystem services, these undertakings can negatively impact the very resources which the tourism sector needs for its sustainability.

On the other hand, sustainable tourism, which generates income through the non-destructive use of natural resources, can help to promote environmental conservation and decouple economic development from environmental degradation. This is particularly important as the nation strives to diversify and strengthen its economy whilst adhering to the National Development Strategy (NDS) - Vision 2030, the National Environmental Policy (2018) and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

#### **Policy Statements:**

GoRTT will:

- i. promote and pursue the adoption of sustainable practices in the planning of tourism projects;
- ii. encourage responsible, efficient and sustainable use of resources, including water and energy conservation, within tourism operations and businesses;
- iii. encourage sustainable waste management initiatives across tourism sites and attractions, as well as other tourism businesses and operators;
- iv. pursue the integration, provision and use of incentives that encourage the adoption of sustainable practices within the tourism industry;
- v. ensure tourism development is carried out in compliance with national, regional and international regulations and standards<sup>34</sup> to reduce its impact on the environment;

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<sup>34</sup> Environmentally based standards such as ISO 14001 (Environmental Management Systems), the CARICOM Regional Energy Efficiency Building Code.



- vi. support the sustainable management, restoration and protection of terrestrial, freshwater (inland), coastal and marine ecosystems, as key elements of the tourism product.<sup>35</sup>

#### **4.16 Marketing, Research and Planning**

Tourism and Hospitality Marketing must be understood in the context of satisfying customer needs with a view to offering products that provide superior customer value, based on effective pricing, distribution, and promotion; and which results in strong customer relations that, in return, create value for the place/destination.

In order to achieve a consistently high level of customer satisfaction, the visitor, and potential visitor must be engaged, through consumer research that identifies and is able to address/respond to their needs, wants and concerns effectively.

Place/Destination Research, Planning and Marketing, represent the steps that lead to the development and final execution of the selected marketing activities. With the advent of the Internet and the availability of a wide range of digital marketing platforms, places/destinations can now determine where to focus their marketing activities, based on the relevant communication tools and resources using real time market data. This also allows for measurement of the effectiveness of marketing activities in the geographical and niche target markets.

In this context, tourism marketers are required to analyse their marketplace and to develop and implement a strategic marketing plan that would increase visitor arrivals in their target market segments. Strategic marketing and planning for the tourism industry generally include needs analysis, research, creative infusion, strategic positioning, marketing plan development and training, implementation, evaluation, and adjustment. The aim is to provide a road map that not only enhances and improves marketing efforts through a strategic marketing system that aims to stretch marketing dollars through planning, monitoring, and evaluation, but which is also action-oriented and

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<sup>35</sup> Due to the importance and sensitivity of terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems as well as marine and coastal ecosystems, the adoption and implementation of Protected Area Plans, Visitor Management Plans, the enforcement of legislation and designation of Marine Protected Areas will be critical.

able to benchmark and counter competitors' strategies with built-in performance measurements and evaluations.

## **Policy Statements**

GoRTT will:

- i. integrate technology into marketing strategy for data collection, trend analysis and prediction, and execution of targeted marketing activities;
- ii. improve the collection, range, quality and comparability of tourism data (particularly inclusive of specific niches, such as culture) to provide indicators that are more harmonised with local needs and regional and international reporting, in order to improve monitoring and inform the development of the tourism sector;<sup>36</sup>
- iii. ensure that marketing strategy is based on research, market intelligence, analytics, advanced targeting and close collaboration with local stakeholders, bearing in mind the regional approach and niche segments;
- iv. ensure the consistency of communications and place/destination brand identity messages across all platforms;
- v. pursue greater efficiency and effectiveness through joint marketing initiatives for Trinidad and Tobago, where appropriate; and
- vi. Ensure that data collection mechanisms are instituted, for both the air bridge and sea bridge, for the collection of inter-island visitor data (domestic and international) between the two islands.

### **4.17 Taxation, Revenue Generation and Funding**

Tourism, like other sectors in the economy, has a range of taxes, fees and charges. These are a source of revenue for the Government and provide an avenue of funding to help support public investment for tourism development. Although implemented mainly for revenue generation purposes, some taxes, such as environmental levies, are imposed to encourage positive behavioural changes. On the other hand, tax incentives

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<sup>36</sup> In keeping with the International Recommendations on Tourism Statistics (IRTS) 2008.

are granted to promote increased investment in tourism infrastructure and ancillary tourism services.

When implementing a taxation scheme, policymakers have to determine what impact such taxes may have on the competitiveness, attractiveness and sustainability of the destination, and what, if any, are the alternative funding mechanisms. Taxation schemes that are burdensome are counterproductive and can make the destination become uncompetitive.

An efficient tax system will create opportunities and favourable conditions for investment while ensuring that the economy becomes more competitive.

## **Policy Statements**

GoRTT will:

- i. develop a flexible mechanism to reinvest revenues collected from the tourism sector;
- ii. monitor and evaluate the impact of tourism-related taxes on the sector to ensure that they meet national development objectives, and are not adversely impacting the destinations' competitiveness, attractiveness or sustainability;
- iii. identify and inform stakeholders of opportunities for funding of tourism projects/activities available through private, local and international sources;
- iv. foster opportunities for public private partnerships (PPPs); and
- v. use a combination of fiscal incentives: tax holidays, investment tax credits, and tax exemptions to stimulate and boost investment in the tourism sector.

### **4.18 Border Control, Frontier Reception, National Security and Public Safety**

Tourism relies on the ability of people to travel safely and freely across borders. Therefore, the removal of barriers aided by non-restrictive customs and immigration policies and visa requirements can ease the mobility of visitors between destinations. The establishment of common multiple-entry

visas among various cooperating states can also lead to an increase in tourism within the participating countries. Nonetheless, the travel and tourism sector is also highly sensitive to the threat of terrorism, pandemics, and other large-scale crises and borders may have to be temporarily closed to deter and prevent the unlawful entry of persons or items that may cause harm or to arrest the spread of a disease or any other threat to the health and safety of citizens.

Therefore, a balance has to be struck between the implementation of border controls and travel restrictions and the adoption of facilitative processes to provide visitors with a seamless, professional and non-threatening experience as their first encounter at the destination.

As a result of global health issues and challenges, the most recent being the COVID-19 pandemic, future travellers will focus their concerns on personal health and safety prior to selecting a host destination. Safeguarding the visitor's health and safety at the destination will be one of GoRTT's priorities.

## **Policy Statements**

GoRTT will:

- i. implement policies and practices that enable greater traveller mobility and confidence while maintaining or enhancing security and border integrity in adherence to national and international protocols;
- ii. pursue the adoption of ICT throughout the processes and procedures at all Ports of Entry for travellers;
- iii. pursue the harmonisation of local, regional and international standards in relation to health, safety and security of visitors to the destination;
- iv. adopt the Tourism Health Information, Monitoring and Response System<sup>37</sup> of the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA);
- v. seek to promulgate a positive, safe destination image in the international arena;

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<sup>37</sup> The Tourism Health Information, Monitoring and Response System is commonly called the Tourism and Health Programme (THP).

