

# CARIBBEAN EXPORT OUTLOOK

2014-2015

**GUYANA**

THE NEXT ECONOMIC TIGER?

**BUTCH  
STEWART**

THE STORY OF SANDALS: LIFE'S A BEACH  
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### Produced by

The Caribbean Export Development Agency  
1st Floor Baobab Tower  
Warrens,  
St. Michael, Barbados BB22026  
Tel. +1(246) 436-0578  
Fax. +1(246) 436-9999  
www.carib-export.com

### Publisher



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### Sales and Advertising

Neysha Soodeen  
neysha@macomag.com

Murl Walcott  
murl@macomag.com

### Design and Layout

Jason Waithe  
jason@macomag.com



## CARICOM DEVELOPMENT FUND (CDF)

The Barbados-based CDF was launched in 2008 as a development fund with a mandate to support “disadvantaged countries, regions and sectors” within the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) by providing grants and loans to Member States to ameliorate disparities and dislocations resulting from the implementation of the CSME.

The core activity of the CDF is its Country Assistance Programmes (CAPs), aimed at mitigating temporary economic constraints facing these Member States. Fifty-Five percent of all approved CAPs have

gone to the Public Sector while 45 percent have been applied to enhancing competitiveness in the Private Sector. The CDF works in close partnership with the public, private, non-Government and other development agencies to optimize the use of the Fund’s resources for the benefit of the Member States.

At the end of August 2014, the CDF had approved US \$46.05 million for all eight eligible countries and disbursed a total of US \$19.8 million to these Member States.

### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CDF’S APPROVED COUNTRY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMES (CAPs)

**BELIZE:** US \$6.25 million - loan and grants to support MSME development in the Private Sector

**DOMINICA:** US \$7.14 million for agricultural export development and financing to private sector entities

**GRENADA:** US \$ 3.76 million for energy efficiency in the tourism sector and financing private sector enterprises

**GUYANA:** US \$7.32 million towards upgrading farm access roads for agricultural development

**SAINT LUCIA:** US \$6.10 million for private sector financing, agricultural development and export promotion

**ST. KITTS AND NEVIS:** US \$3.99 million for financing SME’s, agricultural development and energy efficiency in the manufacturing sector

**ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES:** US \$7.47 million towards airport construction works at the Argyle International Airport

**ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA:** US \$4.02 million for the redevelopment of the Lower St John’s Cruise Terminal and completion of the Learning Resource Centre

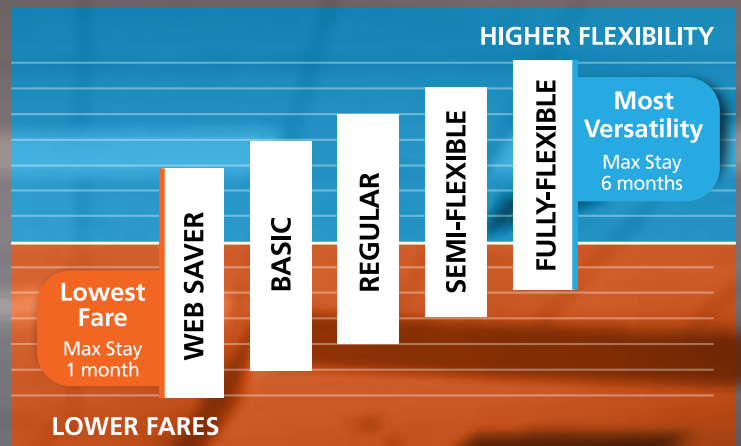


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# message from The Chairman of the Board



As members of CARIFORUM, we welcome the launch of the region's first trade and export publication: *Caribbean Export OUTLOOK* by the Caribbean Export Development Agency (Caribbean Export). This is a timely publication, which is intended to help fill the information gap experienced by our region's exporters as they venture beyond their borders in search of new trade opportunities.

The world of international trade is ever changing and increasingly competitive. Companies continually offer new products and services through innovation, countries increase market access via trade negotiations, and the establishment of new technical barriers to trade cause manufacturing to become a truly international process with a global value chain here to stay. Faced with a myriad of challenges and trade dynamics, CARIFORUM exporters, who are sufficiently informed with up-to-date pertinent trade data, are naturally best positioned to secure long term trading success. They are able to harness information to enhance their international competitiveness, seek niche opportunities, and gain inspiration from regional success stories.

*Caribbean Export OUTLOOK* is intended to provide this necessary level of information to facilitate the navigation of international trade by our regional exporters, whilst

providing potential investors with an insight into the Caribbean business landscape.

Our common quest for regional export growth remains a powerful yet exciting challenge. Lessons learnt must be shared and the innovativeness which resides in all of us must be harnessed. We need to take a close look at the things we do well, recognize where best we can add value, and determine the goods and services that can be packaged and branded with our "Caribbeaness."

This publication is a valuable step in the right direction, providing an effective platform for the dissemination of useful trade information, and updates on regional trade issues. We hope that it will stimulate awareness and help generate the necessary discussions on the way forward for the region, as an important member of the international trading system.

It is my hope that the regional private sector will make full use of this publication, which represents the compilation of some of the best trade research efforts of relevance to CARIFORUM. Congratulations are extended to the staff of Caribbean Export who conceptualized this publication and have made it possible. We all cheer the start of what is set to be a longstanding tradition.

**Christopher Lewis**

**The Chairman of the Board**

The Caribbean Export Development Agency



# message from The Executive Director



The Caribbean Export Development Agency (Caribbean Export) is pleased to publish this inaugural edition of the *Caribbean Export OUTLOOK*. Throughout its existence, Caribbean Export has endeavoured to serve the CARIFORUM private sector through a number of initiatives designed to increase competitiveness to enable businesses to enter new markets and take their brands to the world.

In order for Caribbean countries to take full advantage of the opportunities available under the CARIFORUM-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) and other trade agreements, we must increase the availability and use of high-quality information on markets of interest and ensure that it forms the basis of all trade-related decision making. There are currently no other regional publications dedicated to providing trade-related information written specifically for the private sector. The purpose of producing this annual publication is to give exporters timely and relevant information that will ultimately enhance their export competitiveness.

The first section in the publication, *Pulse of the Caribbean*, provides an understanding of the current economic situation facing CARIFORUM States and a vision for regional growth through increasing trade and exports. The *Trade and Export Hotspots* section highlights select country markets and opportunities within those markets

that the region can capitalize on, while readers can learn more about sectors such as the creative industries and agro-processing under the section covering *Our Competitive Advantage*. Caribbean Export further identifies a number of cross-cutting issues and challenges facing exporters in *Clearing the Hurdles*, which is followed by *Exporters' Insights*, where we take you on a journey with some of the region's most successful exporters to highlight some of the strategies they have used in moving their businesses beyond their local markets. We conclude the publication with an *Exporters' Toolbox*, which contains valuable business contacts for exporters.

We hope that this publication will raise awareness of key issues affecting the private sector; provide information for planning firm-level and national-level export strategies; engage stakeholders, whether policy makers or trade promotion organisations, to improve the export environment for firms; and contribute to the discussion on the way forward for regional export development and promotion.

This publication will also highlight to the world that we in the Caribbean produce quality goods and services that epitomize the essence of who we are as a people—passionate, diverse and exquisite. The Caribbean is ready for trade and I invite you to read and share our *OUTLOOK* as we continue to champion and support the region's private sector.

**Pamela Coke-Hamilton**  
Executive Director

The Caribbean Export Development Agency

# message from The Head of the European Union Delegation to Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean



It is a pleasure for the European Union (EU) to say a few words in this inaugural issue of the *Caribbean Export OUTLOOK* and we take this opportunity to congratulate the Board members, Executive Director and staff of the Caribbean Export Development Agency (Caribbean Export) for the initiative to put this well-needed information into the public domain.

Caribbean Export continues to make an invaluable contribution to the growth and development of the private sector in the Caribbean. The EU has had a longstanding, successful partnership in private sector development with Caribbean Export spanning over 18 years.

The involvement of the EU in advancing the growth and competitiveness of the regional private sector over the past 18 years is indicative of the recognition that a dynamic private sector is the basic prerequisite for economic growth, job creation and poverty reduction. Regional and global economic integration through trade liberalization and the proliferation of bilateral and multilateral trade are central pillars of EU development policy in the context of EU-Caribbean partnership.

Since 2011 under the 10th European Development Fund (EDF), the EU's support to Caribbean Export has been focused on assisting the region in the implementation of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) signed in 2008. It goes without saying that EPA implementation remains a priority for the EU. The CARIFORUM-EU EPA is the only one of its kind and we truly believe that it will make a difference—not only in EU-Caribbean trade relations but also the region's success on the international trade stage.

There can also be no doubt that the EU remains committed to the continued thrust in making the Caribbean a viable and vibrant region for international trade and investment. We have invested a considerable amount of financial and human resources in this regard, and look forward to further successful collaboration with our partners in CARICOM, CARIFORUM, Caribbean Export, as well as other regional and national organizations and other international donors.

I would therefore like to end by congratulating Caribbean Export once again for this milestone. I would also encourage the private sector to take advantage of this unique opportunity which is unprecedented in its scope and provisions.

Thank you.

**His Excellency Ambassador Mikael Barfod**  
Head of the European Union Delegation to  
Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean



# EXPORT FROM THE CARIBBEAN

**Caribbean Export - The only Regional Export Development and Trade and Investment Promotion Organisation of the Forum of Caribbean States (CARIFORUM).**



Caribbean Export works closely with the CARIFORUM Directorate, relevant government ministries across the Caribbean, as well as with other public-private sector agencies that have responsibilities to develop and promote business, trade and investment.

Focused mainly on **agro-processing, alternative energy, creative industries, handicraft, health and wellness, manufacturing, professional services, and specialised tourism** Caribbean Export supports the regions Private Sector with capacity building and market penetration and the utilisation of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA).

Our four-pillar approach of competitiveness and innovation, trade and export development, investment promotion and institutional capacity

building, Caribbean Export not only supports regional development, but also facilitates the creation of a conducive commercial environment for regional businesses and enterprises in the competitive global economy.

Our efforts in these areas extend outside of CARIFORUM, reaching out to those countries that make up the French Caribbean Outermost Regions (FCORs), as well as those that comprise the English and Dutch Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs).

For more information contact us at:

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1st Floor Baobab Tower, Warrens, St. Michael, BB22026, Barbados  
T: (246) 436-0578 | F: (246) 436-9999 | E: [info@carib-export.com](mailto:info@carib-export.com)  
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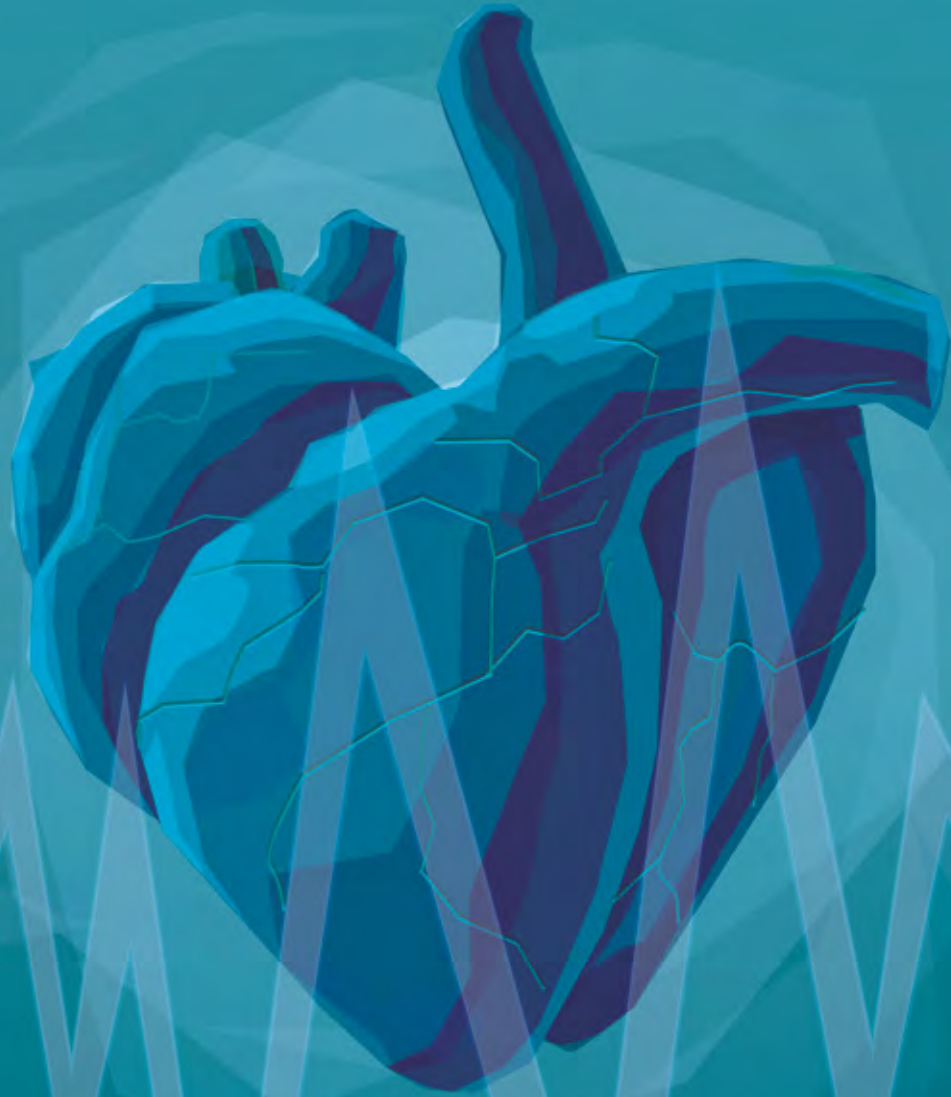


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# pulse of the caribbean



# understanding the state of play: the region's economic performance and the role of Caribbean Export

BY PAMELA COKE-HAMILTON

Despite overall global economic recovery in 2013, the Caribbean region remains mired in the struggle to emerge from the worldwide recession that started six years ago. A quick scan of regional economic data reveals the unhealthy figures that continue to plague country reports and do little to increase investor confidence in the region. With unemployment as high as 20% in some Eastern Caribbean countries and high debt to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) ratios in Jamaica (146.2%) and Barbados (109.7%), the region is at a pivotal point in its historical and economic development (Source RBC Caribbean Economic Report June 2014). While regional governments are battling credit rating downgrades and implementing International Monetary Fund (IMF) programmes, the private sector is caught in the middle as the business environment has drastically changed, resulting in the closure of some companies and the retrenchment of workers. There is therefore an urgent need to support the private sector in mitigating the negative effects of the crisis while also strengthening its internal capacity to export.

The Caribbean has historically been dependent on export earnings to contribute to economic and social development. Under the Lomé Convention, the region's agricultural products enjoyed preferential treatment in its trade with the European Union (EU), which augured well for foreign

exchange earnings, employment and overall socio-economic development. Today, while agriculture still contributes significantly to the GDP of some member states (Guyana 21%, Belize 12% and Suriname 10.9%) the majority of countries in the region have diversified away from agriculture and are now heavily dependent on the services industry (Source World Bank). In 2010, services contributed an average of 77% towards GDP for 13 CARIFORUM States (Source UN Main National Accounts aggregates). At the individual country level, the importance of services is even more apparent. A snapshot of statistics showing the contribution of the finance and business services sector in Barbados, for example, shows how integral it is to the country's national development. The sector employed 17,800 persons and accounted for BDS \$921.4 million worth of exports in 2013 (Source UNCTAD).

However, despite the importance of services to regional economies, governments are again faced with global threats to one of its niche services—the financial services sector. This sector, which is the second largest contributor to GDP in the Caribbean region, has come under increased scrutiny through a number of developed country led initiatives, including harmful tax competition, anti-money laundering standards, tax base erosion and profit shifting and exchange of information standards. In light of this, the



Caribbean finds itself with the challenge of not only fighting for the survival of such a vital sector, but also charged with the responsibility to further develop niche sectors and explore new export market opportunities for its goods and services.

Since the 2008 signing of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between the Caribbean Forum of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (CARIFORUM) and the European Union (EU), regional exports to the EU have increased and mainly included primary products such as oil, mineral fuels and distillation products. By 2013, total CARIFORUM exports to the EU were valued at US\$ 5 billion (Source ITC). However, non-traditional exports to the EU in 2013 grew by 15% between 2009 and 2013 and totalled US\$3.2 billion. There is still much work to be done in increasing exports from the Caribbean to the European market. Through its work programme, Caribbean Export has been working assiduously to ensure that this happens.

Currently implementing the 10th European Development Fund (EDF) Regional Private Sector Development Programme (RPSDP),





Caribbean Export has worked on a number of initiatives that are designed to enhance the competitiveness and export capacity of regional small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and to increase trade and exports. The range of services offered by the Agency can be viewed under the section, *Caribbean Export's Suite of Services*. Our work has spanned a number of priority sectors from agro-processing, to fashion, music, and renewable energy and throughout we have been privileged to work with companies that demonstrate high levels of quality, innovation and workmanship. Their stories are highlighted at various points in the publication under *Companies to Look Out For*.

Caribbean Export is particularly proud to highlight the facilitation of Caribbean firms to participate in the largest food and beverage trade show in the world—ANUGA, which took place in Cologne, Germany in October 2013. Of the 11 Caribbean firms that attended, three of them (Banks Holdings Ltd. from Barbados, Marie Sharp's Fine Foods Limited from Belize, and Baron Foods Limited from Saint Lucia) received the coveted Taste13 Award, which was bestowed upon 54 companies deemed to

carry innovative products. Bearing in mind that nearly 7,000 companies exhibit at ANUGA, that is an amazing feat.

As a result of our participation at ANUGA, SMAKS Luxury Group Ltd. from Trinidad and Tobago was able to secure a major distributor for the Nordic countries (Norway, Sweden, and Denmark) for their teas and Chai Rum. Orders from the prestigious InterContinental Carlton Hotel in Cannes, France have been delivered and teas are already being served. Orders have been received from Italy, France, Switzerland, and the UK. Another company, 10 Saints Brewery from Barbados, received orders from buyers in Italy, Germany and France and is still engaged in discussions with prospects in Poland, Russia and Spain. It is our firm belief that in our region, there are products that are ready for international markets. It is our role as an export promotion agency to offer them the right type of support and guidance that will advance the region's overall economic development.

While we acknowledge that the RPSDP has already made a contribution to increasing exports and enhancing firm competitiveness,

there are still a number of areas that have to be addressed if we are to continue on the trajectory of attaining increased exports from our countries. Some of these (addressed under *Clearing the Hurdles*) include high energy costs, limited access to capital, non-compliance with international standards, and limited market contacts in export markets of interest. Addressing these issues requires the collaborative efforts of policy makers, financial institutions and donor agencies to ensure that we can create solutions to the challenges facing the private sector. In this regard, public-private dialogue will be critical in achieving this objective.

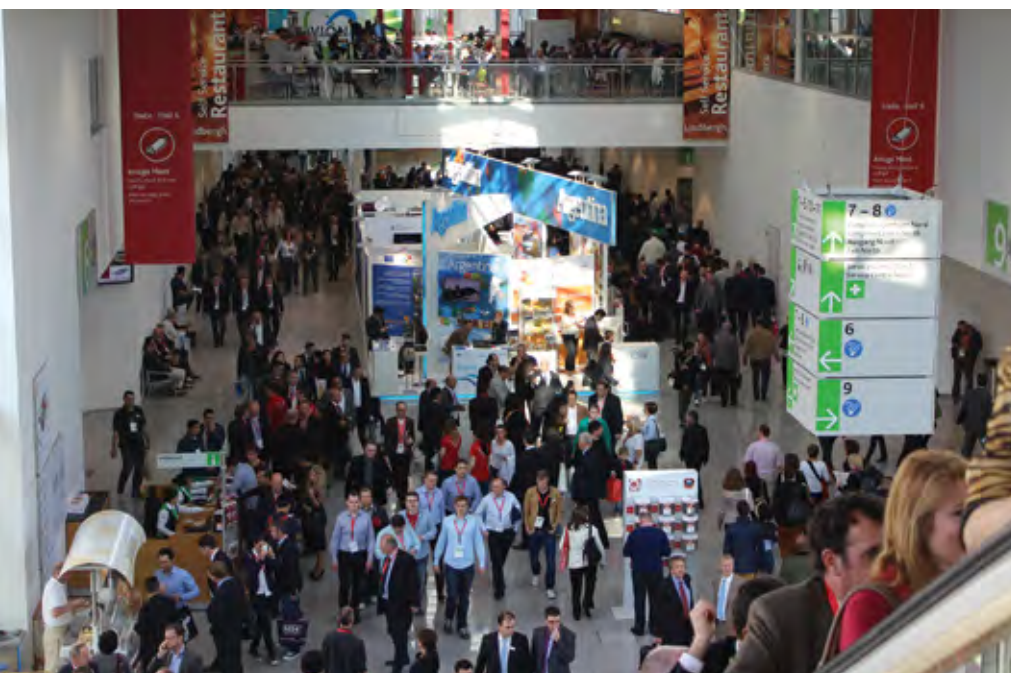
Overall, the region must continue to explore the sectors which offer us a competitive advantage in trade. We must strengthen firms in these sectors while ensuring that the enabling environment under which they operate is "business friendly" and conducive to business start-up and expansion.

The current state of play economically demands that we up our game in the area of trade if we want to emerge a stronger region, one that can earn its living capitalizing on the creativity of its people.



# enhancing regional growth through trade

BY SIR RONALD SANDERS



Much doubt currently exists over whether, in the present circumstances, trade can be expanded both within the Caribbean region and globally to enhance regional growth.

A quick snapshot of the balance of trade deficit of 13 Caribbean Community (CARICOM) countries with the rest of the world makes depressing reading. The Bahamas and Haiti are excluded since they have not committed to the Caribbean Single Market and, therefore, the CARICOM Secretariat (which is the source of these figures) does not compile records of the trade of these two countries. In 2010, CARICOM's balance of trade deficit with the world was US \$2,600,326,524. By 2011, the deficit had increased to US \$3,136,289,308. Only two CARICOM countries enjoyed a trade surplus—Trinidad and Tobago US \$4,475,070,938 (2010) and US \$5,321,850,194 (2011) and Suriname US \$686,278,857 (2010) and US \$878,276,061 (2011). Were it not for the performance of the latter two countries, CARICOM's balance of trade deficit with the rest of the world would have been larger.

Within CARICOM, Trinidad and Tobago is the only country that enjoys a balance of trade surplus. In 2010 the surplus was US \$1,934,847,203 and in 2011 US \$1,884,684,217. In terms of all exports between CARICOM countries, Trinidad and Tobago consistently averages 68 %. The pre-eminent position of Trinidad and Tobago in CARICOM's trade is due to its exports of oil, gas and petroleum products. It also benefits from the advantage its private sector companies enjoy from cheaper costs of energy that reduce their costs of production and make them more competitive within CARICOM.

It is telling that the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between CARIFORUM

countries (CARICOM plus the Dominican Republic) and the European Union (EU) has produced no great benefits to the Caribbean region. Exports of goods from Caribbean countries to the EU have remained stagnant, dropping from US \$5.8 billion in 2007 to US \$5.7 billion in 2011. With regard to trade in commercial services, CARIFORUM members exported US \$6.2 billion in 2009 declining to US \$6 billion in 2011. It is said that the Caribbean private sector has failed to take advantage of the opportunities the EPA offers, but the private sector has complained of severe restrictions on market access. In any event, the existence of the EPA has not resulted in greater exports of Caribbean goods and services to Europe.

A protracted negotiation between Canada and CARICOM countries for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) floundered at the end of June 2013 and the arrangement under which many regional goods entered the Canadian market duty-free is now over. Canada was one of the few developed country markets with which CARICOM countries enjoyed a trade surplus. In 2012, the value of the trade surplus was US \$735.1 million with only a portion benefitting from duty-free treatment. But, CARICOM's exports to Canada represent only 4% of its total export of goods—Caribbean governments might, therefore, have calculated that they could walk away from it. Not so with the United States which accounts for more than 50% of regional trade. The failure to conclude an FTA with Canada, largely because it had no development component and Caribbean governments fear loss of revenue from the removal of tariffs on Canadian imports, portends great difficulties in negotiations with the United States—the Caribbean's biggest trading partner—when the present benefits under the US Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act ends.

On top of all this, the Caribbean has an astronomically high food import bill that

reached US \$4.75 billion in 2013. Yet, many of the 14 independent CARICOM countries are currently experiencing very low or no economic growth, extremely high ratios of debt-to-Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and declining foreign exchange earnings. Countries with very low or no growth in percentage terms in 2012 were Dominica -1.7, Jamaica -0.5, Barbados 0, Saint Lucia 0.5, Grenada 0.6, Trinidad and Tobago 1.5 and the Bahamas 1.8. Belize and Guyana were the only two with reasonable growth at 5.3 and 4.8 respectively.

In 2013, only four countries were exceptions to those with unsustainably high debt-to-GDP ratios. They were: Haiti 21.3%, Suriname 29.2%, Trinidad and Tobago 30.6%, and Bahamas 56.3%. Of the others, Jamaica 138.9%, Grenada 115%, St Kitts and Nevis 104.9%, Antigua and Barbuda 92.9% and Barbados 92% have the highest debt-to-GDP ratios. At the lower end of the unsustainable high debt-to-GDP ratio are Guyana 63.9%, Dominica 74.95%, Belize 75.5%, and St Vincent and the Grenadines 76.4% (source IMF and World Bank). It should be noted that in the case of Haiti, while its debt-to-GDP ratio is low, it has the highest rate of poverty at 77% of its population. Other countries with high levels of poverty are: Belize 41.3%, Grenada 37.7%, Guyana 36.1%, and St Vincent and the Grenadines 30.2%. These figures alone should be strong reasons for CARICOM governments to swiftly involve the private sector and financial institutions in acting to reduce the enormous food import bill by greater trade amongst them in food grown within the region.

Inadequate intra-regional transportation, packing and storage facilities, and dependence on high cost fuel oil and diesel remain huge obstacles to trade in all goods and they can only be overcome by private sector investment, access to capital from development and commercial banks, and government facilitation.

The starting point to expanding trade both regionally and globally is the implementation of the Caribbean Single Market. This includes removing all restrictions on the movement of goods, services and capital, and the right of establishment by nationals and companies across all CARICOM countries. It is very doubtful that the requirement for free movement of people will be achieved anytime soon, except among the seven members of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), but the removal of all other restrictions could spur production integration, i.e., the combination of natural resources with capital and know-how drawn from many Caribbean countries in the establishment and operation of Caribbean enterprises that are competitive internationally and within Caribbean markets against external competitors.

The reality of Caribbean trade is that protected markets in the EU, Canada and the US are history; the era of strong competition in trade has arrived and small inefficient manufacturing and agricultural sectors in individual countries cannot survive. However, trade can still enhance regional growth if CARICOM countries and the DR act together to jointly develop existing and potential agricultural, mineral, industrial and services products which can be produced competitively.

What is required is a well-organised meeting of Caribbean entrepreneurs, the Caribbean Development Bank, national development banks and visionary commercial banks with high-level government representatives to ascertain the opportunities that exist for greater inter-regional and global trade. This meeting will also facilitate the creation of single Caribbean-owned companies that could operate across borders to produce products that could be traded competitively, and to identify where the capital could be raised to finance these operations through joint private sector-government backing.



# Guyana: The next economic tiger?

BY DR PETER CLEGG





Guyana is the third smallest country in South America, located on the north-eastern coast of the continent. Its total population is also small, around 800,000 (giving Guyana one of the lowest population densities in the Americas), with 90% living within 10 miles of the coast. Although Guyana is the third poorest country in the Americas, it has a tremendous stock of natural resources, and it is highly anticipated and projected that Guyana's economy has reached take-off phase and high growth and sustained development are now possible.

Agriculture, the traditional economic sector, remains strong, while mining and forestry are expanding quickly. Mining, mainly of bauxite and gold, contributes around one-fifth of GDP and Guyana has seen healthy growth in these industries in recent years. The mining of manganese, uranium, and rare earths is also being explored. It is expected, based on current exploration, that significant quantities of oil will soon be found in the Suriname-Guyana basin. Meanwhile, logging in the tropical rainforest that covers around 75% of the country's land area has increased appreciably with the granting of concessions to several Asian companies. Owing to the growth in the gold sector, in particular, the national economy has strengthened. Guyana grew by an estimated 5.4 % in 2011 and 4.8% in 2012, and it is predicted to grow by 5.5% in 2013 and 6.0% in 2014, thus recording the highest rate of growth among CARIFORUM countries.

The strengthening domestic economy is being well supported by Guyana's increasingly vibrant foreign policy overtures. The relationship that Guyana has with Brazil is important and efforts have been made in recent

years to strengthen ties. For instance, a partial abolition of visas was agreed in 2003; a new border-crossing was established in 2009 when a bridge was built over the Takutu River; and in February 2013 a joint Working Infrastructure Group met for the first time to discuss a series of projects to aid economic integration. Relations with Venezuela and Suriname are also deepening, despite continuing border and maritime disputes with both countries. Venezuela provides significant opportunities through Petrocaribe (the oil supply and development programme), while there is significant "back-track" or informal trade with Suriname. Guyana also has growing interests in several regional organisations that incorporate Latin America, including the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR).

UNASUR, which, in addition to South American states also includes Guyana and Suriname (considered Caribbean countries although geographically located on the South American mainland) was created in 2008 and has a mandate to bring the countries of the region closer together via infrastructural development. Other initiatives include plans for a single market by 2019 and the promotion of regional security. Owing to the clear policy agenda of UNASUR, a deepening institutional structure, and a substantial allocation of funds, the organization could provide an important avenue through which Guyana extends its links into South America as well as affording Guyana the privileged role of the bridge between South America and the Caribbean. Beyond the region, Guyana maintains close ties with the United States. Guyana trades more with the US than with any other country. Further, China and India are both taking an increasing interest in Guyana, with

growing levels of trade, aid, and foreign direct investment.

However, there are concerns that Guyana's development is being undermined by its internal problems of weak state capacity, corruption, and discrimination. For example, Transparency International's 2012 Corruption Perceptions Index ranks Guyana 133 out of 174 countries assessed (the second most corrupt country in the Caribbean after Haiti). While the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report 2012-2013 identified corruption as the second largest barrier, after crime and theft, for doing business in Guyana. In addition, Ralph Ramkarran, a former stalwart of the governing People's Progressive Party/Civic (PPP/C), claimed an awareness "of enough verifiable cases of corruption" to be satisfied that it is "pervasive."

The associated threat of drug trafficking is also a concern. In its 2013 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report, the US Department of State noted, "The influence of narcotics trafficking is evident in the political and criminal justice systems...Traffickers are attracted by the country's poorly monitored ports, remote airstrips, intricate river networks, porous land borders, and weak security sector capacity." A further concern is the perceived marginalisation of the indigenous Amerindian community whose land is being exploited in the quest for overall economic development.

It is evident that the government of Guyana has undertaken significant reforms and strategic changes to enhance the competitiveness of Guyana's economy. It is also clear that more work needs to be done, but all indicators show that the country is heading in the right direction.



Dr. Peter Clegg is a Senior Lecturer in Politics at the University of the West of England, Bristol. He has been a Visiting Fellow at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies in London, and a Visiting Research Fellow at the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies (SALISES) at the University of the West Indies in Jamaica.



# Trinidad & Tobago: Moving beyond the petro-economy

BY DR PETER CLEGG

Trinidad and Tobago's economy is emerging slowly from a period of stagnation precipitated by the global economic downturn and weakness in the country's petroleum sector. According to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) the economy contracted by 4.4% in 2009, grew by 0.2% in 2010, but fell back again in 2011 by 2.6%. However, in 2012 recorded growth was 1.5%, and it is estimated at 1.6% in 2013 and projected to be 2.1% in 2014.

Growth in 2013 was assisted primarily by the non-petroleum sector, whose contribution to overall GDP was 60.2%—its highest share since 2005. Within the non-petroleum sector, services were most important, followed by manufacturing and agriculture. The petroleum sector, meanwhile, was projected to experience only very slight growth in 2013 (0.5%), but this would be the first expansion of the sector in the last three years. Increased production of natural gas, liquefied natural gas (LNG), and methanol together with higher export prices for oil and gas were the drivers behind the growth. Inflation and unemployment are low, and while the country is running a fiscal deficit that is feeding into higher levels of public sector debt, both are manageable in size.

In order to strengthen the fundamentals of the economy, the government is instituting several important policy reforms. One is the gradual re-directing of LNG exports away from the United States, which is becoming more self-sufficient, towards other markets. One such market is Asia. China began importing natural gas from Trinidad and Tobago in 2009,

and volumes are increasing. Another market is Latin America, particularly Argentina and Brazil. Along with the exploitation of new markets there are growing diplomatic links with these regions. Other reforms include a number of new incentives from January 1, 2014 to encourage further investments in the energy sector; a new corporate governance code to promote more transparency and better company practices; amendments to the pension system; and the passing of the CARIFORUM—European Community Economic Partnership Agreement Bill. Further, the government has implemented a Public Sector Investment Programme to increase capital spending.

Another area in which the government has attempted to undertake reform is in relation to the petroleum subsidy. Trinidad and Tobago has long provided assistance to local consumers so fuel costs can be contained. The subsidy has grown in recent years and the Kamla Persad-Bissessar administration has tried to reduce the current payments and the arrears on the account, with moderate success. However, in a report published in October 2013 the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) advised that Trinidad and Tobago should remove all fuel subsidies as they are undermining labour productivity and the development of a non-energy business sector. The IDB argued that "Most of it [subsidies] goes to inefficient public enterprises, more than 130 overlapping social programmes, and the fuel and electricity subsidy." Trinidad and Tobago's gasoline at the tank costs about 25c (US) per litre—this is one of the lowest prices in the world. Some of the competitiveness problems can be seen with its below par position on the World Economic

Forum's Global Competitiveness Index. In 2013 Trinidad and Tobago was ranked 92 out of 148 countries. The government is alert to the problems but addressing them will take concerted action.

A further challenge to the government is gang-related crime. A recent report by the Council on Hemispheric Affairs (COHA), a Washington-based US think-tank, highlighted the problem, and in another report the UN Development Programme (UNDP) concluded that a 1% reduction in youth crime would boost tourism revenue by US \$35m per year. As such, the need to address gang crime is extremely important.