- vi. pursue strategies for visa-free travel, visa waivers, multiple-entry visas and long stay visas to facilitate arrangements for multi-destination travel within the region and internationally and lengthy trips to the destination; and
- vii. create greater awareness amongst border security personnel on the importance of their role in developing a successful tourism product.

## **5.0 National Tourism Policy Implementation**

The tourism sector is multi-faceted and interconnected. In order to fully harness the potential of the country's tourism sector, the implementation of this revised NTP will require the contribution and collaboration of various actors. While the principal implementing agents will be the MTCA; the THA; TTL and the TTAL, activities and initiatives will cross multiple agencies and sectors driven by governmental, non-governmental and private sector organisations. Therefore, it is anticipated that there will be greater partnering with Ministries, parastatal and other agencies to ensure policy alignment and harmonisation of activities among relevant entities to achieve successful policy implementation.

Additionally, it is anticipated following the revised NTP 2021-2030 coming into effect, a Tourism Master Plan for Trinidad and Tobago will be developed by the MTCA, in collaboration with stakeholders. The Tourism Master Plan will establish projects and actions, timelines, relevant authorisation, monitoring benchmarks and targets in alignment with the Policy statements articulated within the revised policy.

To achieve this, an appropriate institutional framework is critical. Consequently, GoRTT will establish physical, social, legal and institutional frameworks to set the stage for the sustainable growth of the tourism industry. This framework shall comprise:

- i. the MTCA, THA, TTL and TTAL with adequate resources to meet their respective mandates;
- ii. Standing Committees for the sustainable development of tourism in both Trinidad and Tobago, comprising stakeholders and relevant

public and private sector agencies to facilitate and coordinate tourism development; and

- iii. an appropriate legal and regulatory framework for the tourism sector.

The roles and functions of the main agencies responsible for tourism development are outlined below.

### **5.1 The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts (MTCA)**

The MTCA is the government agency charged with overseeing the development of tourism, culture and the arts in Trinidad and Tobago. Its mission is to formulate tourism and cultural policy and strategy and to guide, regulate, oversee and foster the sustainable development of the tourism and cultural sectors. Key to the fulfilment of the Ministry's mandate is the development of strategic and effective public, private and community partnerships.

The principal responsibilities of the Ministry are:

- i. provision of leadership and strategic direction in tourism and cultural development;
- ii. formulation of national tourism and cultural policies and sub-policies to guide tourism and cultural development in Trinidad and Tobago;
- iii. collaboration and supporting relevant Agencies, Organizations, Ministries, Statutory Boards and other Bodies, Associations and Community Groups on matters related to tourism and cultural development;
- iv. monitoring and evaluation of the performance of both the tourism and cultural sectors;
- v. monitoring the implementation of policies including the National Tourism Policy, the National Cultural Policy of Trinidad and Tobago and the National Cultural Recognition Policy, and ensuring that strategies and programmes are in sync with the NDS - Vision 2030 and other relevant national policies;

- vi. providing oversight of the operations of Tourism Trinidad Limited (TTL) and other relevant tourism and cultural entities;
- vii. building public awareness of tourism and culture among nationals through various media to re-orient attitudes towards both sectors;
- viii. provision of an enabling environment to support tourism and cultural development and growth;
- ix. facilitating and monitoring the administration of tourism incentives and concessions in accordance with the Tourism Development Act, Chap. 87:22; and
- x. identification, development and implementation of relevant and appropriate legislative and regulatory framework for the tourism and culture sectors.

## **5.2 The Tobago House of Assembly (THA)**

In accordance with the 'Tobago House of Assembly Act No. 40 of 1996, Chap. 25:03', the THA is responsible for the overall development of the island of Tobago, including tourism development. The Division of Tourism, Culture and Transportation is charged with the responsibility of establishing, standardising and sustaining the island's tourism product in a manner consistent with the repositioning strategy for Tobago as a tourist destination. The Division also ensures that there is an adequate supply of air and sea transportation to satisfy the needs of both residents and visitors to Tobago. The THA's primary responsibilities with respect to tourism in Tobago are:

- i. formulation and implementation of specific policy and plans for the island's tourism sector;
- ii. conducting tourism market research;
- iii. providing tourist information services;
- iv. product development and service management for tourism development;
- v. monitoring and evaluation of the tourism sector;
- vi. implementation of standards for the development and maintenance of tourism infrastructure and sites and attractions;

- vii. promotion of investment opportunities;
- viii. maintenance of tourism facilities/amenities;
- ix. administering the provisions of the Tourism Development Act, Chap. 87:22 in respect of tourism investment; and
- x. collaborating with the MTCA with regard to the development and promotion of tourism.

### **5.3 Tourism Trinidad Limited (TTL)**

TTL is a special purpose state enterprise which was established in 2017 to advance Trinidad's tourism development agenda. TTL's mandate includes:

- i. the development and marketing of Trinidad's tourism offerings;
- ii. leading and facilitating the marketing and promotion of destination Trinidad internationally;
- iii. taking the lead in attracting tourism investment;
- iv. the promotion of tourism business development;
- v. the promotion of education, awareness, and cooperation in advancing economic expansion through tourism; and
- vi. encouraging a tourism-friendly approach through well-defined and coordinated marketing strategies, inclusive of social media and other technology-based platforms.

### **5.4 Tobago Tourism Agency Limited (TTAL)**

TTAL was established by the THA in 2017 as the execution agency responsible for driving the rejuvenation and competitiveness of tourism in Tobago.

TTAL's core mandate is to lead the (re) development of the island's tourism product and the marketing and (re) positioning of Tobago as a premier island destination founded on the principles of sustainable development. This includes:

- i. establishment of quality standards;



- ii. training of industry workers;
- iii. research on the impacts and contribution of tourism;
- iv. marketing and promotion for the tourism sector in Tobago;
- v. development of quality products and services; and
- vi. facilitation of investment into the island's tourism industry.

In fulfilling their mandates, both the TTL and TTAL will work closely with public and private sector stakeholders and partners in the aviation, cruise, hospitality sub-sectors and other sectors, as required.

## **5.5 Local Government**

It is proposed that Local Government Agencies play a greater role in the development of tourism within their respective areas. Therefore, the transfer of responsibilities to the Local Government level, will include land-use planning, and the management of heritage and cultural sites. This will empower local government agencies to manage their respective programmes and budgets efficiently, through a decentralised approach. As it relates to tourism development, the main functions of the Local Government authorities will include:

- i. collaboration with the MTCA /TTL in the development of quality products and services;
- ii. the provision, maintenance, enhancement and control of parks, recreation grounds, beaches, watercourses, and other public spaces;
- iii. construction and maintenance of roads in their respective jurisdictions including the provision and maintenance of drains, bridges, side-walks, and street-signs;
- iv. cleaning, maintenance and enhancement of public spaces; and
- v. approval of building and development plans.