In 2011 a state of emergency was introduced from late August to early December, and although 448 persons were arrested under the Anti-Gang Act during this period not a single gang member was charged and convicted. Indeed, concerns have been expressed in the local media and elsewhere about the low detection and conviction rates. In response the government has begun to introduce a range of anti-gang measures, including a watch list of gang members who receive contracts from the State; the creation of a Criminal Gang Intelligence Unit; joint patrols by members of the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force and the police; and civil assets forfeiture legislation to cut off gang access to funding.

Overall, it is clear that Trinidad and Tobago has tremendous economic advantages and future potential, but more needs to be done to improve aspects of the economy and to reduce crime.

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Dr Peter Clegg is a Senior Lecturer in Politics at the University of the West of England, Bristol. He has been a Visiting Fellow at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies in London, and a Visiting Research Fellow at the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies (SALISES) at the University of the West Indies in Jamaica.







# Jamaica: From debt to development?

BY DR PETER CLEGG



The economy of Jamaica is in great difficulties and has been for some time. Jamaica is one of the most indebted countries in the world with debts totalling US \$19 billion, equivalent to 140% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Servicing of the debt accounts for about 50% of total budgeted expenditure, and 45% of the 2012/13 budget was financed by borrowing. Further, growth has been sluggish for several years, with a 1.5% decline in 2010, 1.3% growth in 2011, but another decline of 0.3% in 2012. Unemployment and poverty levels are high, and the external current account deficit has widened. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) noted that low economic growth, declining productivity, and reduced competitiveness were key problems, but also linked these to Jamaica's "unsustainable debt burden."

Serious attempts are now being made to turn the economy around. However, recalibrating the economy and reducing debt levels is a real challenge. The last Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) government signed an agreement with

the IMF in February 2010 for a Standby Loan Agreement worth US \$1.27 billion. In return, the government committed to reducing the level of debt and interest rate costs and reforming the financial sector. Still, the IMF agreement stalled and the last disbursement authorised by the Fund took place in January 2011. The present People's National Party (PNP) government returned to the IMF and agreed to a four-year Extended Fund Facility (EFF) worth US \$932 million in May 2013.

The PNP believes there is no alternative. As Finance Minister Peter Phillips argued in February 2013, "Quite frankly ... this is essentially a matter of the survival of the Jamaican nation as a viable nation state."

To secure the EFF, the government is pushing through a series of difficult reforms, including a debt swap, tax raising measures, and reducing the public-sector wage bill. Eight months into the agreement the IMF stated that "overall policy implementation is strong" and that performance targets were being met.

However, much more work needs to be done and the underlying tension between the very high and barely sustainable debt burden on the one hand, and encouraging growth on the other has to be addressed.

Debt continues to displace much needed investments and prevents long-term growth. Nevertheless, any serious attempt to reduce the debt through public spending cuts also damages Jamaica's growth prospects. The particular focus on spending cuts is unfortunate as the country has been running primary budget surpluses for the last 20 years. As the Center for Economic and Policy Research argued in 2011, the most important factors causing budget targets to be missed are "lower-than-projected revenue and higher-than-anticipated interest payments—not increased spending."

Under these conditions, it is not surprising that several key sectors of the economy have been under-performing. In 2012 these included mining and quarrying, which fell by 9.1% (contributing 2% to GDP); construction dropped by 3.8% (contributing 7% to GDP);





and transport, storage and communications contracted by 1.6% (contributing 11% to GDP). Other sectors grew positively; agriculture, forestry and fishing grew by 2.6% (contributing 7% of GDP), while hotels and restaurants grew by 1.8% (contributing 6% of GDP). The first quarter 2013 data suggested that the goods producing sectors (agriculture, mining and quarrying, and construction) declined while the service sectors remained flat. For example, tourist arrivals saw little improvement year-on-year.

So the macroeconomic position of Jamaica is extremely challenging, but there are hopes that the IMF-backed reforms will provide some relief. Foreign exchange inflows from the IMF, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank will help. It is also expected that IMF support more generally will inspire greater confidence in the economy.

In September, 2014, Jamaica completed its 5th staff review of its economic performance

by The Executive Board of the IMF. Over this four-year period, the economic reform was supported by a US\$932 million arrangement under the Extended Fund Facility. The completion of the review enables an immediate disbursement of an amount equivalent to US\$68.8 million to further aid in the long road to economic recovery for the island.

Jamaica's economic performance has been consistent with the programme, and structural reforms are progressing. Based on the aforementioned review, fiscal performance continues to support the debt reduction objective. Moreover, the external accounts are improving, economic growth is continuing with an expected growth rate of over 1% over the 2014-2015 period, inflation is trending down to about 8% and is accompanied by steady growth in employment. Jamaica has not however fully recovered from years of poor economic performance and as such, must continue along its path of fiscal discipline, modernization and reduction of its

public debt and strengthening of its revenue administration.

Another and quite different source of crucial support for Jamaica is being provided by Venezuela. Venezuela provides about one-third of Jamaica's total oil consumption at a discounted price under the Petrocaribe initiative. In addition, since 2005 Jamaica has received US \$2.4 billion in the form of long term loans based on its oil purchases. Funds have been invested in improving the country's physical infrastructure, investing in renewable energy resources, and supporting the operation of several public bodies.

Very importantly, resources have been allocated for the refinancing of Jamaica's domestic public sector debt. Jamaica has reportedly accessed Petrocaribe funds for recurrent expenses not limited to debt servicing. So the Jamaican economy is being supported in a variety of ways and the IMF predicts that it will grow by 0.4% in 2013 and 1.2% in 2014.

Dr Peter Clegg is a Senior Lecturer in Politics at the University of the West of England, Bristol. He has been a Visiting Fellow at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies in London, and a Visiting Research Fellow at the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies (SALISES) at the University of the West Indies in Jamaica.



# OECS: The quest for economic resilience

BY DR. PETER CLEGG



The six independent countries of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) are undertaking significant reforms in an attempt to improve their economies. Over the past several years, all countries have been hit hard by the global financial crisis.

From 2009 to 2012 the OECS economy contracted by 7.6%. Performance was undermined by a lacklustre tourism sector; especially cruise ship tourism, manufacturing, construction, and agriculture. The result has been high unemployment and growing fiscal deficits. In 2012, for example, Dominica had a deficit equivalent to 12% of GDP. In terms of total public debt as a percentage of GDP, St Kitts and Nevis has a figure of 130%; Antigua

and Barbuda and Grenada 90%; and the other countries all above 70%. In January 2013, Sir K. Dwight Venner, Governor of the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank, warned the region was “now at a tipping point.” He argued “we must prepare for significant adjustments to our current policies and modes of doing business.”

These changes are starting to happen. Several countries, particularly Antigua and Barbuda, with assistance from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), are narrowing their fiscal deficits. In June 2013, the IMF described Antigua and Barbuda’s three-year agreement with the IMF as a success. The IMF said that the country had “successfully completed” the programme despite “considerable challenges.”

The fiscal deficit dropped from 18% of GDP in 2009 to just over 1% in 2012 while the debt ratio fell from 102.5% of GDP to 89%. The IMF also noted that the economic recovery is “picking up speed”—growth is estimated to be 1.7% in 2013 and 3.2% in 2014. However, the IMF cautioned that “significant challenges remain” and it recommended that further reforms were necessary including the elimination of tax exemptions, a broadening of the tax base and civil service reform. Indeed countries across the region are trying to improve their fiscal and debt sustainability. For example, Saint Lucia has widened its tax base and increased revenue via the introduction of value added tax (VAT). Grenada, meanwhile in March 2013, suffered a debt default and is now





implementing an IMF-supported economic reform programme.

The reforms being initiated across the OECS are coming at a time of moderate recovery in key sectors of the economy. The improving situation in North America is an important contributing factor. According to the Caribbean Tourism Organisation tourist arrivals from the United States to Saint Lucia and Grenada increased by almost 11% compared to 2012, while tourist numbers from Canada to Antigua and Barbuda rose by over 28%. However, it should be noted that the recovery in tourism across the OECS is still quite weak. In terms of agriculture, there is evidence of some revival after the devastation by Hurricane Tomas in 2010, and the more recent infestation of Black Sigatoka disease which affects bananas. The sector grew by about 5% in 2012, with Grenada and Saint Lucia doing particularly well. Likewise manufacturing saw growth of 3.4%, but construction contracted in part because of the reductions in capital

spending by most governments. Only in Antigua and Barbuda and in St Vincent and the Grenadines, where major works are underway for airport construction, was there modest growth in the sector.

The continued support of China, Taiwan, and Venezuela will also be important. In relation to cooperation with Venezuela, four OECS countries, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Saint Lucia, and St Vincent and the Grenadines, are part of Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA). Also, every OECS country benefits from the Petrocaribe initiative, whereby signatories can purchase Venezuelan oil at a discounted price. At a time of economic hardship and relatively high oil prices the assistance from Venezuela is very important indeed, and despite concerns over the medium-term viability of Petrocaribe because of Venezuela's recent economic problems its government has given commitments that support will continue.

So there are hopes that domestic restructuring and a more benign international economic environment will help OECS countries recover some of their economic strength. According to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) there will be a recovery in 2013, perhaps with growth of 2%, but this masks significant variations in performance. Saint Lucia and St Kitts and Nevis are expected to see GDP growth of around 2.5%, but Grenada and St Vincent and the Grenadines will barely reach 1%.

Indeed, serious underlying challenges remain, particularly in relation to the high levels of indebtedness.

If OECS governments are forced to cut deeper into their budgets there is a risk that the cherished and long-standing economic welfare model that has underpinned Eastern Caribbean development for several decades will become unsustainable.

Dr Peter Clegg is a Senior Lecturer in Politics at the University of the West of England, Bristol. He has been a Visiting Fellow at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies in London, and a Visiting Research Fellow at the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies (SALISES) at the University of the West Indies in Jamaica.





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# trade and export hotspots





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BY LINCOLN PRICE

Billions of dollars are being invested by the US in Brazil. Here's how regional firms can capture their share.



The Brazilian economy recorded a strong performance during most of the 2007-12 period, with real GDP growth averaging 3.6% a year. Growth benefited from strong domestic demand which also reflected lucrative import demand.

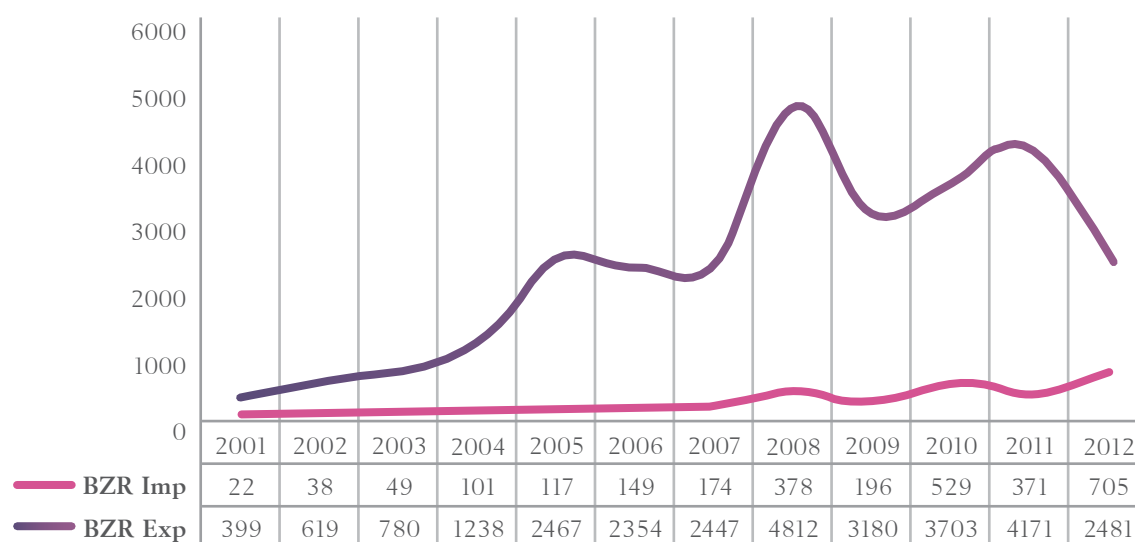
CARICOM-based firms generated US \$705 million in sales to Brazil in 2012 compared to US \$22 million in 2001. CARICOM's top exporter

to Brazil was Trinidad and Tobago, accounting for over 98% of export sales in 2012. Guyana and Suriname have attempted to spur trade with Brazil through trade contracts called Partial Scope Agreements (PSAs).

These PSAs provide limited duty-free or reduced-duty treatment for a specific list of products, versus a comprehensive trade agreement which would provide broad duty relief for a wide set

of products. Other top exporters in 2011 were The Bahamas, St Kitts and Nevis, Jamaica and Barbados. Suriname ranks as the seventh highest exporter to Brazil, with Guyana outperforming Dominica, Antigua and Barbuda and Grenada in the Brazilian market. The trade deficit between Brazil and CARICOM has deteriorated from US \$377 million in 2001 to US \$1.7 billion in 2012. (Table 1.)

**Table 1: CARICOM-Brazil merchandise trade performance (US \$m)**



Source: TradeMAP retrieved November 1, 2013.

#### **In 2012, Brazil's top 10 merchandise imports from CARICOM were:**

1. Liquified natural gas
2. Anhydrous ammonia
3. Methanol
4. Hot rolled bars/rods of iron/steel
5. Aluminium oxide
6. Portland cement
7. Undenatured ethyl alcohol
8. Melamine
9. Other essential oils
10. Kaolin and other kaolinic clays, whether or not calcined

It is important to note that CARICOM's top 10 exports to Brazil were not covered by either PSA from Guyana or Suriname. The PSAs do not cover most of Guyana and Suriname's most competitive products nor do they cover the current exports from the rest of CARICOM. As a result, Guyana and Suriname are not adequately exploiting their trade opportunities with Brazil and therefore the PSAs between Brazil and both CARICOM members are not having the desired impact.

However, if the fifth additional protocol of the Brazil-Guyana PSA is approved, many of Guyana's and CARICOM's key merchandise exports to Brazil would be covered.

### **Product Opportunities**

CARICOM can exploit a strategic window to penetrate the Brazilian market through targeting the Olympic Games during 2016. The 2014-2016 period can also be explored as a market entry period, after which

CARICOM-based firms can consolidate their positions and seek to grow market share. A number of trade opportunities are proposed for Guyana- and Suriname-based firms and for other CARICOM member states through these countries. These opportunities are based on the import demand in Brazil as well as the global export capacity of firms in Guyana and Suriname, even though currently no trade to Brazil was observed up to 2012 in these particular product areas. (Table 2.)





**Table 2: Market Opportunities in Brazil for CARICOM products**

Product	Brazil's Total Imports 2012	CARICOM's Exports to Brazil	CARICOM's Global Exports
<b>Opportunities for Guyana</b>			
Sauces	US \$24mn	0	US \$5.2mn
Rum and tafia	US \$1 mn	0	US \$161.5mn
Pasta	US \$3.5mn	0	US \$3.2mn
Carton boxes	US \$43mn	0	US \$9mn
Medicaments	US \$2.6bn	0	US \$68.3mn
Chewing gum	US \$2mn	0	US \$0.7mn
<b>Opportunities for Suriname</b>			
Mineral/aerated waters	US \$0.4mn	0	US \$72.6mn
Toilet paper	US \$6.6mn	0	US \$10.9mn
Tableware and kitchenware of plastics	US \$58mn	0	US \$1.3mn
Beer made from malt	US \$45mn	0	US \$63mn
Disinfectants	US \$17mn		US \$0.5mn
Mixtures of juice	US \$3.8mn		US \$5.5mn

Source: International Trade Centre tradeMAP Database, retrieved December, 2013

The export opportunities targeted above represented over US \$200m in potential merchandise export sales to Brazil based on import patterns in Brazil and CARICOM's global exports. These sectors were selected based on the import demand in Brazil observed between 2001 and 2011. Additionally, the export competitiveness of these sectors was assessed as well as the brand differentiating potential. These export sectors provide opportunities outside the Trinidad and Tobago-centred energy cluster which

other CARICOM member states can exploit. The specific markets in Brazil are suggested in the conclusion to this article.

## Trade Challenges

Firms interviewed in a recent study by Caribbean Export proposed a number of reasons for the poor market penetration in Brazil. The reasons cited, amongst others, included poor transport logistics; poorly implemented trade agreements between Brazil, Guyana and Suriname; estranged trade support

agencies; peripheral political importance by Heads of Government; and sluggish intra-CARICOM merchandise trade. The study revealed that the main factors impacting the decision to export to Brazil included access to:

- market information.
- trade financing.
- matchmaking support.

Respondents were generally unaware of most of the trade support institutions outside of their own national institutions.



They generally saw the provision of trade development services as the government's job, and were not willing to pay for these services. All persons polled support the establishment of a quick response mechanism to address their trade concerns in the Brazilian market.

It is suggested that CARICOM immediately pursue the following actions:

- i. Expedite a quick response Market Intelligence system currently being developed by Caribbean Export;
- ii. Incorporate sauces; pasta; aerated beverages and beer into the Caribbean Kitchen programme currently being executed by Caribbean Export;
- iii. Assist in the establishment of trade desks in the Guyana Private Sector Commission and the Suriname Business Forum to serve as information and matchmaking centres for CARICOM firms interested in trading with Brazil;
- iv. Engage the CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality (CROSQ) concerning digitisation and translation (from Portuguese to English and vice versa) of technical regulations (including labelling rules) in Brazil;
- v. Engage COPA Airlines Ltd to assess willingness to engage in missions where journalists can visit the markets of Guyana and Suriname;
- vi. Engage the Inter-American

Development Bank Compete Caribbean Business Climate reform programme to fund an 18-month trade development programme focussing on customs cooperation; a trade promotion desk exchange programme; and business matchmaking.

CARICOM firms should see Brazil as several distinct markets rather than one seamless market. Boa Vista is the largest Northern Market in Brazil, while Manaus is the centre of an industrial plan through the Superintendência da Zona Franca de Manaus (SUFRAMA) to improve the free zones competitiveness and transform it into an industrial district for the southern continent. Bahia is seen as a market with significant affinity to the Caribbean, and is perceived as the base for the African Brazilian population.

Boa Vista and Manaus were viewed as middle term markets in a 2003 Guyana Marketing Corporation (GMC) Northern Brazil study. The study was not very optimistic on the near term possibilities, but seemed to suggest that these northern markets were opportunities for Guyana based on their inaccessibility to the rest of the country. The report suggested that Guyana intensify road and other infrastructural projects and target greater business matchmaking opportunities in Belem, Boa Vista and Manaus. It is now suggested that Belem is not a strong opportunity for trade development as this

market is now seen as too competitive for small niche exporters in Guyana and Suriname and the infrastructural improvements has improved access into this market for the rest of Brazil.

Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro are difficult markets to crack based on the self-sufficiency of the Brazilian private sector in those economies, and the dense red tape. However, these markets cannot be ignored as they are the fulcrum of a significant public sector investment programme for infrastructure improvements associated with the FIFA World Cup in 2014, and the IOC Olympic Games in 2016.

The multiplier effects estimated in a study by Ernst and Young put the total economic impact at US\$120 billion. President Rousseff also announced an additional US\$66 billion infrastructure spend in Brazil for the next 15 years to further enhance infrastructure developments in the economy. The bulk of these investments will be targeted at Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, with Manaus also figuring strongly in the improvements.

It is suggested that CARICOM-based firms position themselves in Brazil through Suriname and Guyana to benefit from some of the "trickle down" effects of this US\$120 billion wave of economic activity in Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and other provinces of Brazil.

Lincoln Price is a Jamaican-born Economist and Statistician with over 16 years experience in Market Research, Business Negotiations and Strategic Planning in the public sector, private sector and academia. Previously employed at the CARICOM Office of Trade Negotiations (OTN) as the Private Sector Liaison, his responsibilities were geared at maximising the benefits of trade agreements for the region's private sector.



# expanding caribbean exports to fast growing African economies

BY CLEOPATRA MCDONALD



Africa's economic growth accelerated in the years following 2000, making it the world's second fastest-growing region after Asia. Over the last decade, six of the world's 10 fastest growing economies were African. While resources contributed less than a third of total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth in the 2000s, the most significant contributors to growth are changing, with a more apparent reliance on domestic demand. The African market opportunity is concentrated, with 10 of 54 countries—including Ghana, South Africa and Nigeria—accounting for 81% of Africa's private consumption in 2011.

The countries of the Caribbean Forum of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) states (CARIFORUM) have already begun to take advantage of these growing economies. With the discovery of crude oil in Ghana, Republic Bank, a substantial player in the oil and gas sector in Trinidad and Tobago, and in mortgage markets throughout the Caribbean has incrementally increased its stake from 8.9% to 40% in the Ghana-based HFC Bank, making it the largest single stakeholder. However, many more prospects still exist for the Caribbean in Africa.

## TRENDS: DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND, CONSUMERISM AND TELECOMS BOOM

As African economies grow, so does the middle class, resulting in the continent now having the fastest growing middle class in the world. Thirteen percent of the population are currently categorised as stable middle class, and this number will grow to 42% (1.1 billion) by 2060. By 2016, some 11 million South African households are expected to have annual incomes of R89, 500 (US \$10, 000).

Further, Africa boasts the world's youngest population, with two-thirds of its total population under 25 years of age; and it is the only continent that will double in size, reaching 2 billion people by 2045. South Africa has one of the youngest populations globally, with the average age of the population estimated at 24.9 years. In Ghana, the total median age is 17.9 years and Nigerians between 20-40 years account for 47% of the country's population. Evidence points to the potential for a "demographic dividend", the

economic benefit countries reap when the share of the working-age population rises relative to children and old people, implying lower support costs for dependants and an increase in disposable income.

The upshot of these trends is that they afford discretionary spending for a wide range of consumer goods and services. Since 2000, consumer spending in Sub-Saharan Africa has grown at a steady 4% per year, reaching nearly US \$600 billion in 2010, and is projected to reach US \$1.4 trillion by 2020; with the largest increases expected in lifestyle/home-goods, clothing, food, mobile telecommunications and entertainment.

The telecommunications sector has undergone profound changes during the past decade, with the opening of the sector to competition, the creation of national regulatory authorities, the privatization of incumbent operators and the emergence of the first private operators—all of this resulting in a boom in mobile telephony. Mobile phones have far outstripped computers as a means of accessing the Internet. Social networking is the leading purpose for which the Internet is used, followed by online music/video content. The implication of increasing mobile Internet usage is that employing Information Communication Technologies (ICT) as a means of building markets has improved the potential distribution of goods and services in the three mentioned markets.

## FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Food retailers benefit first from increased earnings, since consumers move from an informal retail environment to a formal one. In South Africa, food sales have shown significantly steady growth, accounting for 54% of all sales in 2011; in that year, the country's aggregate retail sales surpassed R1 trillion for the first time in history, and are likely to hit R1.46 trillion by 2016. In Ghana, retail food sales have grown about 10% annually in the last 10 years and there is a high demand for imported food products, particularly consumer-ready products. In all three countries, changing demographics

and lifestyles are resulting in increasing consumer preference for convenience, processed and packaged food products.

Within the food sector, there is differentiated demand at the top and bottom ends of the income spectrum. In South Africa, the most basic fast-moving consumer goods, such as soaps and cleaners, are buoyed by large-scale social grants provided by the government, expanding by an average of just over 17% between 2012-2016. At the upper end of the scale there is an aspirational drive to increase spending on status purchases such as high-end goods and services and premium alcohols. There is a visible shift from traditional beer to spirits, and premium spirits specifically have demonstrated strong volume growth amongst middle class consumers. Entry barriers lie less with technical barriers, than with the resources required for building new brands through marketing and advertising. Moreover, intense competition for consumers' disposable income, high freight costs from the Caribbean and price sensitivity in the food product market are important determinants of the potential for market entry by CARIFORUM firms.

However, existing exports prove that perceived challenges are not insurmountable. GraceKennedy has increased its exports to Ghana, with soft drinks and canned meat products accounting for the bulk of sales. The similarity in flavour profile of West Indian and West African cuisines has contributed to the surge in sales, and having started exports to Nigeria in late 2013, the company has identified other West African countries such as Cameroon as potential export destinations.

South Africa's major retailers such as Shoprite, Spur, Pick n Pay, Woolworths, and Truworths are focused on a varied growth strategy consisting inter alia, of converting informal trade into formal retail with particular attention to expanding into the rest of Africa, making South Africa a major retail competitor. This presents a unique opportunity for CARIFORUM food and beverage manufacturers to reach an increased number of Africans through establishing relationships with large South African retailers expanding throughout the continent.





## CULTURAL INDUSTRIES: MUSIC & ENTERTAINMENT

These above trends have led to broadening access to global culture and an increasing demand for cultural and creative goods and services. There is increased usage of digital audio platforms including online radio, MP3 players, and podcasting, and a concomitant increase in digital sales. The potential for cultural exports and collaborations is robust, and unique cultural products and services with a compelling story—including the African-Caribbean connection and historical cross-pollination between African and Caribbean musical styles—can fare well with the correct promotional strategy. However, most musicians do not earn a living from recorded music but rather from performances or working in other creative enterprises (theatre, film, commercials), making this sector the most important.

Bootstrapping artists would face challenges exploiting the music market not least because of the costs and restrictions of doing business and touring in foreign territories, including attaining visas and work permits. Also the lack of a professional live music circuit, and limited bandwidth could impede marketing efforts. Artists would also need to consider the costs

of promotion in large territories given logistics and exchange rates. The risk of piracy remains, owing to weak institutional and governance frameworks. Of the three countries, South Africa has implemented a strong music rights administration regime, but in Nigeria and Ghana enforcement institutions are inadequate or absent.

## TOURISM

Africa is one of the fastest-growing markets for air travel behind Asia and the Middle East. Of the three countries, South Africa has a more robust outbound tourism market, owing to its larger middle class, stronger economy and more stable national airline. There was a 24% growth in outbound travel and tourism recorded in 2011 and the number is expected to continue growing to 6.9 million by 2017. For the majority of the population, outbound tourism is a price-based as opposed to an experience-based choice and much tourism remains limited to local and regional destinations. For these market segments, cost, distance, time and low information are barriers to entry for CARIFORUM tourism exports.

Although the highest earners and the affluent still account for a small proportion of the

consumer market, their spending power translates into an opportunity for luxury and experience-based tourism exports. The affluent middle and upper classes are exhibiting their increased purchasing power in major tourism destinations and experience-based holidays might be marketed around regional music and cultural festivals. Tourism exports present a challenging but not impossible proposition. Existing policy recommendations for product innovation through a single-destination platform could be considered in this context; however this necessitates the improvement of intra-CARIFORUM air accessibility and strengthened marketing and brand positioning.

Although qualified by inherent risks of market entry, African markets experiencing consumption-led growth present some unique opportunities for CARIFORUM exports, and goods and services with competitive advantage could find a market amongst the continent's increasingly moneyed consumers. Premium alcohol, food and beverage products certainly bear promise, but also to a lesser extent do travel, and cultural tourism and services. In sectors where Caribbean firms hold strong expertise, fast-growing African economies might just be among potential non-traditional export markets.

Cleopatra McDonald is a trade lawyer and consultant with several years' experience in trade policy formulation, review and negotiations. She has worked as a trade advisor on the Economic Partnership Agreement negotiations between the European Union and the East and Southern Africa Group, and as a legal expert on short-term trade and development projects in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean.





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#### Feedback

##### EXPORTER

"We had quite an experience presenting to a contingent from Barbados... If all goes well in three weeks I see us having our first order"

Rawlins Amar - Brava International, Trinidad

##### BUYER

"I was very surprised by the quantity and diversity of the products I've seen thus far and I hope that I will see more tomorrow. I think that there are many opportunities [in Trinidad and Tobago] and the country has an important amount of products that can be offered in our [Costa Rica] supermarkets."

Carolyn Altán - Alimentos Clippis, Costa Rica

##### EXPORTER

"I was very pleased with the companies that we met with... I certainly see opportunities for us to do some trade"

Anthony Samrny - Pope's Marketing Limited

##### EXPORTER

"We met a lot of buyers from Cuba, we were really grateful because the facts of how to penetrate the Cuban market to many is still shrouded in mystery"

Roxanne De Landro - Abel Building Solutions Limited

##### BUYER

"I came with a vision that my company needed to grow its customer base, with the product range and technical knowhow resident from manufacturers in Trinidad & Tobago, I believe we can form strategic alliances whereby we represent local brands credibly and profitably in the St. Lucian Market"

Edward Harris - Essential Hardware & Proofer Industries, Saint Lucia

##### BUYER

"This is not the first show that we have attended of this nature, we have been to Costa Rica and Miami... but I must say we are quite impressed with what we have seen thus far, I have met quite a number of local manufacturers willing to produce under our label"

Mirko and Miranda Gill - Sunshine Industries, Barbados

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# satisfying the German demand for Caribbean specialty foods

BY DR RAINER ENGELS



The general food retail market in Germany has two severe disadvantages for Caribbean exporters: the quantities needed are far beyond the capacities of Caribbean companies and the prices are far below levels which would suffice. Therefore the only opportunities in the German food market are niche markets. The three fastest growing niche markets are products from organic agriculture, fair trade labelled products and vegetarian food.

The agro-processing sector has played a critical role in the diversification of the Caribbean's agriculture sector, with the process of making jams, jellies, fruit nectars and other beverages well established within the region. There is an estimated number of over 300 agro-processors in the CARIFORUM region who are mainly located in Trinidad and Tobago, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Jamaica and Suriname and to a lesser extent in Barbados, Belize and Saint Lucia.

Both the capacity as well as the opportunity may be available to build upon the existing and growing trade relationships between the European Union and CARIFORUM states. This may be explored by further export activity of CARIFORUM agriculture and agro-processing products particularly into the German market.

When seeking to enter the German market, potential exporters should note that buyers generally expect high quality products at low prices. However, Caribbean exporters face several challenges, sharing many features of other small states' size-related macroeconomic vulnerabilities, such as lack of economies of scale, capacity constraints, export diversification and exposure to natural disasters.

Caribbean countries' smallness constrains the achievement of economies of scale and economic specialization. States also face rising losses caused by natural disasters from 0.9% of annual GDP in the 1980s and 1990s to 1.3 % of GDP in the 2000s. Overall, the region has demonstrated declining export competitiveness over the years (IMF, 2013). In light of the above, competition based upon price would be difficult for Caribbean firms particularly wanting to enter the low-priced German food market. Therefore it is important to have a unique product which may justify higher pricing, with a special story that could be sold along with the product as part of its marketing and branding appeal e.g. "Organic Caribbean."

All three identified export categories of organic, vegetarian and fair trade have specialized traders who supply local shops and retailers. Caribbean exporters who are interested in supplying the German market

should seek to collaborate with such traders in order to successfully enter the market. Such market research is critical in order to determine which product segment of the market you wish to supply and hence which type of specialized traders may prove to be the most suitable business partners for exporting into Germany or the EU.

## Organic Market Trends

Globally 37 million hectares (ha) of the production surface area are allocated towards organic food. In 2010, the European market for organic food was valued at €20 billion with major markets such as France and Italy valued at €3.4 and 1.6 billion respectively during 2012. For Germany alone during the 2011 to 2012 period, the value of this sector increased from €6.64 billion to 7 billion with the share of organic farms in Germany during 2012 accounting for 8 % of total farms and 6.3% of production surface.

Demand for organic food within European markets may be exhibited by the per capita expenditure trends for such products. For example during 2011 (as seen below) up to 177 euro per capita was spent that year. The quite low value for Germany is due to low food prices even for organic food, a market characteristic which is important to note for prospective exporters.

**Table 1: 2011 Expenditure on Organic Food for Select European Markets**

Country	2011 Value (EUR per capita)
Switzerland	177
Denmark	162
Austria	127
Luxembourg	134
Liechtenstein	100
Sweden	94
Germany	81



## German Organic Market Opportunities

Total German organic food imports ranged between 5% and 20% of total turnover, depending on the product group. In 2012, Germany's production surface area for the organic food sector; of 1.043 million ha or 2.577 million acres (ac), was observed to be growing slower than organic food turnover, demonstrating a growing trend of import activity to satisfy local demand. During the 2009 to 2012 timeline, the percentage share of organic food in total food expenditure by German final consumers amounted to 6194.4 billion euro. This value represented an average of around 3.6% of total food expenditure increasing steadily each year by approximately 0.2%. Aside from bananas, organic products from Latin America into Europe included items such as sunflower kernels, soy beans, flax seeds, onions, apples (20% of apple imports are from Latin America). These products are certified by recognized control bodies according to the European regulations.

## Relevant EU Importing Requirements/Regulations

The EC Regulation (EC) No. 1235/2008 (which was amended in 2012 by EC Regulation (EC) No. 508/2012) identifies the list of control bodies and authorities considered competent to carry out controls and issue certificates for "third country" exporters such as from the Caribbean for the purpose of equivalence. As it relates to organic products, all control bodies recognized by the EU Commission to conduct such product certification, may be found listed within Annex IV of the EC Regulation (EC) No. 1235/2008 which contains the detailed rules relating to the arrangements for the imports into the EU. Further details on this regulation as well as contact information of certifying bodies may be found listed under Annex IV p.3-45. According to the rules a "Certificate of Inspection" would be required for every shipment to the EU.

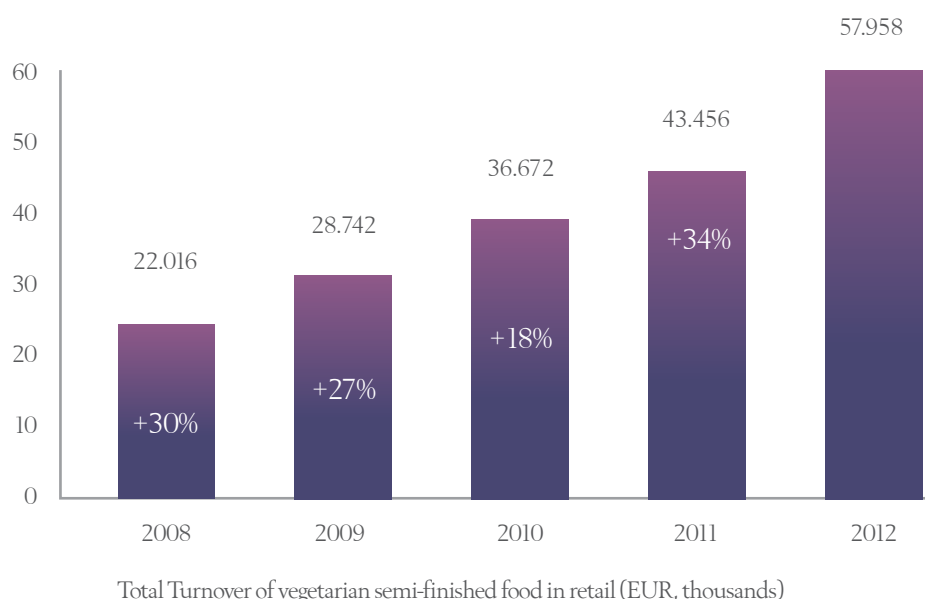
The EURO-Bio logo represents the very minimum level of EU standards that are acceptable for imported organic products. This label provides confidence that the goods produced are done so entirely in line with the EU organic farming regulations and according at least to a minimum level of EU standards.