## **5.6 Parastatal Organisations**

The Government has established parastatal organisations to propel the growth and development of the economy. Some of these parastatal organisations have a critical role to play in the development of tourism. For example, together, the Urban Development Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (UDeCOTT) and Evolving TecKnologies and Enterprise Development Company Limited (eTeck) own a large percentage of the hotel rooms in Trinidad and Tobago. Also, the Chaguaramas Development Authority (CDA) is responsible for the Chaguaramas National Park as well as tourism sites and attractions, in the western peninsula. Therefore, in order to build a successful and sustainable tourism industry, it is important that the plans, actions and strategies of these and other parastatal organisations, are closely coordinated with other industry partners and aligned with the National Tourism Policy, where applicable.

## **5.7 Standing Committees on Tourism**

In fulfilment of the Government's commitment to develop the tourism industry in consultation with all major stakeholders, there shall be two (2) Standing Committees for the sustainable development of tourism in Trinidad and in Tobago, respectively. The primary role of these Committees shall be to pursue and coordinate the sustainable development of the tourism industry in each island, with linkages between the two (2) Committees. They will comprise representatives of key governmental and tourism-related organisations (public/private sector) and shall co-opt tourism related stakeholders as necessary. The Standing Committees shall provide a formalised mechanism of collaboration among stakeholders and shall focus on important issues pertaining to the industry.

## **5.8 The Private Sector**

The private sector is a critical actor in the development and promotion of tourism in Trinidad and Tobago. The private sector bears the major risks of tourism investment as well as a large part of the responsibility for satisfying the visitor. The delivery of quality tourism services and providing the customer with value for money are largely the responsibilities of the private

sector. Furthermore, the private sector is in a position to promote the involvement of local communities in tourism ventures. The role of the private sector is to:

- i. invest in the tourism industry;
- ii. operate and manage the tourism plant efficiently, sustainably and profitably;
- iii. advertise and promote individual tourism services as well as the country - locally, regionally and internationally;
- iv. continuously upgrade the skills of the workforce by providing training and re-training;
- v. continuously refurbish the tourism plant and equipment;
- vi. operate according to the best environmental standards;
- vii. satisfy customer needs by providing quality products and services as well as value for money;
- viii. develop and promote socially and environmentally responsible tourism;
- ix. ensure the safety, security and health of visitors in collaboration with the Government and other private sector members;
- x. collaborate with the Government in planning, promoting and marketing tourism;
- xi. operate according to appropriate local, regional and international standards; and
- xii. partner with local communities and small, micro and medium-sized enterprises (SMMEs) in the sector by establishing partnership ventures with communities.

## **5.9 Non-Governmental and Community-Based Organisations**

Non-Governmental and community-based organisations (NGOs/CBOs), especially those with an environmental and community-oriented focus, play a vital role in the development and spread of responsible tourism practices,

while providing valuable insights at the grassroots level. NGOs also play a critical role in building capacity and assisting local communities to organise themselves and to bring new and innovative products and services to the market. The role of these organisations is to:

- i. must be established appropriately to play a more effective role in the tourism industry and interact with Government and stakeholders at all levels;
- ii. identify their resources and attractions for tourism development;
- iii. exploit opportunities for tourism training and awareness, finance and incentives for tourism development;
- iv. seek partnership opportunities with the tourism industry's private sector;
- v. participate in all aspects of the tourism business;
- vi. support and promote responsible tourism and sustainable development;
- vii. participate in decision-making with respect to major tourism developments planned or proposed for the communities; and
- viii. participate in and promote responsible tourism.

## **6.0 National Tourism Policy – Monitoring and Evaluation**

The MTCA will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the Policy implementation process to determine if the NTP 2021-2030 is having the desired impact. Therefore, MTCA has developed an Implementation Plan that specifies strategies, identifies responsible persons/organisations and establishes implementation time frames.

MTCA, the Division of Tourism, Culture and Transportation of the THA, TTL and TTAL have been identified as the principal implementing agencies. Additionally, given the crosscutting nature of the activities and initiatives within the Policy, it is recognised that collaborative approaches will have to be advanced with the Ministries of Rural Development and Local Government, Sport and Community Development, Planning and Development, Works and Transport, and Agriculture, Land and Fisheries, among others.

Each programme, activity and project to be pursued under the implementation plan will have a built-in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) component based on key performance indicators which are linked directly to the objectives of the NTP 2021-2030. The Ministry, Department or Agency charged with responsibility for the implementation of particular programmes, activities or projects will monitor specific tasks and operations as outlined in the implementation plans; and will prepare quarterly progress reports.

The Ministry's M&E team will be tasked with overseeing the progress reports as well as gathering and assessing relevant data to determine the status of policy implementation. The Unit will report to the MTCA's Executive on a quarterly basis. A quarterly M&E cycle is recommended to assess the quality of activities being conducted and to modify interventions in the implementation process brought about by new policy directives or the emergence of disruptions that impact the tourism sector.

The MTCA will prepare an Annual Report to inform on the extent to which the goals and objectives of the NTP 2021-2030 are being achieved and to make recommendations on policy adjustments, as required.

*Note: An implementation plan for the roll out of the revised National Tourism Policy has been developed as a separate document.*

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## Glossary

<b>Direct Contribution to GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product (GDP) generated by industries that deal directly with tourists, including hotels, travel agents, airlines and other passenger transport services, as well as the activities of restaurant and leisure industries that deal directly with tourists. It is equivalent to total internal Travel & Tourism spending (see below) within a country minus the purchases made by those industries (including imports). In terms of the UN's Tourism Satellite Account methodology it is consistent with total GDP calculated in table 6 of the TSA: RMF 2008.
<b>Direct Contribution to Employment</b>	The number of direct jobs within Travel & Tourism. This is consistent with total employment calculated in table 7 of the TSA: RMF 2008.
<b>Domestic Tourism</b>	Tourism involving residents of one country travelling within that country.
<b>Home-sharing Economy</b>	The sharing economy is an economic model defined as a peer-to-peer (P2P) based activity of acquiring, providing, or sharing access to goods and services that is often facilitated by a community-based on-line platform. Home-sharing occurs when a visitors pay to stay in private homes.
<b>International Tourist</b>	A person who travels to a country other than his/her country of usual residence for at least one night but less than one year, and whose main purpose of visit is other than the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the country visited.
<b>International Tourism Receipts</b>	Expenditure of international inbound visitors including their payments to national carriers for international transport. They also include any other payments or payments afterwards made for goods and services received in the destination country. <i>(NB. The definition is more extensive than that of the travel expenditure in the Balance of Payments in which international passenger transport is not included).</i>
<b>Regional Tourism Provinces</b>	A geographically determined cultural, socio-economic and biologically rich and diverse area, in which tourism development will depend on sustainability and the principles of integration, cooperation and consensus among tourism