As such it is important to note that most producers opt to be certified beyond the minimum legal standards of the EURO-Bio logo for organic products. Consequently, only between 40% and 45% share of organic products are certified under the minimum legal requirements of the EURO-Bio labelling system. Nevertheless it may be quite feasible, as well as cost effective for Caribbean companies seeking to enter this market to first pursue certification under the minimum standards of the EURO-Bio labelling system.

## Vegetarian Products

Graphically depicted below is the growth in the turnover of vegetarian semi-prepared food within the German retail market. While the category of vegetarian products is difficult to define (e.g. egg and milk products are accepted by some of the vegetarian consumers, in some cases even fish), the diagram below shows that this segment is characterized by steady growth of products which replace meat products such as sausages or burgers.

**Table 2: Total turnover of vegetarian semi-finished food in the German retail market (EUR, thousands)**



Source: IRI Information Resources



Caribbean exporters interested in tapping into supplying this market need only to satisfy sanitary and phyto-sanitary (SPS) measures for this type of product. The sector is not a protected one in Germany; therefore Caribbean exporters may sell their products at the higher price point associated with vegetarian labelled goods such as ready-made (pre-cooked) convenience meals without animal by-products. An attractive approach to entering this market would be to deliver specifically to companies which currently supply vegetarian buyers. Interested exporters should research the current trademarks associated with these types of products and find a suitable business EU partner for market entry. The advantage of seeking to enter this market is that exporters may benefit from a higher price point for

their goods while only having to satisfy German/EU SPS measures for vegetarian fresh and processed foods.

### Fair Trade

Fair trade is an alternative approach to conventional trade based on a partnership between producers and traders, businesses and consumers and complying with some minimum social standards. The Fairtrade Labelling Organisation coordinates fair trade labelling at an international level from their office in Bonn, Germany. They set international fair trade standards, organize support for producers around the world, develop a global fair trade strategy and promote trade justice internationally. The organization also helps producers to gain fair trade certification and

develop market opportunities. They do this through locally-based liaison officers which provide training, guidance on certification and facilitate relationships with buyers.

Liaison officers additionally provide advisory services to farmers and workers, as well as training and information to help them comply with the fair trade standards, strengthen business capacities, and deepen fair trade impact. There is a growing trend of EU imported products being labelled under both fair trade and organic food regulations, as observed below. This reflects the more recent understanding of sustainability as linking social, ecologic, economic and cultural elements. The largest seller of fair trade products in Germany is GEPA, a fair trade non-profit organisation, which holds 19 % market share.



**Table 3: 2012 Total Fair Trade Products Turnover and Percentage Share of Organic Products**

Product Group	Turnover	% Share of Products also Categorized as Organic
Bananas	21,139 tons	88
Coffee	9,322 tons	78
Sweets	937 tons	47
Honey	143 tons	10
Cocoa	304 tons	72
Chocolate	796 tons	52
Sugar	2,236 tons	11
Ice cream	3,444 tons	0
Tea	200 tons	77
Rice	799 tons	77
Wine	613,000 l tons	5
Flowers	257 million pieces	—
cotton	2,563,000 pieces	39
Footballs	40,000 pieces	—

*In 2012 total fair trade products turnover in Germany was 533 Million EUR (World 5 Billion EUR)*

## Becoming Export Ready for Europe

Several opportunities have been identified for entry into the German market for organic, vegetarian and fair trade products. Based upon this, the next step for Caribbean producers and exporters would be to determine how to get their products ready to enter the EU market.

Within the Caribbean region several business and export development services are available, such as:

1. The Productivity Network (ProNET)  
A business and export development programme available within the CARIFORUM region. For further

information about the programme please contact the Caribbean Export Development Agency.

2. The Services of the Europe-Africa-Caribbean-Pacific Liaison Committee Pesticide Initiative Programme (COLE ACPPIP). The organization has developed several Crop Protocol and Good Practice Guides which are compliant with EU regulations including pesticide maximum residue limits (MRLs). Such regulation guides have been developed for products such as avocado, mango, dasheen, coconut, cassava, and potatoes among others.

The German organic, vegetarian and fair trade food markets present varying export opportunities for export-oriented Caribbean firms. In order to leverage these growing trends by EU and German buyers, Caribbean products must first meet the expectations and legal standards which regulate the EU market. Crucial services are available to assist Caribbean companies in meeting these export regulations. Once this is achieved, the Caribbean firms only need to market and brand a product which can uniquely appeal to the German consumer.

Dr Rainer Engels is the Executive Project Manager at the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) EPA Implementation support Project. He is a specialist in quality management, technical barriers to trade, innovation and agricultural trade politics in the public sector. Dr Engels has undertaken 35 short term missions which bestowed him with a wide range of experiences working in various regions of Africa, Asia, the Near East and southern Europe.

# RED TAPE TO *Red Carpet*

## COMMUNICATING THE PROCESS OF CHANGE TO ATTRACT GLOBAL BUSINESS

There's a fresh wind blowing through the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Investment and Communications.

New Government agencies have been formed to lead initiatives that will attract foreign direct investment. All are revitalizing the approach to business and seeking partnerships between private and public sector; between global and local producers.

Initiatives like this publication, the re-focusing of the primary investment promotion agency – invest TT Ltd - and the aggressive outreach of new companies like the International Financial Centre and CreativeTT are aimed at evoking positive responses from Trinidad and Tobago, and from the world. They say, we are streamlining our approaches, we are eager to do business.

We are, you might say, on red alert. Red, now, is the colour of vibrancy, movement.

Across many Government ministries, the move is on. It was recently given an identity by the Minister himself. Senator the Hon. Vasant Bharath holds portfolios of

Trade, Industry and Investment. He believes that to effect change, one must at times be prepared to move in leaps and bounds. To assure customers, local and international, that the country is open for business, indeed serious about efficiency and good governance even as it sweeps away unnecessary bureaucracy, he declared the move "from red tape to red carpet."

The "red tape to red carpet" campaign is based on the trend towards enhanced collaboration among Government ministries and agencies. It reflects the efforts to do better faster even as it drives improvements in service delivery across all interactions in Trinidad and Tobago. Hopefully, a virtuous cycle of continuous improvement is being created. It is new branding that indicates energy, urgency and efficiency in the country's business interactions.

To date, the agencies that have initiated activity in support of this move include:

- Trade Licence Unit;
- Animal Production and Health Division;
- Plant Quarantine Services;
- Chemistry, Food and Drugs Division;
- exporTT Ltd—the export company of Trinidad and Tobago;
- Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce;
- Ministry of Legal Affairs;
- Work Permit Secretariat at the Ministry of National Security.

The vision is to create an expectation of premium service on the part of the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago; and exceed the real expectations of the businessman or investor, local or international.

The vision is to create an expectation of premium service on the part of the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago; and exceed the real expectations of the businessman or investor, local or international.

Within the Government agencies, employees are motivated to provide service to the private sector, in the spirit of collaboration. Leading the reform process is Randall Karim - Director, Policy and Strategy of the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Investment and Communications. He is responsible for multiple stakeholder engagements all aimed at brainstorming solutions for reducing bureaucracy and other issues. Once solutions are presented, the process drives early adoption of plans and programmes which may include better communications, computerization and efficiency targets among others.

Karim leads an action-oriented group comprising representatives of all the active subscriber agencies (listed above) with clearly defined targets and delivery dates. He reports regularly to the executive management of the Ministry of Trade,

Industry, Investment and Communications in a forum that is aimed at confirming and supporting the team approach to action planning, expediting and facilitating collaboration.

"Red tape to red carpet" has evolved into a comprehensive multi-media programme aimed at communicating the changes taking place across Government agencies in support of a business-like attitude. It includes the use of traditional media (press, radio, television, billboards); and explores new social media such as Facebook and youTube. The corporate press advertisement has been placed in key local and regional business magazines. InvesTT Limited's One Stop Shop and Facilitation Department are the key deliverable for the promotion of the red carpet treatment to the investor.

Some significant specific outcomes are efficiencies and reduction in the time elapsed between

application and registration or certification results. For example, time taken for procurement of a construction permit should be reduced. Some processes which should be achieved in shorter time frames include:

the goods declaration service (via Customs and Excise); registering a property; and enforcement of contracts, or dealing with bankruptcy and insolvency.

A couple counties in California—Silicon Valley and Orange County—have "red tape to red carpet" initiatives. These have evolved over time to include measurable objectives, incentives and annual awards which celebrate the efforts of Government and other agencies in continuous improvement, to do better faster. In time, "red tape to red carpet" will be a significant element of the Trinidad and Tobago brand.

(Information provided by Yolande Agard-Simmons - Manager, Communications and Events, Ministry of Trade, Industry, Investment and Communications)



company to  
look out for:

# 10 Saints Brewery Company Limited





### Company Name

10 SAINTS Brewery Co Ltd

### Website

[www.10saints.com](http://www.10saints.com)

### Chief Executive Officer

Glyn Partridge

### Years in Existence

2 years

### Location

Speightstown, Barbados

### Product Summary:

10 SAINTS, named after the 10 Saint parishes of Barbados is the first specialist independent brewing company in the Caribbean. Combining the rum heritage of Barbados with the skills of our master brewer, 10 SAINTS has produced a range of small batch production beers uniquely aged in rum casks. Our "original" export brew is a refreshing lager style beer, oak aged for 90 days resulting in a rounded palate. It is golden amber in appearance with the aroma of lightly roasted malt and "oakiness" delivering a full yet refreshing flavour of vanilla balanced with

tropical spices and citrus notes. A smooth rum finish completes the taste sensation.

### Export Markets

The United Kingdom, Ireland, Italy, Germany, Poland, Russia and several Caribbean markets. Shipments to the United States of America, Canada and Brazil should begin this year.

### Major Exporting Achievements

We are the only specialist craft premium beer produced in the Caribbean and as such have accessed top outlets in major European cities such as Mahiki's night club, London which





is frequented regularly by royal princes and London's A list celebrities. Our quality and unique process is reflected in our premium pricing; 50% and above all Caribbean beers sold domestically and exported. In addition, we have won several beer awards and other accolades. One great achievement was having Chelsea owner and multi billionaire Roman Abramovich and his guests drink 10 SAINTS on his yacht when they visited Barbados and the further request that 10 SAINTS be stocked in Chelsea football club.

#### Market Entry Strategies

Identify the right partner and ensure expectations are understood and agreed—that's the critical factor.

#### Greatest Exporting Lessons Learnt

In Barbados it's really the fact that Barbados is NOT a part of the CARICOM duty free agreement. We are subject to punitive import duties (70% plus) when attempting to export to the lesser developed economies which really kills that prospect. This combined with a small domestic market makes Barbados a very tough place to establish an export operation.

#### Support Received by Caribbean Export

We participated in ANUGA and received orders from Italy, Germany, and France. We also have a pending listing in a supermarket chain whom we met at the show. Additionally, we have ongoing discussions with several prospects in Poland, Russia and Spain.

#### General recommendation on support needed by exporters:

Fight for a genuine duty-free area within CARICOM, remove non-tariff barriers and bureaucracy and improve shipping efficiencies.

our competitive  
advantage





# agro-processing: what's our unique selling point?

BY BEVERLEY ALLEYNE

Carambola, Barbadian aloe, guava, mango, lemongrass—the region is endowed with natural treasures and has the potential to penetrate international food and nutraceutical markets.





Kiran Akal summed up the essence of the Caribbean's agro-processing industry like this: "We have these super-desirable products in the West Indies—Trinitario cocoa, tropical lemon grass, orange peel, anise, hibiscus, nutmeg, sorrel. These things are available in other countries, but we have the best. It's a question of terroir."

Akal is Chief Executive Officer of Trinidad and Tobago's SMAKS Luxury Group, which markets a tea collection.

The *mélange* of races and cultures that constitutes the Caribbean, born out of a history of colonization, has resulted in a more colourful existence than other territories may be able to claim. The very term "Caribbean" is synonymous with "exotic," "flavourful," "hand-crafted," and "vivacious." The uniqueness of the Caribbean brand is what we have to offer the world and we should leverage this to include our agro-processed goods.

While we have already made some inroads in exporting our agro-processed food products internationally through such brands as GraceKennedy, Walkers Wood, Baron Foods, and Banks Beer, the Caribbean still sits on untapped agronomic treasures. The region is endowed richly with fruits and vegetables, which provide the raw material for an exciting array of exportable products. The degree to which we are able to own and combine the flavours and characteristics of these endowments, with apposite packaging and presentation, will be the extent to which we are successful in international markets.

Significant and strategic investments will be necessary in the areas of product development research (linked closely with market intelligence); equipment and technology;

quality and sanitary programmes; and strategic marketing.

Testimony to the international potential for the distinctive Caribbean flavours is the recent success of at least three companies from the region at the ANUGA Fair held in Germany in October 2013. ANUGA is the world's leading food fair for retail trade, food service and catering. Banana Ketchup from Baron Foods Ltd, Tiger Malt from Beverages Caribbean Inc and Marie Sharp's Fruit Flavours from Belize were all winners of the coveted Taste13 Award.

To the question of terroir, much of the Caribbean's food crops have their genesis in the colonial history of the region—from the corridors of Africa and Europe to the Pacific. Ackee, for instance, was imported into Jamaica from West Africa in the 17th century. However, while it can also be found in Haiti, Cuba, and Florida, ackee has ostensibly become Jamaican, so that ackee and saltfish is the country's national dish. The historically highly demanded Aloe *barbadensis* (Barbados aloe) was inserted into the international pharmacopeia because of its particular quality.

So, what are some of the untapped Caribbean treasures? Aside from the traditional sugar, banana, rice, and nutmeg crops, the region produces exotic fruits, vegetables, roots and spices such as gooseberries, several varieties of apples, mangoes, plums and hot or flavour peppers, carambola, soursop, Barbados cherry, breadfruit, sweet potatoes, and pimento, to mention a few. Much of these remain unfamiliar to the rest of the world, but have not been investigated to the degree the peanut was by George Washington Carver. His research led to a cornucopia of items, such





as peanut butter, oils, hair and skin products, as well as the proliferation of nut-flavoured baked goods, snacks and drinks.

A new health-conscious consumer is looking for gourmet cuisine without having to sacrifice flavour for health. Further, the increase in food allergies and gluten intolerance has given rise to the need for healthy alternatives. Research has deemed many familiar items, such as wheat-based products, bleached flours and pastas, as unhealthy because of over-processing, hydrogenation, genetic modification, or high-glycaemic factors.

The Caribbean has the potential to bring to international markets healthy flour alternatives made from sweet potato, breadfruit, and yam, for example, once it can be practically and

scientifically demonstrated how these flours could replace or blend with traditional wheat flours to create new lines of healthy cuisine from the Caribbean in the baked goods food category. This product category is one of the largest categories in both the United States and the United Kingdom markets.

And what of jams and jellies? Feedback from the UK market indicates an untapped niche for banana jam from the region. As a native of Britain, I grew up eating banana sandwiches. They were to the average British child what the peanut butter and jelly sandwich is to the American child. Gooseberry and golden-apple jams are delightful too, by the way.

Traditional Caribbean confectionery can also be exported to the degree that chocolate has

been internationalized. The correct packaging and presentation would be needed to assure adequate shelf life and transportability of such items as guava cheese mixed with new flavours as mango, jammoo, carambola or soursop, to imagine a few.

Traditional extracts such as vanilla and almond could be extended to mango, for instance, or even nutmeg or guava. These alternatives widen the scope for new and creative products to emerge. Note that guava (guayaba) is a favourite of the Latin-American community for desserts and treats.

Beyond food, Caribbean agro-processed products could include dyes, nutraceuticals and supplements. In Jamaica, Bio-Tech R&D Institute Ltd has already



adventurously invested in nutraceuticals and pharmaceuticals derived from the indigenous medicinal plants of Jamaica.

The possibilities can be as creative as our imaginations. What is necessary is a belief in the Caribbean's value in the marketplace and a can-do attitude, backed by the necessary capital investment into research, technology and marketing. This can certainly be gleaned from those Caribbean exporters who have successfully positioned themselves on the international scene. At the core, they have all embraced the "Caribbeanness" of their products. Their marketing strategies and tools have infused the stories of Caribbean history and culture, and captured those evocative elements that resonate with the international markets.

SMAXS, for instance, has made a concerted effort in this regard by naming some of its tea blends "Barbados Silver," "Antillean Green," "Trinidad Breakfast," "Tobago Afternoon," and providing very high-quality packaging that speaks to the hand-crafted nature of their exotic teas. Grace Kennedy International appeals to authenticity in its catch phrase, "Genuine Caribbean taste enjoyed worldwide."

An additional new marketing approach that could prove invaluable to promoting the region's products is a Caribbean food channel on the international networks, complemented by the establishment of Caribbean shops in strategic markets, established solely for the purpose of diffusing Caribbean cuisine and promoting the agro-processed products

that are, or will be, available in the markets. These shops would be distinct from ordinary supermarkets and retail outlets because they would be responsible for education and promotion through product launches, sampling sessions, demonstrations, and other fun but effective tools.