	stakeholders, with the larger goal of enhancing the attractiveness of the sites, attractions and intangible assets within the area (zone).
<b>Shovel Ready</b>	Construction project (usually larger-scale infrastructure) is where planning and engineering is advanced enough that with sufficient funding, construction can begin within a very short time.
<b>Stakeholder</b>	Individuals who have a vested interest in development, including community members; environmental, social, and community NGOs; natural resource, planning, and government officials; hotel owners, tour operators, guides, transportation providers, and representatives from other related services in the private sector.
<b>Sustainable Development</b>	A pattern of resource use that aims to meet human needs (cultural, economic, natural and social) while preserving the environment so that these needs can be met not only in the present, but also by future generations.
<b>Sustainable Tourism</b>	Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.
<b>Total Contribution to GDP</b>	GDP generated directly by the Travel & Tourism sector plus its indirect and induced impacts. In other words, this includes tourism consumption, its associated supply-chain value added as well as the goods and services that are produced on behalf of the tourism industry by government spending and fixed investment. It also includes the induced effects of tourism through the spending of workers directly and indirectly employed in the industry.
<b>Total Contribution to Employment</b>	The number of jobs generated directly in the Travel & Tourism sector plus the indirect and induced contributions.
<b>Tourism</b>	All travel for whatever purpose that results in one or more nights being spent away from home and the sum of the associated services and activities (e.g. hotel accommodation, tours, shopping, and entertainment).
<b>Tourism Clusters</b>	A geographic concentration of attractions with touristic differential, companies and institutions interconnected and coordinated in tourism activities, this includes suppliers, services, governments, institutions, universities, and



	competitors
<b>Tourism Health Information System (THiS)</b>	THiS is a real-time, web-based application developed by the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) to monitor for illnesses and potential outbreaks in visitor accommodations (Hotels, Guest Houses, etc.) and to facilitate a confidential early warning and rapid response. THiS, which falls under the Tourism and Health Programme (THP), is intended to strengthen regional and national health systems and to enhance the health safety of staff, residents and visitors and the quality, reputation and sustainability of Caribbean tourism.
<b>Tourism Product</b>	A combination of tangible and intangible elements, such as natural, cultural and man-made resources, attractions, facilities, services and activities around a specific centre of interest which represents the core of the destination marketing mix and creates an overall visitor experience including emotional aspects for the potential customers. A tourism product is priced and sold through distribution channels and it has a life-cycle.
<b>Tourism Satellite Account</b>	The reconciliation framework of tourism statistics developed to present economic data relative to tourism within a framework of internal and external consistency with the rest of the statistical system through its link to the System of National Accounts.
<b>Tourism Service Providers</b>	This term covers all individuals, businesses and entities in hospitality, travel and tourism that offer services to visitors in the destination. These include those in all of tourism's sub-sectors including Accommodation, Transportation, Food and Beverage; Entertainment and Recreation (including Sites and attractions); Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Events (MICE); and Other Tourism Support and Related Services.
<b>Tourism Zone</b>	An area consisting of tourism sites that are closely linked in terms of nature, history, culture or otherwise
<b>Tourist (or Overnight Visitor)</b>	A person who travels away from home, staying away for at least one night. A tourist travels for different purposes such as business, leisure, conference and incentive, sport or sun, sand and sea.
<b>Tourism superstructure</b>	Buildings or facilities that serve the needs or interests of

	tourism/hospitality visitors
<b>Travel / traveller</b>	Travel refers to the activity of travellers. A traveller is someone who moves between different geographic locations, for any purpose and any duration. The visitor is a particular type of traveller and consequently tourism is a subset of travel.
<b>Visitor</b>	A visitor is a traveller taking a trip to a main destination outside his/her usual environment, for less than a year, for any main purpose (business, leisure or other personal purpose) other than to be employed by a resident entity in the country or place visited. A visitor (domestic, inbound or outbound) is classified as a tourist (or overnight visitor), if his/her trip includes an overnight stay, or as a same-day visitor (or excursionist) otherwise.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1 – Tourism’s Alignment with the National Development Strategy (NDS) - Vision 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

#### TOURISM AND THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT THEMES TO 2030

Themes (NDS)	Summary about the theme
1. Putting People First: Nurturing Our Greatest Asset	This Theme acknowledges that our citizens are central to our development and in fact are our greatest assets. We must create a society in which all the basic needs are met and each individual is valued and given the opportunity to contribute and to self-actualise.
2. Delivering Good Governance and Service Excellence	Good governance and service excellence are crucial to the achievement of a high quality of life for all citizens and to business expansion.
3. Improving Productivity through Quality Infrastructure and Transportation	High quality infrastructure unlocks economic potential, ensures an equitable distribution of growth and opportunities throughout the country and creates networks that bind us together. It also boosts productivity and competitiveness, allowing businesses to grow and prosper, create employment and attract investment.
4. Building Globally Competitive Businesses	It is widely accepted that nations do not compete; firms do. Competitive Businesses are, therefore, important to our developed-nation thrust. For any sustained increase in the quality of life there must be an increase in productivity and real growth, which can then be translated into higher wages originating from innovation and competition.
5. Placing the Environment at the Centre of Social and Economic Development	The environment is the common thread that supports all sectors which contribute to the social and economic development of the nation and, therefore, must be managed for the benefit of present and future generations...We will create a culture that engenders an attitude of environmental consciousness and esteems conservation and preservation of our national assets, be they man made or natural.

## TOURISM AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The UNWTO (2020) defines sustainable tourism as “tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, and the environment and host communities”. Within this principle, the sector features as targets in three of the 17 SDGs, namely SDG 8 on ‘Decent Work and Economic Growth’<sup>9</sup>, SDG 12 on ‘Responsible Consumption and Production’<sup>10</sup> and SDG 14 on ‘Life below Water’<sup>11</sup>. Yet, with its wide reach and impact, the sector can – directly and indirectly – to the achievement of all 17 SDGs.