They would develop and build networking relationships with distributors/retailers, to work in tandem with them rather than in competition, so that sales could be channelled through these mechanisms. They would have strong Public Relations and media campaigns. They would all have uniformity and consistency in imagery or branding so that a Caribbean shop could easily be identified. This is an idea for further rumination, but could very well be the foundation that supports the building of a Caribbean brand.

Ms. Beverley Alleyne is a Senior Business Development Officer of the Barbados Investment and Development Corporation. She has over twelve years' experience in the business of export development and promotion, managing a cross-section of large and SME exporters.



# company to look out for:

## marie sharp's fine foods limited

### Company Name

Marie Sharp's Fine Foods Limited

### Website

[www.mariesharps-bz.com](http://www.mariesharps-bz.com)

### Chief Executive Officer

Mrs. Marie Sharp

### Years in Existence

33 years

### Location

Stann Creek Valley, Belize

### Product Summary

Marie Sharp's is a proud manufacturer of all natural Habanero Pepper Sauces, Fruit Jams and Jellies, Habanero Pepper Jellies, and snacks in Belize. Marie Sharp's Habanero Pepper Sauces are carrot-based, citrus fruit based, and also cactus-based, each one with its own unique taste. Marie Sharp's carrot-based habanero

sauces uses the potent red habanero, while both cactus and citrus-based hot sauce use the yellow and green habanero. Marie Sharp's products are HACCP certified, FDA approved, and certified for health food stores in the USA. Marie Sharp's lives up to its slogan "Proud Products of Belize."

### Export Markets

Japan, USA, Taiwan, Canada, China, Germany, United Kingdom, South Korea, Mexico, France, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras.



### Major Exporting Achievements

ANUGA Taste13 Award 2013, Fiery Food Show award in the USA in 2001, Award for Food and Beverage at ANUGA 1997.

### Market Entry Strategies

Most of our market entry has occurred after attending food shows. After persons taste our products they are astounded by the quality and flavour of Marie Sharp's. Also tourism in Belize has also directly impacted our exports around the world. Many tourists take back our products as gifts and they then become known in those particular countries.

### Greatest Exporting Lessons Learnt

- Practise what you preach; don't make a promise and then don't do it.
- Quality, Quality, Quality!
- Have a business mind-set or approach to all business related activities.
- Be different and better than the rest.
- Success is not overnight; it can take years to establish a brand and products.
- Intellectual property rights protection is a must!

### Support Received by Caribbean Export

Caribbean Export has been very instrumental in many initiatives that have led Marie Sharp's to export to new markets and expand existing markets. Through Caribbean Export's export development initiative Marie Sharp's was chosen to be part of the "product placement" in the Fiesta market chain in Texas. This began with a few case samples and now Marie Sharp's is selling by pallets every three months to Fiesta. In addition, there has been an increase of Marie Sharp's sales into US markets due to attendance at the New York Fancy Food Show. At the Fancy Food Show Marie Sharp's was able to display products, provide tasters, and do product giveaways. Since that show we have seen a steady 11-13% growth in US sales since 2011. The same applied for ANUGA 2013 Show in Germany, where Marie Sharp's won the prestigious Taste 13 award for excellence and quality. The radio and TV coverage given was exceptional for both Marie Sharp's and the Caribbean region. At ANUGA, Marie Sharp's participated with other Caribbean companies as the Caribbean Pavilion, under the vision and direction of the dedicated

team of Caribbean Export. Marie Sharp's has also participated in various other workshops supported by Caribbean Export. One of the workshops which focused on "Intellectual Property Rights" was very crucial to equipping the company with information on exporting from the Caribbean region to the globe. The Caribbean Export workshops provide great benefits for exporting companies and soon-to-be exporters to be better prepared for what lies ahead when Caribbean based products enter new markets around the world.

### Key Support Needed by Exporters:

- Access to lending institutions for low interest financing.
- Export Readiness workshops for new or soon to be exporters with a focus on topics such as market entry, marketing, pricing, negotiations, HACCP, ISO certification, etc.
- Online/internet presence.
- Tradeshows/trade missions.
- Market placements of high potential export ready products in major ethnic/diaspora supermarkets.





# the caribbean services sector and the opportunities under the CARIFORUM-EU EPA

BY LUCILLA LEWIS & FLORENCE LOUIS-EDUOARD



The services sector accounted for almost 71% of global GDP in 2010. Trade in services has increased from US \$1.5b in 2000 to US \$3.9b in 2008 and US \$4.3b in 2012, representing a weighted average annual increase of 15.7%. While the services sector in the CARIFORUM region continues to grow in line with these global trends, trade in services from the region comprises a very small portion of total international trade.

The CARIFORUM-European Union Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), which is based on reciprocity and transparency, provides an enhanced framework for trade and economic development between the EU and the CARIFORUM region. The signing of the EPA in 2008 marked the inclusion, for the first time, of commitments of access for service providers and investors as well as provisions for development of e-commerce based on international best practice.

Within the EPA, CARIFORUM States opened 65 to 75% of their services markets focusing on sectors with the greatest impact on development and where investment and transfer of technology is appropriate, for example, business services, management consultancy, maritime transport, entertainment and tourism. With respect to the European Union, 90 % of its services markets were opened up, allowing for more favourable opportunities and market access for CARIFORUM export of services to the European Union.

Concomitantly, the EU has granted market access in 29 sectors to Contractual Service Suppliers (CSS) from the Caribbean. Services providers in these 29 sub-sectors are therefore allowed to stay in the EU for up to six months in a calendar year to provide their services. The 29 sub-sectors include legal advisory services in respect of international public law and foreign law (i.e. non-EU law); accounting and bookkeeping services, architectural services, urban planning and landscape architecture services, engineering services, computer and related services, advertising services, management consulting services, chef de cuisine services, fashion model services, education services, health services and entertainment services.

The EU has also liberalized 11 sectors for temporary entry by Independent Professionals (IPs) or self-employed persons without quotas or economic ceilings on the number of service

suppliers that can enter the EU markets.

For both the CSS and the IPs there are conditions of entry which must be met, e.g. there is the provision for an economic needs test by the intended host country in the EU before entry is granted to IPs and CSSs from the CARIFORUM region. Further details on entry requirements are laid out, generally in Articles 83 to 85, in sector specific Articles of the EPA and in Annex IV.

With respect to entertainment services, artists and cultural practitioners are granted access to the European markets. The cultural sector and entertainment services in particular are addressed through two instruments in the EPA. These are as follows:

- (i) Market access commitments by 26 European states for entertainment services from CARIFORUM states that are governed by the rules of the Services and Investment chapter and the general provisions of the EPA.
- (ii) A Special Protocol on Cultural Cooperation.

In the case of the EPA's market access provisions, Caribbean firms are allowed to invest in entertainment activities in Europe. For the first time, the EU and its States granted legally binding provisions on market access for the supply of entertainment services through the temporary entry of natural persons for up to six months. This is categorized as Contractual Service Suppliers (CSS) under the EPA and covers the following activities:

### **CPC 9619 Entertainment services** (other than audio-visual)

- 96191 Theatrical producer, singer group, band and orchestra entertainment services.
- 96192 Services provided by authors, composers, sculptors, entertainers and other individual artists.
- 96193 Ancillary theatrical services not elsewhere classified.
- 96194 Circus, amusement park and similar attraction services.
- 96195 Ballroom, discotheque and dance instructor services.
- 96199 Other entertainment services not elsewhere classified.

In addition, the Protocol on Cultural Cooperation provides for greater cooperation on all cultural fronts. It facilitates those who wish to enter the EU for other cultural activities, including collaborating with creative persons. It provides a framework for temporary movement and training of artists and other cultural practitioners in performing and visual arts, and contains special provisions on the audio-visual sector.

Historically, and as a result of EU-wide policies, market access commitments have not been allowed in the audio-visual sector in any preceding trade agreement between the Caribbean and Europe. However, the EPA Protocol on Cultural Cooperation provides possibilities for collaboration with European producers in order to facilitate access into the EU for CARIFORUM audio-visual material through special mechanisms.

Article 5 requires parties to the Protocol to encourage negotiation of new, and implementation of existing co-production agreements between one or several Member States of the EU and one or several signatory CARIFORUM States, including through granting of preferential treatment and support through organization of festivals, seminars and similar initiatives. Article 6 builds on the provisions in Article 5 by requiring the parties to the Protocol to encourage the promotion of their respective territories as locations for the purpose of shooting cinematographic films and television programmes, including cooperation to allow temporary importation from the territory of one party to the territory of the other party, the necessary technical material and equipment.

In particular, co-produced audio-visual products and services involving European and CARIFORUM creative teams will qualify as domestic productions and meet the audio-visual content rules in all EU states and in the CARIFORUM region. Through the Protocol, artists and other cultural practitioners (who are not involved in commercial activities in the EU) will be able to enter the EU space to collaborate on specific projects and training exchanges. These persons will be allowed to stay in the EU for periods up to 90 days in any 12-month period. This is of significant importance to the CARIFORUM private sector in the context of the modern knowledge-based







economy being pursued by the region.

Services providers from CARIFORUM States have already shown evidence of great dynamism and potential in these liberalized sectors.

### Selected Sectoral Indications Computer and Information Services

There is already evidence of intra-regional activity with firms in Barbados and Jamaica providing computer software solutions and related services to businesses in other CARIFORUM States. Off-shore data processing companies and call centres are also well established in the region and create sources of employment for many citizens. All EU Member States have granted market access for computer and information services.

### Education Services

As a destination for foreign direct investment, the region has seen increasing evidence of higher education facilities from the United States being established as Foreign Affiliates (FAs) in the region. In such cases, the education services provided to the non-resident students and the living expenses of the students are exports of education tourism services for the region. The EPA provisions can result in similar trends in attracting Foreign Affiliates from EU Member States. The EPA offers opportunities in the provision of training, as well as domiciles for offshore education/training institutes and the provision of general administrative services to support offshore education institutes. For example, businesses/investors in the region can pursue opportunities through establishing commercial presence (mode 3) or otherwise partnering with investors in Europe to establish training institutions to teach

EU residents subjects including Caribbean cooking, Caribbean culture and so on, both in the CARIFORUM region and in the EU. An Institute for Learning of Caribbean Culture, for example, to include dialects, music, flora and fauna, could be established either in the EU or in a CARIFORUM State, as a joint venture investment with CARIFORUM and EU interests.

In addition, access granted under the EPA by several EU Member States at different levels of education from primary to university, though with varying levels of exceptions, should allow instructors from the region to seize opportunities to teach at institutions in Europe or in the region through movement of natural persons (mode 4), and through the internet platform (mode 1).

### Health Services

The Health/Medical Tourism Services sector offers several opportunities in relation to development of businesses which offer natural remedies and spa facilities in the health and wellness tourism niche in the region. There has been a trend towards location of health rehabilitation and wellness centres as Foreign Affiliates from developed to developing countries, including to some CARIFORUM States. In such cases the expenditure by non-resident "patients" is classified as receipts from tourism for the host country and of course has a multiplier effect as well.

In addition to evidence of direct investments in offshore rehabilitation clinics in several CARIFORUM States, there is also increasing evidence of use of technology at those facilities by medical practitioners located in different parts of the world to undertake real time joint patient management. This offers promise for

both health tourism and exports of computer and information services from the region. Given the region's emerging reputation as a wellness destination and the increasing cost of health care in Europe and globally, the potential for growth in exports of health services by region is tremendous.

Location of such educational and health facilities would also stimulate and nurture market demand in the EU for cultural services from the CARIFORUM region.

### Cultural Services

The Cultural Industries Sector in CARIFORUM region includes song writing, live performance and recording of music, local production of audiovisual products and location filming, arts and crafts, multimedia and literature. The contribution of exports of cultural services to value added in the region varies from being very significant in some including Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago to not so significant based on available statistics in some of the other States. All States have identified cultural industries as having tremendous export growth potential through FTAs being entered into including the EPA.

Every CARIFORUM State has an annual Carnival, and several other annual festivals which all embrace and provide marketing opportunities for most of the cultural services listed above, and which are more and more, being showcased as tourism events. Under the EPA, there is the opportunity for the regional private sector to partner with the national festival promotion agencies in CARIFORUM States and with counterparts in EU markets towards organizing one major annual cultural event reciprocally. Also, to make promotion

of these festivals more cost effective, service providers in the region could develop more fringe activities around the festivals through joint venture investments with investors from the EU; a forum for forging such partnerships could be included as an agenda item at the annual event to be organised or developed.

In addition to festivals several of the region's performing groups and artists especially in the field of music are already penetrating markets in the US, Africa and the EU.

Importantly such services/activities developed and cultural activities exported through CSS or IPs must continue to meet international standards.

### Sports tourism

Export earnings from sporting events have been evident in the region through movement of natural persons, e.g. when Usain Bolt of Jamaica returned home with earnings for outstanding performances at the 2012 Summer Olympics in the UK. More resources need to be allocated to developing and maintaining of sporting facilities in all CARIFORUM States. In most CARIFORUM States this is the responsibility of resource strapped public agencies. The EPA makes provisions under which investors in the EU may be induced into partnerships with local investors in developing much needed sporting facilities.

### Conclusion

The highlighted market opportunities can exist only if international standards are met. The private sector is urged to get involved in making the necessary business investments to continue to meet and maintain international best practice and certification standards. Under the technical barriers to trade component of the 10th EDF, projects being implemented seek to:

- Strengthen the metrology infrastructure within the region;
- Strengthen and harmonise the standardization infrastructure;
- Operationalize regional schemes for accreditation, certification and conformity assessment; and develop

and operationalise a regional scheme for certification and conformity assessment;

- Build awareness, strengthen the information and communication infrastructure and develop a coordinated knowledge management system;
- Strengthen institutions such as the CARICOM Regional Organization for Standards and Quality (CROSQ) Secretariat, The Dominican Institute for Quality (INDOCAL) and the National Standards Body (NSBs) from an organizational level, as well as to develop a regional framework for market surveillance.

At the regional level also, the trade support agencies need to continue to invest resources in twinning businesses/professionals with relevant institutions/agencies in the EU and in providing the necessary market intelligence. The Caribbean Spa and Wellness Association (C-SWA) should endeavour to provide technical assistance to its national chapters e.g. to the recently formed Dominica Spa Health and Wellness Association (D-SHWA) and embark on a campaign to encourage establishment of similar chapters in all other CARIFORUM States.

Joint regional promotion campaigns targeting EU markets need to be organized on a more regular basis, possibly twice annually, with alternating sector focus and with different segments of the private sector taking a lead role. The issue of access to suitable capital for addressing business development challenges must be addressed with increased urgency as the region needs to continue to enhance its competitiveness as a destination for foreign investors and to enhance business viability generally. This will require strong support from national business support organizations as well as regional agencies such as the Caribbean Export Development Agency.

Also, the approach and instruments available to the development banks in the region, to carry out their mandate of contributing to economic development and poverty

alleviation, may need to be revisited. Private sector financial institutions would also be well advised, within the framework of their mandatory financial prudence guidelines, to allocate a limited share of their, often reported, excess liquidity to establishing creative financial instruments for financing enhancement of export competitiveness of businesses in the region. When co-production treaties are completed between individual EU Member States and Caribbean States or region, it will also become possible for Caribbean audiovisual producers to access funding for creative projects. CARIFORUM States, in the spirit of the provisions of the EPA must support private sector initiatives to secure co-production treaties.

There is also an urgent need to provide market research information to performing artists in the region in order to link them with producers in the EU. The region also needs to better document and package all aspects of its cultural heritage in a manner that allows development of a certified teaching syllabus in these areas.

The Protocol on Cultural Cooperation (discussed above) stipulates that artists and cultural practitioners have to be registered and/or certified across the region. This condition should be addressed through the establishment of a regional registry of artists and other CSS and IPs who succeed in accessing EU markets with their services, and also those who attempted and failed and the reasons why they failed. Furthermore, transparency in application of entry requirements across borders in all States that are party to the EPA must be ensured by the national authorities to facilitate hassle-free travel by CSSs and IPs to provide their services.

All these efforts will require increased investments in developing the enabling environment to nurture the existing entrepreneurial spirit in the private sector. Considerable funds have been allocated under the 10th EDF for this purpose. The region must ensure that the desired results of these resource allocations are met.

Ms Lucilla Lewis possesses several years of experience in undertaking social and economic research particularly on challenges faced by Small Island Developing States (SIDS). She has worked in the areas of trade policy and related capacity building assignments. Ms Lewis holds an MSc in Economics and is a Certified Management Consultant (CMC).

Ms Florence Louis-Edouard is a Senior Trade expert with 10 years' experience in trade and export development, regional integration, private sector development, projects design and implementation, monitoring and evaluation, capacity building, trade in services and trade negotiations, among others.



# on the right track: MVP boosting the business of sport

BY STEPHANIE BISHOP



Image provided by MVP Track Club





With the motto “Whatever you do, do well,” four men with a vision started a club in 1999 at Wolmer’s Boys’ School in Kingston Jamaica, which would eventually burgeon into one of the Caribbean’s most successful athletic ventures.

### The starting blocks

Paul Francis, Stephen Francis, David Noel and Bruce James established the Maximising Velocity and Power (MVP) Track and Field Club because they wanted to see Jamaican athletes develop and progress beyond high school.