**TABLE 4: LINKING THE SDGs TO TOURISM**

SDGs	Impact of Tourism
 <p><b>1</b> NO POVERTY</p>	As one of the largest and fastest growing economic sectors in the world, tourism is well-positioned to foster economic growth and development at all levels and provide income through job creation. (Tourism provides income through job creation at local and community levels. It can be linked with national poverty reduction strategies and entrepreneurship. Low skills requirement and local recruitment can empower less favoured groups, particularly youth and women)
 <p><b>2</b> ZERO HUNGER</p>	Tourism can spur sustainable agriculture by promoting the production and supplies to hotels, and sales of local products to tourists. Agro-tourism can generate additional income while enhancing the value of the tourism experience.
 <p><b>3</b> GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</p>	Tax income generated from tourism can be reinvested in health care and services, improving maternal health, reduce child mortality and preventing diseases. Visitors fees collected in protected areas can as well contribute to health services.
 <p><b>4</b> QUALITY EDUCATION</p>	Tourism has the potential to promote inclusiveness. A skilful workforce is crucial for tourism to prosper. The tourism sector provides opportunities for direct and indirect jobs for youth, women, and those with special needs, who should benefit through educational means.
 <p><b>5</b> GENDER EQUALITY</p>	Tourism can empower women, particularly through the provision of direct jobs and income-generation from SMEs in tourism and hospitality related enterprises. Tourism can be a tool for women to become fully engaged and lead in every aspect of society.
 <p><b>6</b> CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION</p>	Tourism investment requirement for providing utilities can play a critical role in achieving water access and security, as well as hygiene and sanitation for all. The efficient use of water in tourism, pollution control and technology efficiency can be key to safeguarding our most precious resource.
 <p><b>7</b> AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY</p>	As a sector, which is energy intensive, tourism can accelerate the shift towards increased renewable energy shares in the global energy mix. By promoting investments in clean energy sources, tourism can help to reduce greenhouse gases, mitigate climate change and contribute to access of energy for all.
 <p><b>8</b> DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</p>	Tourism, as services trade, is one of the top four export earners globally, currently providing one in ten jobs worldwide. Decent work opportunities in tourism, particularly for youth and women, and policies that favour better diversification through tourism value chains can enhance tourism positive socio-economic impacts.

<b>9</b> INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 	<p>Tourism development relies on good public and private infrastructure. The sector can influence public policy for infrastructure upgrade and retrofit, making them more sustainable, innovative and resource-efficient and moving towards low carbon growth, thus attracting tourists and other sources of foreign investment.</p>
<b>10</b> REDUCED INEQUALITIES 	<p>Tourism can be a powerful tool for reducing inequalities if it engages local populations and all key stakeholders in its development. Tourism can contribute to urban renewal and rural development by giving people the opportunity to prosper in their place of origin. Tourism serves as an effective mean for economic integration and diversification.</p>
<b>11</b> SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES 	<p>Tourism can advance urban infrastructure and accessibility, promote regeneration and preserve cultural and natural heritage, assets on which tourism depends. Investment in green infrastructure (more efficient transport, reduced air pollution) should result in smarter and greener cities for, not only residents but also tourists.</p>
<b>12</b> RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION 	<p>The tourism sector needs to adopt sustainable consumption and production (SCP) modes, accelerating the shift towards sustainability. Tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for tourism including for energy, water, waste, and biodiversity and job creation will result in enhanced economic, social and environmental outcomes.</p>
<b>13</b> CLIMATE ACTION 	<p>Tourism contributes to and is affected by climate change. Tourism stakeholders should play a leading role in the global response to climate change. By reducing its carbon footprint, in the transport and accommodation sector, tourism can benefit from low carbon growth and help tackle one of the most pressing challenges of our time.</p>
<b>14</b> LIFE BELOW WATER 	<p>Coastal and maritime tourism rely on healthy marine ecosystems. Tourism development must be a part of Integrated Coastal Zone Management in order to help conserve and preserve fragile marine ecosystems and serve as a vehicle to promote a blue economy, contributing to the sustainable use of marine resources.</p>
<b>15</b> LIFE ON LAND 	<p>Rich biodiversity and natural heritage are often the main reasons why tourists visit a destination. Tourism can play a major role if sustainably managed in fragile zones, not only in conserving and preserving biodiversity, but also in generating revenue as an alternative livelihood to local communities.</p>
<b>16</b> PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS 	<p>As tourism revolves around billions of encounters between people of diverse cultural backgrounds, the sector can foster multicultural and inter-faith tolerance and understanding, laying the foundation for more peaceful societies. Tourism, which benefits and engages local communities, can also consolidate peace in post-conflict societies.</p>
<b>17</b> PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS 	<p>Due to its cross-sectoral nature, tourism has the ability to strengthen private/public partnerships and engage multiple stakeholders – international, national, regional and local – to work together to achieve the SDGs and other common goals. Public policy and innovative financing are at the core for achieving the 2030 Agenda.</p>

Source: Adapted from World Tourism Organization (2020), 'Tourism for SDGs – Welcome To The Tourism For SDGs Platform!', UNWTO, Madrid (online), available at: <http://tourism4sdgs.org/> [Accessed 9 October 2020].



## **Appendix 2 - Tourism Initiatives (2010-2019)**

During the period 2010-2019, a number of key initiatives, informed by the NTP, 2010, were developed and executed by the then Ministry of Tourism; the Division of Tourism, Culture and Transportation of the THA; and the Tourism Development Company Limited. The initiatives focused on areas such as human resource development, community development, infrastructure and transportation development, investment promotion, accommodation; product development; and marketing.

- Promotion of certification programmes to support adherence to service quality standards within the local tourism sector in keeping with international standards and best practices, such as:
  - Trinidad and Tobago Tourism Industry Certification (TTTIC) Programme: A voluntary national certification programme to ensure conformity to prescribed standards of quality in their operations by domestic tourism operators and service providers.
  - Service. Training. Attitude. Respect (STAR): Developed to build an enduring culture of service excellence premised on recognising that all visitor contact points are critical to positive visitor experiences.
  - Small Tourism Enterprises Project (STEP): A training programme of the Organization of American States (OAS) that assisted small tourism operators in improving competitiveness, profitability and sustainability.
- Tourism Education and Awareness Programme delivered in both primary and secondary schools across Trinidad and Tobago.
- Establishment of the following three (3) Cabinet-appointed Committees tasked with formulating strategies to improve development of the airlift and cruise industries; and the development of a Tourism Road Map to market and promote niche and heritage tourism in Trinidad, respectively:
  - Standing Committee for the Strategic and Sustainable Development of Tourism in Trinidad (2015-2016);
  - Standing Committee for the Sustainable Development of Tourism in Trinidad (2010-2014); and
  - Advisory Committee for Heritage Tourism in Trinidad (2011-2014).
- Continued support by the Trinidad and Tobago Convention Bureau to attract meeting planners to host conferences and conventions in Trinidad, thereby positioning Port of Spain as the business capital of the Caribbean region.
- Establishment of a MoU between the Tourism Development Company Limited and the Sport Company of Trinidad and Tobago (2013) to facilitate the development, marketing and promotion of the sport tourism niche.

- Blue Flag Programme - A voluntary eco-label operated under the auspices of the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) which promotes sustainable development of beaches and marinas. Between 2014 and 2017, the Las Cuevas Beach became the first certified Blue Flag beach in the English-speaking Caribbean.
- Execution of Tourism Incentive Programmes under the Tourism Development Act (TDA) for:
  - Tourism Accommodation Projects, Tourist Transport, Tourism Ancillary Projects such as:
    - Marinas and boatyards, Water sports, Charter boats, Dive operations, Recreational Space & Theme Parks;
    - Tour operations - land, sea and air;
    - Cultural centres, film making and special events;
    - Golf courses that are open for public use;
    - Transportation services.
  - Government Loan Guarantee Program - Tobago Tourism Development Fund
  - Trinidad and Tobago Tourism Development Fund (TTTDF) - a facility that was provided to assist tourism project owners to secure loan financing through approved commercial banks which are given Government Guarantees. The loans are accessed by accommodation property owners for repairs and/or refurbishment of guest houses/hotels up to 50 rooms in Trinidad and Tobago. The facility is managed by the Trinidad and Tobago Tourism Business Development Limited (TTTBDL), a subsidiary of the EXIMBANK.
  - Tourism Room Upgrade Programme - This tourism incentive was developed to assist property owners to upgrade their tourism accommodation to a first-class level that meets and/or exceeds the Trinidad and Tobago standard requirements for tourist accommodation.
  - Hotel and Guesthouse Room Stock Upgrade Incentive Programme (2010) - The objective of the programme was to provide an incentive for the upgrade of Trinidad and Tobago's hotel and guesthouse room stock to a first-class level.

**Other initiatives included:**

- Active promotion of domestic tourism through the “*Stay to Get Away*” campaign during the July/August vacation period;
- Formulation of three (3) tourism sub-policies to drive niche development in the areas of ecotourism, community-based tourism and sport tourism;
- Signing of Tourism Bilateral Cooperation Agreements;

- Engagement of community-based organisations and Tourism Action Committees; and
- Public sector investment through the Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP) for the development of sites and attractions in Trinidad such as the Maracas, Las Cuevas, Manzanilla and Vessigny Beach Facilities, the La Brea Pitch Lake Visitor Facility and the Valencia Visitor Centre and the Tourism Baseline Survey.

### Appendix 3 – Areas of Specialisation: TPDC Members

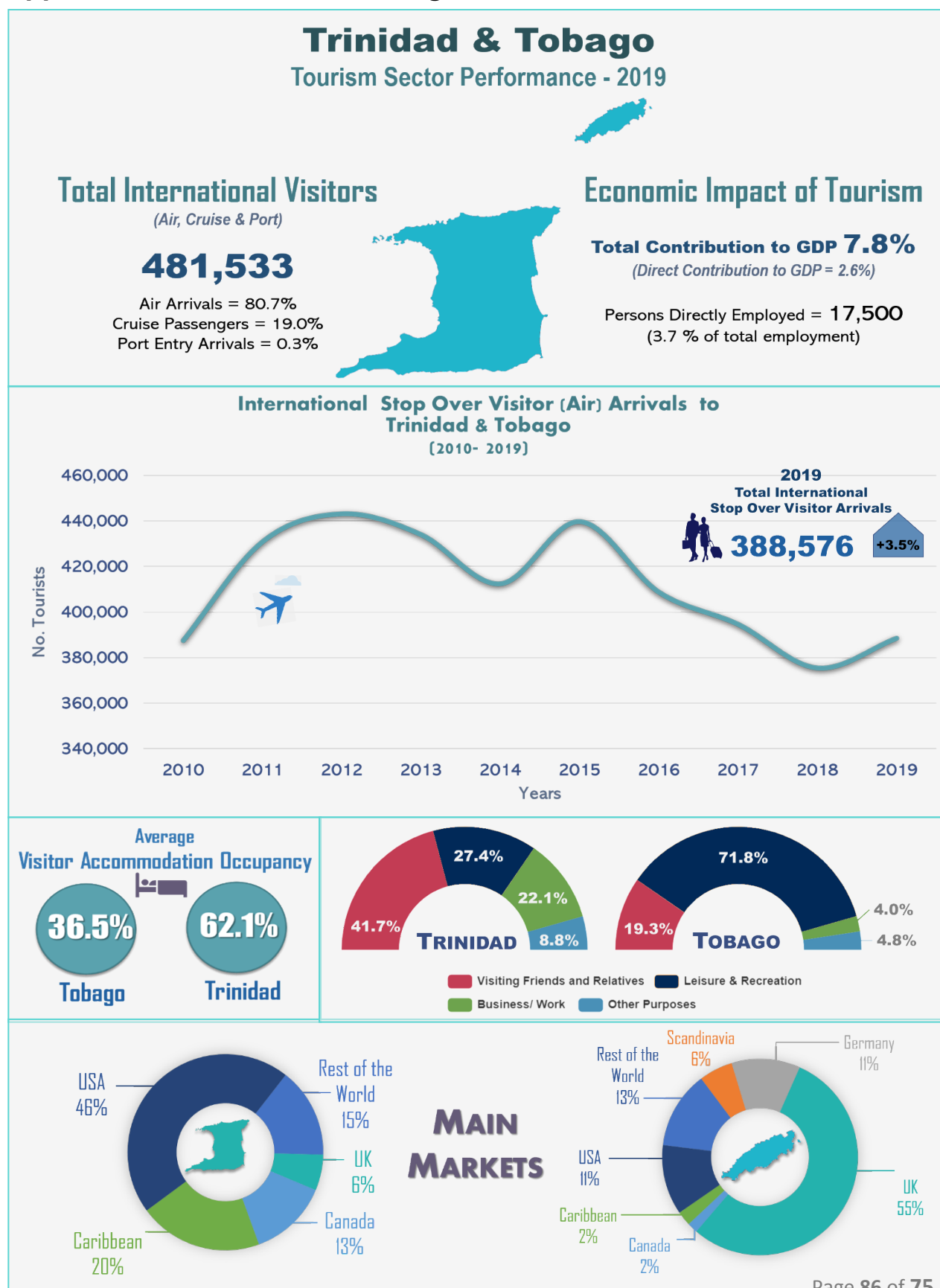
Area of Specialisation	Experience by Geographic Areas
Tourism, Hospitality, Consultancy, Education	Hemispheric
Policy, Planning and Research, Tourism, Health, Education and Protocol and International Relations	Trinidad and Tobago
Physical Planner, Public Sector Management & Policy Advisor	CARICOM
Tourism Management /Policy Development, Consultancy & Education	CARICOM
Arts, Cultural, Education Tourism, Management	Trinidad and Tobago
Digital Marketing, Business Management, Communication, Advertising	Trinidad and Tobago
Sports Management & Promotion	Trinidad and Tobago
Hospitality, Tourism & Consultancy	Hemispheric
Economic, Tourism, Consultancy, Education	Hemispheric
Hospitality, Tourism & Consultancy	CARICOM
Research & Education	Trinidad and Tobago
Architecture, Education	Global
Tourism Policy, Research and Planning	Trinidad and Tobago