Bruce James, President of MVP said, “We felt that we had quite a bit of success in producing athletes who would get scholarships to universities in the United States. However, we found that they did not develop as well as we thought they should have.” He added, “Our expectation was that when they left high school they would continue on a certain trajectory, but instead they plateaued.”

Prior to the formation of MVP Track and Field Club, the business environment for athletics in Jamaica was primarily a system that shipped athletes out to overseas universities to train and study after high school.

James and company had consistently proven that they were good enough to train athletes up to that level, but what was needed was a structure to take those athletes to the next level—while keeping them in Jamaica.

### Jumping the Hurdles

The transformation envisaged did not come without challenges. Jamaica already had a rich sporting history with athletes who had gone through the process of completing high school in Jamaica, receiving scholarships to the US, competing in the World Championships and

winning Olympic medals.

“People didn’t believe that what we were doing was feasible, and they felt that anything we did was going to spoil that legacy. So the buy-in from investors was never there,” James said.

To overcome these hurdles, MVP had to be innovative and strategic in its approach to recruitment. “We had to target second-tier athletes because the top-tier athletes had also bought into the view that they needed to get a scholarship to the US to be a world-class athlete.”

By 2001, MVP was beginning to face financial challenges. “Although we were attracting a few athletes here to join us, we didn’t have a way to maintain it,” James explained. “They were training on a dirt track at Wolmer’s, and a lot of them were now missing the opportunity to go to university. So we had to find a way to sustain what we had.”

It was then that business partner and coach Stephen Francis decided to approach the University of Technology (U-Tech) with an offer they couldn’t refuse. He would offer his IAAF-certified training skills for free, with the condition that the university allowed MVP athletes to train at the grounds and enroll in classes there.

As a result, Asafa Powell became one of the club’s first recruits in September that year. James said, “I believe that if we did not have the opportunity to train at U-Tech, we would not have been able to attract or recruit athletes like Asafa. So 2001 was a watershed year for us.”

### Transitioning from Sport to Business

During the 2000 Sydney Olympics, Jamaican athletes who lived and trained outside of





Image provided by MVP Track Club



Jamaica earned 100% of the medals the country received. By the 2008 Beijing Games, 80% of the medal winners were living and training in Jamaica. They included Usain Bolt, Brigitte Foster-Hylton, Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce, Asafa Powell, Sherone Simpson, Melaine Walker and Shericka Williams.

"I can't say that MVP was responsible for Usain Bolt staying in Jamaica, but I dare say that because we were able to establish the club, the possibility of being able to stay in Jamaica became an option and was now up for serious consideration."

MVP also created an opportunity to take

sports beyond recreation to a viable business venture. The club showed Jamaica and the region that Jamaican coaches, managers, and facilities could be the very best in the world. This is continually demonstrated in the breaking of world and Olympic records and the winning of medals.

"Anyone in the region can do what we did. Certainly now there is a proliferation of clubs as a result of what MVP has done, and other Caribbean countries can follow suit."

James is also of the view that this transformation can extend beyond athletics to include other sporting disciplines, as long as the right model is in place and managed appropriately.

### Competitive Advantage

That model has garnered MVP undeniable success in the club's 14-year history. James also cites two reasons for their continued achievements both on and off the track: their team and infrastructure. "A track and field club, or any sports club, can only be as successful as their coaching staff, and we have the very best in the world. We also have a structure that works, meaning that in addition to great coaches and great athletes, we have an infrastructure that supports them."

MVP is an all-inclusive track club that seeks to handle the everyday affairs of athletes, such as accommodation, academics, and



meals for student-athletes, and financial, tax and legal advice for the professional athlete.

"In other clubs, athletes may have a different relationship for every aspect they encounter outside of athletics, but here at MVP we handle everything in one place so that our athletes can concentrate on training without the added distractions."

### On the right track

James believes that athletes have made a significant impact on the country's brand. "When our athletes run across the finish line and are successful, they are adding positive value to 'Brand Jamaica'."

This is also translated into the economic viability of sports tourism within that country and potentially throughout the

region. According to the Jamaica Tourist Board, approximately 1.3 million tourists visited Jamaica in 2012. It is a widely held belief that these figures would increase exponentially, with the development of a national sports tourism policy that sets the parameters for enhancing the collaboration between tourism and sports, which effectively harnesses the Jamaican sport product.

James remarked that the Caribbean is on the right track as a "natural tourist destination," and given the innate and incredible sporting talent of our region's athletes, "someone can find a way to marry our great sporting history with our unique tourism product."

He added, "I really believe that our contribution to sports tourism is ensuring that our [regional] athletes are the very best in the world. Then the tourism marketers and the public relations machines can use

our success to promote the different tourism products to the various countries."

### Steps to Success

Today, MVP Track and Field Club has approximately 100 students on its training roster, of whom 40 are professional athletes. In addition to Jamaican athletes, the club also has an enrolment of athletes from Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, France, Germany and South Africa.

James offers the following advice to sport entrepreneurs: "The first step is self-confidence: you have to believe you have the ability to do something. Next, dream big: you don't just want to train an athlete to make Olympic standards. You need to believe your athletes would break records. Don't set low targets. Finally, teamwork: work with a group of competent people who you can trust."

Stephanie Bishop is a Communications Advisor at the Caribbean Export Development Agency. She is a development communications specialist with over 10 years professional experience and holds a Masters in International Affairs.



Image provided by MVP Track Club



# one-on-one with two-time olympic champion shelly-ann fraser-pryce

BY STEPHANIE BISHOP



When you consider the dominance of Jamaican athletes in short sprints during the 21st century, it's hard to believe that before 2008 no Jamaican had ever won an Olympic 100-metre gold medal. That year, however, everything changed when a virtually unknown five-foot, 21-year-old named Shelly-Ann Fraser helped Jamaica sweep the short sprints, along with country mates Usain Bolt (100 and 200 metres) and Veronica Campbell-Brown (200 metres).

Six years after becoming the first Caribbean woman to win the Olympic 100-metre sprint, Fraser-Pryce has gone on to successfully defend that title during the 2012 London Olympics, becoming only the third woman in history to win two consecutive 100-metre events at that level. In 2013, she also became the first female sprinter to win gold medals in three sprint events in a single World Championship. Because of her speed and petite frame, she is called the "Pocket Rocket."

Fraser-Pryce won her first international medal during the Central American and Caribbean (CAC) Junior Championships in Barbados in 2002. This was just the beginning of an illustrious career in athletics spanning over 13 years, and she has amassed some 16 medals.

Coached by the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF)-certified Stephen Francis, Fraser-Pryce is a member of the Maximising Velocity and Power (MVP) Track and Field Club, in Kingston Jamaica.

In addition to her honours on the track, Fraser-Pryce was also named the first United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) National Goodwill Ambassador for Jamaica

in 2010 and, most recently, the IAAF Female Athlete of the Year.

Undoubtedly, there is much more to Fraser-Pryce than what the world sees on the track, so Caribbean Export sat down for a one-on-one with the Caribbean sprint queen.

### **What has your professional athletics journey been like since joining the MVP Track and Field Club?**

Since joining MVP in 2006, the journey has been very successful. I have been able to train with some of the world's best athletes such as Asafa Powell, Brigitte Foster-Hylton, and Sherone Simpson, and it has given me a tremendous amount of respect for these athletes, and how hard they work. This has also given me the drive to perform at my very best.

My coach, Stephen Francis, is also a very wonderful coach. He is very intelligent and tenacious when it comes to paying attention to the details and making sure we get things right on the track. Our management team is also fantastic, as they manage every aspect of what we do here at MVP, in addition to working with my agent for local and international meets.

### **Outside of athletics, with which other activities are you currently involved?**

Apart from track and field, there is my passion the Pocket Rocket Foundation. This has been a dream that I wanted to fulfill for a while. I waited until I won that gold medal (in London) because it came with so much more that was able to help me in this endeavour.

With my Foundation, we especially want to help student athletes because I know how difficult it can be to follow your dreams while facing challenges. We found that some of the best athletes are coming from the inner city or single-parent homes and that they are struggling to link education with sports because the resources are not there. So I decided to start the Foundation to create lasting change, through education and sports, in the lives of student-athletes. We also want to extend it beyond athletics to include netball, football, tennis, cricket, et cetera.

Digicel, Grace Kennedy, Nike and Sagicor have been fantastic sponsors and I hope that more of corporate Jamaica can get involved, because when they help these students, they help Jamaica.

In addition to my Foundation, I have a hair store called Chic Hair. It caters to the woman who wants to change her look, or adapt to the weather. Something adaptable yet fashionable; we are also branching out (in December 2013) to include a full service beauty salon.

### **What are some of the challenges that young athletes face, female in particular, on the global stage?**

As females, we face a lot of challenges in athletics. We go through so much more than our male counterparts, yet we have to rise against those challenges, while trying to meet them at their level. The males get more attention than the females in athletics, but we are enduring some of the same training.

Further, we are competing on the track amongst ourselves, but we are also competing





Image provided by Pocket Rocket Foundation



Image provided by Pocket Rocket Foundation

to be on the same level as the men. We can understand not getting the same amount of pay because the men are breaking records every year, and the female records are so far out there, it's like we're chasing a ghost! Yet we still aspire to be like them and this is why I think we still deserve the recognition.

**What advice would you give for overcoming some of these barriers?**

It is important to work hard and be dedicated. Honestly, we are not alone in the challenges we face today, as the athletes before us endured the same thing but overcame because of their determination.

**Given all the success you are currently attaining what has been the single most important lesson?**

Whatever you want to achieve is attainable if you learn to follow good advice and instructions. Sometimes you may feel that you have all the answers, but it is important to put your ego aside and listen to those who genuinely want to help you.

**As an accomplished athlete, what recommendations do you have for developing the sports tourism industry in the Caribbean?**

I think more needs to be done about sports tourism in Jamaica. We need to capitalize on "Brand Jamaica". Have our athletes endorse the Jamaican products. When we go abroad, we see an abundance of Jamaican shirts and merchandise but we are not maximizing on it here in Jamaica especially given our success in other sports such as cricket and football, not just athletics. The same can be said for the Caribbean, if there is a system put in place to showcase our athletes and our sports persons not only can it help our tourism industry but also potentially become a major economic stimulator.

**Where do you see yourself professionally or personally in five years?**

I am one of those God-fearing persons who believe that my purpose in life is to help and to support others as much as I can. I want to work with children and who knows. Who knows? I

may run for (the office of the) Prime Minister.

Track and field is just a stepping-stone in the process, but it gives me the platform I need to put the resources in place to get things done and help as much as I can. I especially want to be in a position to help young girls realize their dreams and passions, because passion breeds success.

For me, training is my safe ground. It really is my passion and I enjoy it. So I want our young people to be able to follow their dreams.

**What is your equation for success?**

Passion: don't think about the money just think about the love for what you do.

Commitment: when you think you can't go anymore, that is when you give your all. Push for those last 10 seconds whether it is for getting that promotion, that degree or crossing the finish line for gold.

Confidence: believing in yourself, knowing your ability and work towards your dreams.

## PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Nationality	Jamaican		
Born	December 27, 1985		
Residence	Kingston, Jamaica		
Height	5ft. 0 in. (1.52 metres)		

## SPORTS

Sport	Running		
Event(s)	100 metres, 200 metres		
Club	MVP Track and Field Club		
Personal Records	10.70 (100m), 22.09 (200m)		

## MEDAL RECORD

Event	1st	2nd	3rd
Olympic Games	2	2	0
World Championships	5	2	0
CARIFTA Games Juniors (U20)	1	0	1
CAC Junior Championships (U17)	1	0	0
World Athletics Final	1	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>

## COMPETITIONS

2012 London Olympics	100m, 200m, 4x100m relay		
2008 Beijing Olympics	100m		
2013 Moscow World Championships	100m, 200m, 4x100m relay		
2011 Daegu World Championships	4x100m relay		
2009 Berlin World Championships	100m, 4x100m relay		
2007 Osaka World Championships	4x100m relay		
2009 Thessaloniki World Athletics Final	100m		
2008 Stuttgart World Athletics Final	100m		
2013 IAAF Diamond League	100m, 200m		
2012 IAAF Diamond League	100m, 200m		
2005 Tobago CARIFTA Games	100m, 4x100m relay		
2002 Barbados CAC Junior Championships	4x100m relay		

## AWARDS/HONOURS

IAAF Female Athlete of the Year	2013		
UNICEF National Goodwill Ambassador	2010		
Grace Goodwill Ambassador	2010		

## ENDORSEMENTS

Nike, Digicel, GraceKennedy			
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## CHARITIES

UNICEF Jamaica, Pocket Rocket Foundation			
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Stephanie Bishop is a Communications Advisor at Caribbean Export. She is a development communications specialist with over 10 years professional experience and holds a Masters in International Affairs.



# the Caribbean: sun, sea, sand and sport

BY JOELLEN R. LARYEA



All images provided by Caribbean Premier League



T20 cricket has reignited the imagination and draws crowds back to the stadiums for fast-paced games. Think of what it can do for tourism and the economy!



When people think of cricket in the Caribbean, often it conjures up images of children playing on the pristine sandy beaches against a backdrop of turquoise water with the sun shining endlessly against it.

That's a rather romantic image of yesteryear, as today you are more likely to find children playing football on the beach and basketball in the parks.

For quite a few years, regional and even international cricket had been played in the West Indies, more often than not, to half-empty stadiums, but the inaugural Caribbean Premier League (CPL) Twenty20 (T20) competition finally reignited the imagination of disgruntled fans.

In July and August of 2013, the Caribbean witnessed sold-out stadiums, captivated crowds and international investment far surpassing what the organisers had ever expected. The CPL represents for the region a great opportunity to exploit sport tourism, which is a fast growing sector of the global travel industry.

It was in September 2012 that the West Indies Cricket Board announced that it had finalized an agreement with Ajmal Khan, founder of Verus International, to fund the league which operates under a franchise model comprising six teams—the Antigua Hawksbills, the Barbados Tridents, the Guyana Amazon Warriors, the Jamaica Tallawahs, the Saint Lucia Zouks and the Trinidad and Tobago Red Steel.

T20 was introduced in 2003 as a new format for the game, a fast and furious version that has become an instant success with cricket fanatics, and has also delivered significant value to multiple partners—team owners,

broadcasters and sponsors alike. Global interest has grown significantly and this high-energy game has a natural home within the Caribbean, synonymous with vibrant, colourful Carnivals and a party atmosphere. High energy is exactly what was experienced at every CPL T20 game that was played during the summer of 2013. "There is nowhere in the world that I have ever experienced an atmosphere like what we had at CPL," said CPL Chief Executive Officer Damien O'Donohoe in a recent interview.

The T20 series hosted more than 250,000 fans across six countries and 36 million viewers worldwide. Approximately US\$4.868 million was spent in and around the stadiums, which could result in an economic impact of US\$91 million when hotels, travel, food and other services are taken into consideration.

These figures cannot be taken lightly, especially in view of the ratio of regional visitors to international tourists attending the games. As much as 90% of league has been funded from within the region, with Digicel as the global sponsor and Guyana's Limacool as the title sponsor. The success proves that there is spending power within the region, O'Donohoe said, and "with the right structure and the right team, we can deliver a world-class event in the Caribbean as the CPL is second only to the Indian Premiere League."

It is the production of world-class events in the Caribbean that will support the development of the sports tourism sector. The precedent has been set with the CPL and the goal should be to continue developing this product to further stimulate regional expenditure and to attract greater international investment to support the local economies.

The CPL has already seen investment from









Hollywood stars Gerard Butler and Mark Wahlberg, who have stakes in the Jamaica Tallawahs and the Barbados Tridents teams respectively. Long-term Caribbean investor, owner and founder of the Virgin Group Sir Richard Branson has invested in the Antigua Hawksbills and is a tournament sponsor.

Such celebrity endorsements, combined with the opportunity for the CPL to be seen by as many as 80 million via ESPN, give rise to endless possibilities when it comes to boosting sports tourism, international business, attracting foreign direct investment into the Caribbean, and the exportation of our goods and services.

Increased media exposure of sporting events is critical to raise the profile of sports. Live coverage will always be preferred by viewers, and thus the time zone difference presents a challenge for the target markets that are most interested in the main international sporting events. For example, UK fans are sleeping whilst sport in the Caribbean is being played. Still, an increasing number of sports fans want to experience live events.

The media have the ability to create national and international icons of professional athletes, which engenders greater demand, as fans want to see their sporting idols in

the flesh. Such celebrity status translates into an immense opportunity for the CPL as well as other sports. Carole Beckford, publicist for Usain Bolt, noted that at least 450 elite Caribbean athletes are featured on television year-round—from Jamaica's Bolt to the US Virgin Islands' basketball superstar Tim Duncan. It is estimated that 12 million international sports tourism trips are made each year, a niche which represents 14% of the global travel and tourism market which is expected to grow around 6% annually over the next four years.

Sporting events are being made more appealing to attend, with producers listening to the needs of their audience and providing greater levels of comfort. CPL T20 has been truly cemented as a Caribbean family event, with grandparents, parents, children and women (24% of the audience) attending the matches. O'Donohoe noted that no costs were spared to ensure the overall experience was positive, with spectacular firework displays and entertainment to support the cricket.

The CPL's scheduling during the height of Carnival season enables other events, such as festivals and concerts, to be created around it, further enticing visitors to the region. Sporting events bundled with the entire creative sector makes a very attractive destination.