## Appendix 4 – Individuals and Organizations invited to present at the TPDC meetings.

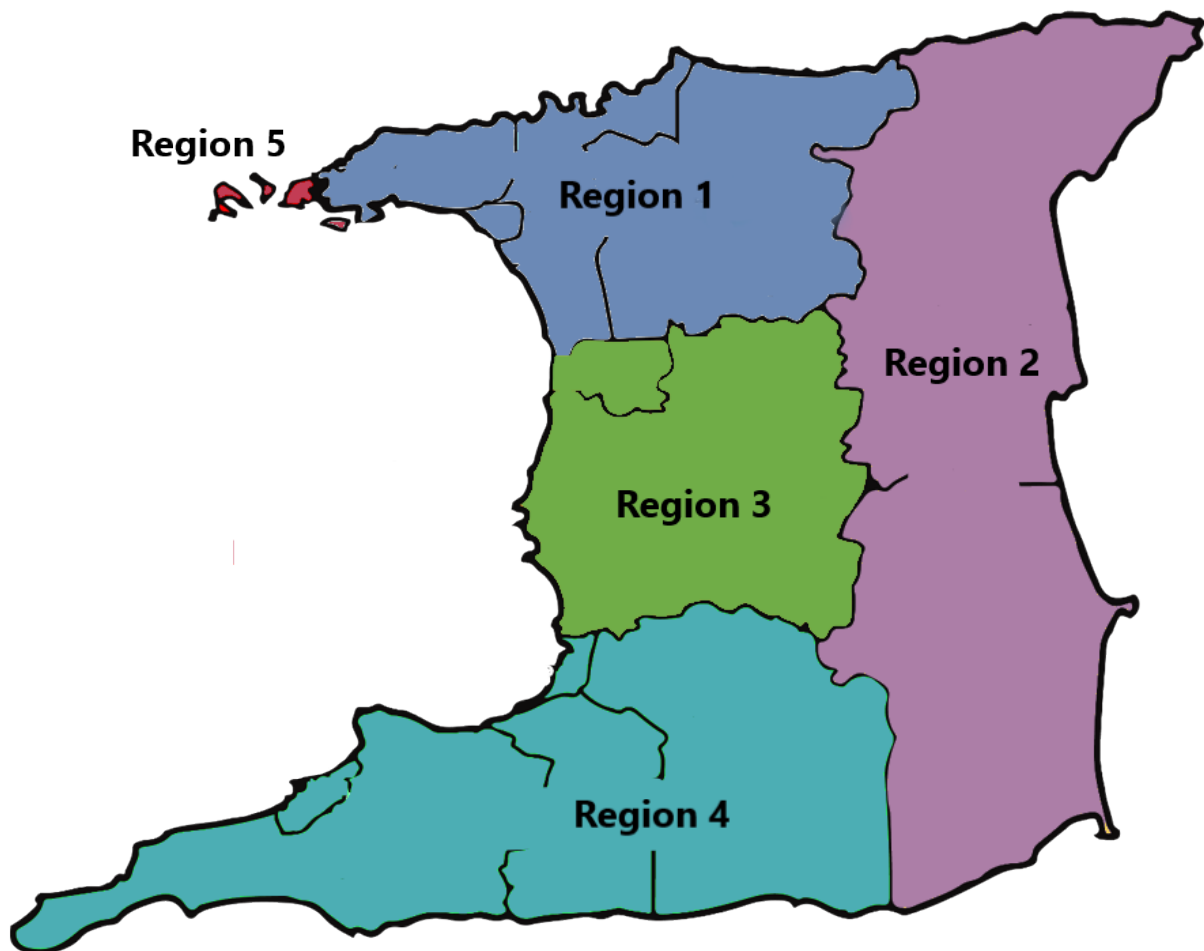
Date	Presenters
15 <sup>th</sup> Aug, 2019	1. Ken Butcher – former Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Sport and Sport Tourism advocate
22 <sup>nd</sup> Aug, 2019	2. National Trust of Trinidad and Tobago
	3. Ryan Darmanie – Urban Planning Consultant
5 <sup>th</sup> Sep, 2019	4. SIEL Environmental Services Limited
	5. Lake Asphalt
12 <sup>th</sup> Sep, 2019	6. Ministry Rural Development & Local Government
	7. Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts (MCDCA) (formerly, now the Ministry of Sport and Community Development)
27 <sup>th</sup> Sep, 2019	8. Roger Neckles – Wildlife photographer
	9. Environmental Management Authority (EMA)
	10. Trinidad and Tobago Coalition of Service Industries (TTCSI)
3 <sup>rd</sup> Oct, 2019	11. Town & Country Planning Division
	12. Ministry of Works & Transport
10 <sup>th</sup> Oct, 2019	13. Ministry of Agriculture
	14. UDeCOTT
	15. Pointe - a - Pierre Wildfowl Trust
17 <sup>th</sup> Oct, 2019	16. Mayor of POS – His Worship Joel Martinez
	17. Ministry of National Security – Immigration Division
24 <sup>th</sup> Oct, 2019	18. Ministry of Planning and Development (Climate Change Unit)
	19. Caribbean Airlines Limited (CAL)
	20. Airport Authority of Trinidad and Tobago
	21. Port Authority of Trinidad and Tobago
31 <sup>st</sup> Oct, 2019	22. Creative TT
	23. Carnival Band Promoters
	24. O2N Foundation
7 <sup>th</sup> Nov, 2019	25. T&T Institute of Architect
	26. Tours Incredible
	27. CEO of East POS Development Company
	28. Downtown Owners and Merchants Association (DOMA)

13 <sup>th</sup> Nov, 2019	29. Planting Seeds – Agency that provides a boost to entrepreneurial and innovative ideas
21 <sup>st</sup> Nov, 2019	30. Ministry of National Security – T&T Police
	31. Ministry of Finance
	32. Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs
28 <sup>th</sup> Nov, 2019	33. National Carnival Commission of Trinidad and Tobago
	34. Music Business Promoters
	35. Trinidad and Tobago Publishers and Broadcasters Association
13 <sup>th</sup> Dec, 2019	36. Pan Trinbago
	37. Cocoa Development Company
	38. Bocas Lit Fest
	39. Cocoa Research Centre – University of the West Indies
9 Jan, 2020	40. Mr. Jason Williams - Chief Executive Officer (Ag.) - Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago
	41. Mr. Kairon Serrette - Senior Manager of Business Development - Sports Company of Trinidad and Tobago
16 Jan, 2020	42. Ms. Zakiya Wadada - Executive Director - Emancipation Support Committee (ESC)
	43. Mr. Dave Jacob – President - Hiking Association of Trinidad and Tobago (HATT)
31 Jan, 2020	44. Ken Ramchand – Chairman, Friends of Mr Biswas
	45. Dr J. Vijay Maharaj – Programme Director, Lines of Life
	46. Peter Sheppard – Photographer/Blogger
13 Feb, 2020	47. Ms Glendora Lashley – Radio Tambrin
	48. Ms Earline Andrews – Caribbean Beat Magazine
	49. Dr Bisham Bhimull – National Council of Indian Culture of Trinidad and Tobago (NCIC) TT

## Appendix 5 – Trinidad and Tobago's Tourism Sector Performance



## Appendix 6 – Map: Regional Approach to Tourism Development in Trinidad



### REGION 1: NORTH-WESTERN PROVINCE

Municipalities / (Regions): Diego Martin, Port of Spain, Tunapuna/Piarco, Arima and San Juan/Laventille

**Unique Selling Propositions:** *The City of Port of Spain - A novel city experience with vibrant nightlife, cultural and historical attractions and a natural environment all in one location. Designated as a UNESCO Creative City of the World (5 Nov 2019)*

Tourism Product Offerings / Niches

**Core Niche:** Meetings, Conferences and Exhibitions

**Supporting Niches:** Nightlife and Entertainment, Culture and Heritage, Festivals and Events, Sport, Ecotourism and Birdwatching, Medical Tourism and Educational



## Tourism

### REGION 2: EASTERN PROVINCE

Municipalities / (Regions): Sangre Grande, Mayaro/Rio Claro

**Unique Selling Propositions:** *Untouched Natural Environment*

Tourism Product Offerings / Niches

**Core Niche:** Ecotourism (including birdwatching, turtle watching, hiking, caves, mud volcanoes)

**Supporting Niches:** Beaches and (potential for Resort Tourism), Culture

### REGION 3: CENTRAL PROVINCE

Municipalities / (Regions): Chaguanas, Couva/Tabaquite/ Talparo

**Unique Selling Propositions:** *Best Sport and Training Facilities in the Hemisphere*

Tourism Product Offerings / Niches

**Core Niche:** Sport Tourism

**Supporting Niches:** Culture and Heritage, Culinary Tourism, Festivals and Events, Agro Tourism (cocoa estates)

### REGION 4: SOUTH-WESTERN PROVINCE

Municipalities / (Regions): Penal/Debe, Point Fortin, Princes Town, San Fernando, Siparia

**Unique Selling Propositions:** *Rich Culture and History*

Tourism Product Offerings / Niches

**Core Niche:** Culture and Heritage

**Supporting Niches:** Culinary Tourism, Festivals and Events, Beach and (potential for Resort Tourism)

### REGION 5: CHAGUARAMAS

Municipalities /Regions: Chaguaramas which falls within the municipality of Diego Martin, has been identified as a distinct region owing to its built infrastructure and vibrant business environment, which are conducive to tourism.

**Unique Selling Propositions:** *A Distinctive Coastal and Marine Tourism Experience*









Tourism Product Offerings / Niches

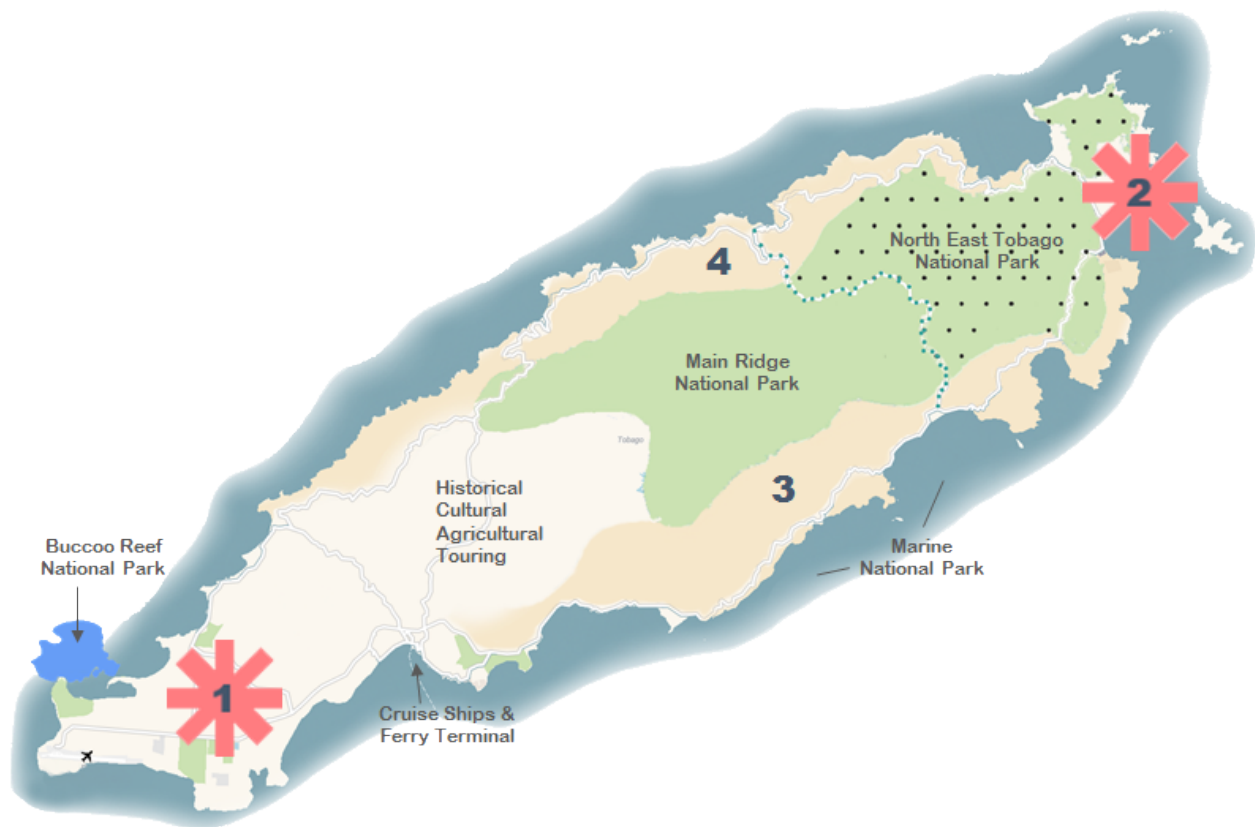
**Core Niche:** Marine Tourism

**Supporting Niches:** Ecotourism, Soft-adventure Tourism, Nightlife and Entertainment, Agro Tourism

## Appendix 7 – Map: Tobago Land Use Framework

The Land Use Framework presented in the Tourism Master Plan (1995) remains as the spatial development policy for Tobago.

Tobago Land Use Framework	
 <b>Main Ridge National Park</b> Rain Forest Ecotourism/Wilderness Tourism	 <b>Special Resort Development Area</b> Speciality Products / Experiences Marine Ecotourism/Wilderness Tourism
 <b>North East Tobago National Park</b> Rain Forest Ecotourism/Wilderness Tourism	 <b>Atlantic Scenic Corridor</b> Limited Resort Development Heritage/Cultural Touring Access to Marine & Wilderness Ecotourism
 <b>Marine National Park</b> Marine Ecotourism	 <b>Caribbean Scenic Corridor</b> Limited Resort Development Access to Marine & Wilderness Ecotourism
 <b>Buccoo Reef National Park</b> Marine Ecotourism	 <b>Scenic Drive</b>
 <b>Main Resort Development Area</b> Sun Sea & Sand Experiences with Heritage/Cultural/Marine Ecotourism/ Recreation/Touring Activities	



Replicated from Trinidad and Tobago Tourism Master Plan (1995)