The CPL is now tasked to build its brand to capture the minds of tourists and those interested in the Caribbean. The CPL has the potential to grow beyond the Caribbean shores. About 1200 cricket clubs have been identified in New York alone, indicating there is a strong interest in what many would consider non-traditional markets. The Indian Premiere League (IPL) was valued in 2010 at US \$4.13 billion by the UK-based brand consultancy Brand Finance, and although we can't compare the CPL to the IPL because of the sheer size difference, the global cricket market is huge and available for the Caribbean to seize a sizeable portion to significantly contribute to the region's economies.

With the support of the governments and tourism boards, the CPL can assist in putting the Caribbean in the homes of 80 million people worldwide, greatly increasing the potential for avid cricket fans travelling to the region or even vacationers who simply want to enjoy a different side of Caribbean life.

After watching the scenes of jubilation, and the electrifying atmosphere witnessed in 2013, who wouldn't want to come to the Caribbean and experience the music, the culture, the food, the Carnival, the people and, of course, the home of the best cricket in the world!

JoEllen R. Laryea is the PR, Communication and Marketing Advisor at The Caribbean Export Development Agency and offers a wealth of international experience having worked with leading brands Nike, Sony and Apple.



# the creative industries: exploring opportunities

BY ERICA K. SMITH



Creative industries can be defined as “those requiring creativity, skill and talent, with potential for wealth and job creation through the exploitation of their intellectual property” and include advertising, software development and architecture. Film, music, publishing and the visual and performing arts can be defined as cultural industries, a sub-set of the creative industries.

According to UNCTAD, international trade in creative goods rose from US \$198 billion in 2002 to US \$454 billion in 2011. In the Caribbean, exports of creative goods in 2008 were US \$548 million while imports stood at US \$1.2 billion.

The World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) commissioned a number of studies between 2007-2013 to ascertain the economic contribution of the copyright-based industries, which would include cultural industries such as film and music publishing. The results showed that these industries made a substantial contribution to the GDP of many Caribbean countries ranging from 3.3% in Dominica, to as much as 8% in Saint Lucia. Moreover, in St Vincent and the Grenadines

the cultural industries accounted for 4.9% of total employment.

Thus, within CARIFORUM the main focus has been on the cultural industries, with the aim of taking advantage of the region’s rich diversity of cultural expressions. Examples of this can be seen in the region’s music and fashion industries which can be considered the largest and most internationally recognisable industries that fall within the culture sub-set.

## Regional Music

In the past decade, the level of exports from the music industry, specifically CD sales, has fallen dramatically; so too for the rest of the world. However, whilst the sale of digital music has compensated for this decline in other markets, the region has not experienced this shift. In fact, with the exception of, for example, CRS Music and Media in Barbados, very few Caribbean rights holders are active on the major digital distribution platforms which generate a considerable percentage of their overall revenue.

Another key area for rights holders to generate revenue is through live performances such

as festivals and concerts, particularly since in the Caribbean the relationship between music and the many carnivals is deeply rooted and inter-twined. Local carnivals act as an impetus for the creation of new musical content and provide opportunities for live performances locally, regionally and even internationally. Revenue can also be generated through performance royalties, to a lesser extent.

The global music copyright royalties market is worth approximately US \$7.7 billion, of which the Caribbean generates around US \$4 million. The management of regional Collective Management Organisations (CMOs) believes that the level of royalties currently collected in the Caribbean represents only half of what the market is worth.

The Caribbean faces some tough challenges as it relates to growth of the music sector.

Recessionary economic conditions have depressed the domestic live performance market as evidenced by the sharp decline in the number of performances in hotels and nightclubs. Artists have also reported fewer



opportunities for regional and international performances, coupled with stagnant performance fees that have not significantly increased since the 1990s.

It is important to note that the live performance market impacts the possibility of achieving international success. Based on the flow of performance royalties (live and radio), overall, the UK market has remained the strongest market internationally for Caribbean music, and despite fluctuations, there has been a net export of royalties.

In Barbados, based on royalty statements provided to the local CMO, the highest value of royalty earnings per annum for the top three songwriters was during the late 1990s and early 2000s. During this period, royalties were as high as US \$100,000 when there were several bands touring internationally, and regularly releasing music. Consequently, a decline in performance activity in the domestic market is likely to result in a decline in the level of earnings from the international market.

This correlation between local performance and international success must be recognized

in order to overcome the obstacles that are preventing the advancement of the regional music industry.

Talent scouts from the international music industry often expect artists to have a solid local audience. Artists are encouraged to take advantage of opportunities to perform locally as this contributes to their overall skills development and can expand their repertoire, since they would need to compose new material for their markets in order to keep live performances alive and in demand. International royalty earnings have demonstrated little diversity over the years, and it can therefore be argued that this is an indication that new music is not penetrating the international market.

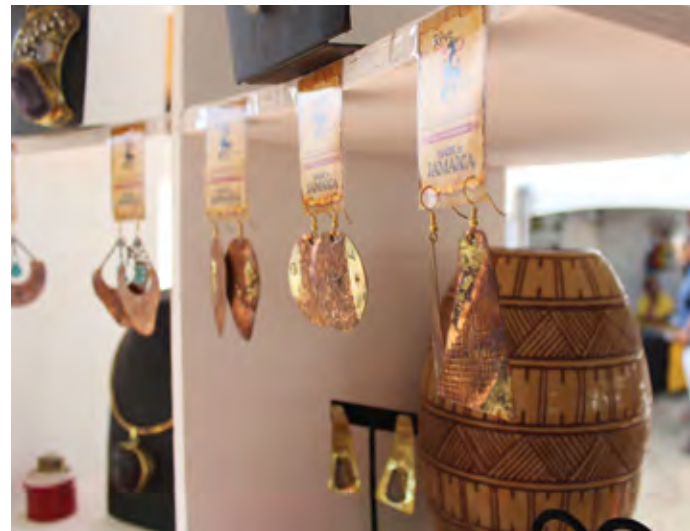
This focus on the development of the local market may translate to increased diversity of music available throughout the year and the building of a solid domestic fan base. Upon achieving this success, artists should then look toward the regional market for performance opportunities at carnivals, for example, which will again add to the expansion of their fan base and generate further income.

Quite often the region's focus is on participation in carnival-type activities in the diaspora markets, such as Notting Hill Carnival in London, UK and the Labour Day parade in New York, USA; however, these types of free street events, unlike festivals with gate receipts, do not generate substantial revenue or royalties in these countries for many artists and do not facilitate the exposure of a diversity of Caribbean genres.

With the scores of tourists from Europe visiting the region annually, significant efforts must be made to penetrate the buoyant and abundant festival stages of the UK, France, Sweden and Germany, in view of their mature markets and receptiveness to compensate generously for performances and royalty fees. Therefore, efforts should instead be redirected to attending the major trade fairs, the World Music Expo (WOMEX) and Babel Med Music for promotion and networking opportunities with festival directors in order to increase participation opportunities in festivals.

However, radio airplay remains the most important form of exposure providing







tremendous promotional value, and an important source of royalty revenue both within the Caribbean and internationally. Therefore, artists should work toward gaining exposure on European airwaves in particular where the demand for Caribbean music is relatively strong. This task, while difficult, can be achieved by: seeking collaboration with European artists to do joint works; sponsoring radio shows which feature Caribbean music and building a network of European radio programmers to whom music can be distributed.

Developing the live music market at the domestic, regional and international level cannot be ignored as it has an important role to play in the overall growth of the Caribbean music industry. Internationally, the primary effort should be placed on the European market for a number of reasons. Europe has an apparent interest in "world" music generally. Evidence of the flow of royalties suggest an interest in Caribbean music. Europe also has a substantial number of festivals and of course, the access provided under the CARIFORUM-EU Economic Partnership Agreement should be taken advantage of.

Individual artists cannot achieve the type of activity recommended for increased festival participation and international airplay on their own. At the policy and institutional level, the region must consider investment in a Caribbean Music Export Office, either as an independent entity or under the umbrella of the Caribbean Export Development Agency (Caribbean Export) or similar entity, which is responsible for the recommended actions. This type of organisation exists at the national and regional level worldwide and the continued absence of such within the Caribbean is notable.

## Regional Fashion

The global apparel market is estimated to be worth US \$1.1 trillion annually. Unfortunately there is limited statistical data relating to the economic contribution and employment within this sub-sector. It has been reported that between 2003 and 2007, apparel exports in Jamaica fell by 87% to just

US \$1.5 million. In the case of jewellery, figures from 2006 indicated Jamaican exports of US \$2.1 million. However, this figure is inclusive of items imported and re-exported through duty-free shopping, which could suggest that locally produced Jamaican products were insignificant. Most recently, in 2014, it was reported that the Trinidad and Tobago fashion industry employs more than 11,000 people either directly or indirectly, generating just under US \$4 million annually.

Across the region the premier showcase for Caribbean fashion has been Caribbean Fashion Week (CFW) held in Jamaica, providing a platform for regional designers to display to a global audience. The success of CFW has influenced the establishment of similar events throughout the Caribbean. These events, in addition to the participation of Caribbean designers in major international fashion events such as New York Fashion Week, Miami Fashion Week, the Gallery during Berlin Fashion Week and regionally, Dominicana Moda in the Dominican Republic, are where regional designers have been able to promote their brands and generate international interest. Designers, such as Heather Jones of Trinidad and Tobago, who have frequently attended trade events in Europe, the United States and Asia have been particularly successful.

The challenge most regional designers are faced with when it comes to successfully establishing international presence is their production capacity constraints because of the limited regional manufacturing that is available. Caribbean designers are often confined to small niche markets that are less likely to order in large quantities. Designers would need to establish relationships with external manufacturers, in order to fulfil a large international order, should it be requested.

One country that can be utilized to address this very issue is Haiti, where there are comparatively cheap labour costs, and some large manufacturing companies that could support the mass production of goods. Caribbean designers should consider developing

relationships in Haiti and negotiating manufacturing agreements that would support the increased production required to grow international presence. In addition, Caribbean designers could also benefit from the Trade Preference Programmes that are in place for Haitian Textiles and Apparel with the United States, under which apparel imports from Haiti or 17 other Caribbean countries qualify for duty-free access.

Another means for designers to address capacity issues is through the licensing of designs which removes the need to enter manufacturing agreements. However, this requires good technical design skills, the ability to present portfolios and very importantly, an understanding of intellectual property rights from a legal and commercial perspective. This in turn requires the capacity to monitor licensees in order to ensure that the design brand retains a good reputation through consistent and quality manufacturing. In order for this approach to be successful, there must be high-level training on design, intellectual property rights and licensing for regional designers and/or a cadre of specialist advisors available.

Whether manufacturing or a design only strategy is adopted, a consistent presence at major regional and international events, as well as investment in branding and marketing is required. But in order to truly expand the sector, manufacturing solutions must be implemented and fortunately, these can be achieved regionally. Caribbean Export as the regional trade promotion organisation with the contacts and market knowledge of Haiti can provide assistance to designers and thus should be utilized.

What is apparent in both the music and the fashion industries is the need for sound knowledge and understanding of intellectual property rights. Particularly, design and copyright are the legal basis of the creative industries and thus should be fully embraced in all policies and strategies as they play a specific and critical role in the expansion of the regional design industry.

Erica K. Smith has been working in the creative sector for the past 15 years. Her academic background covers intellectual property law, sports law and international business. Her professional experience includes copyright licensing and management, regional and international consultancies in the creative industries in addition to the design, execution and implementation of training programmes.



# the voice of a region:

## Tessanne Chin's rise to prominence

BY STEPHANIE BISHOP



Image provided by NBC

In September 2013, a delightfully unassuming and completely unaffected songstress from Jamaica shot to stardom and became one of the Caribbean's biggest musical stories for that year. Tessanne Chin's stratospheric ascent from relative obscurity, even in her homeland, to international fame after her triumph on NBC's singing competition *The Voice*, has positioned her as the first Jamaican to win the competition and for a transformative career breakthrough in 2014.

## Musical Beginnings

Born in Kingston, Tessanne comes from a musical background. Her parents Richard and Christine Chin formed the world's first all-female ska band, The Carnations, which also featured her aunt Ingrid Chin, and other family members.

"It was absolutely awesome," Tessanne recounts. "I have happy memories of going to my parents' rehearsals, and that was the first time I picked up a microphone. I think what made it so natural was the fact that everyone was involved in the band...it was a real family affair."

Undoubtedly, Tessanne's background and culture significantly influenced her style of music.

"Growing up in Jamaica, music is the first thing you hear, and it affected my sound, but music is more than what you hear. In Jamaica, it is a way of life, the voice of the people."

Some of Tessanne's musical influences, besides her family, include international acts such as Celine Dion, Tina Turner and Michael Jackson, but inspiration also came from Jamaican legends Bob Marley, Jimmy Cliff, Toots, Third World, Marcia Griffith, and Diana King.

"I remember when Diana King first came on the scene, with her big music and big video. I remember thinking that this is someone I can understand and my sister [Tami Chynn] and I would write down every lyric because we wanted to sing just like her."

Marcia Griffith and Diana King also paved the way for Tessanne and other female artistes in Jamaica, but growth in an industry historically dominated by men is no easy feat. Tessanne, however, never let this reality daunt her dreams.

"I once heard Tanya Stephens say gender is not a stumbling block or a handicap, so I never looked at it that way. I believe that as long as you do your best in your craft, regardless of gender, you will succeed. We have so many great female artistes in reggae and in other genres, so I believe it is more to our advantage as women today in music."

## International Exposure

Tessanne was named *Caribbean Journal's* Artiste of the Year in December 2013 and also received a Gold Medal of the City of Kingston. Prior to this, the reggae-fusion artiste, opened for famous acts such as Patti Labelle, Peabo

Bryson, and Gladys Knight. She also toured for three years with Jamaican-born Grammy award-winning singer and actor Jimmy Cliff. However, in Jamaica, Tessanne's music received scant airplay.

"I will be the first person to admit that I was struggling and at the point in my career where I hit a glass ceiling. It felt like I was on a treadmill running, but not going anywhere. It was very frustrating, especially when you know the type of artiste you want to be."

Because Tessanne's talents weren't fully recognised in Jamaica, her mentor and longtime friend Shaggy encouraged her to audition for Season 5 of *The Voice* as a vehicle for showcasing her skills.

"Naturally, I was a bit apprehensive, and I knew I was going to get some backlash, but I also knew the reach that this show had, and I wanted to be a part of it. It was a chance to do something I'd never done, to get something I'd never gotten."

Today, Tessanne credits the competition with providing her the platform she needed to gain international market access. She is now able to work with some of the biggest names in producing and songwriting, including industry icons Diane Warren, Toby Gadd, Claude Kelly and Rock City.

"*The Voice* gave me an opportunity to display my diversity, sing other types of music, and show people I'm not just this girl from Jamaica that can sing reggae music. I love my music, I





Image provided by NBC

love reggae but this was not the only music I had a passion for or the only genre I wanted to sing. It gave me a voice, as cliché as it sounds, I wanted to be seen as a vocalist first and the competition gave me that exposure.”

During the three-month broadcast, Tessanne sang 13 songs, three of which reached the Top 10 on iTunes. With each performance on *The Voice*, Tessanne thrilled the audience, stunned the judges, and carried the hopes and dreams of an entire Caribbean region on her shoulders.

“To this day I am still bowled over by the support. At first, when you’re doing something like this, it is solely for you, but then when I saw the outpouring of love on Facebook and other social media outlets I realized that I had the chance to do something positive for my Jamaican and Caribbean people. It’s a humbling feeling and one that you don’t take for granted.”

Tessanne describes the aftermath of winning the competition as a “beautifully chaotic and wonderful time” in her life. Since then, she has been involved in numerous projects, including filming commercials, media appearances, and performances, including a concert hosted by the First Lady of the United States Michelle Obama at the White House.

“If someone told me a year ago [this would have happened] I would have laughed. Don’t get me wrong, I’m a big dreamer, but nothing prepared me for this. It was such a beautiful and humbling experience to not just be among President Obama and his wife, but also all of that wonderful talent.”

During the event, entitled “Women of Soul: In Performance at the White House,” Tessanne was featured alongside an impressive line-up of American music legends, including Melissa Etheridge, Aretha Franklin, Ariana Grande, Patti LaBelle, Jill Scott, and Janelle Monae.

Image courtesy of Official White House  
Photo by Chuck Kennedy

“When you work at something for so long and so hard, it feels incredible to see great things happening. I will treasure the experience for the rest of my life.”

### International Market Access Opportunities

Tessanne believes that her achievement on *The Voice* is more than just an anomaly. International markets are accessible for all Caribbean artistes, but the right tools are needed to ensure the maximum capitalization on opportunities, she said.

“I think social media is so powerful because it has made the world smaller. Today, artistes can reach out to millions worldwide. It’s important to know your brand and continue to push it. I have seen so many people move from overnight sensations to celebrities using this avenue; it shouldn’t be any different for us here in the region.”



Caribbean musicians are much more than the purview of reggae, dancehall, and soca, she added, although these genres have vastly influenced other types of music.

"Music is one of our biggest exports, and not just from Jamaica. We have something to offer the world that no one else can, and it's because of our culture, our heritage, and our people. It is unique and it is beautiful."

When people come to the region, it's for more than just sand, sea and sun; they come for the culture and music is a big part of that equation, she added. She pointed to the exploits of Rihanna and Bob Marley as examples of what the region has already achieved globally.

"What they have done is not simple, but they are paving the way for other Caribbean musicians to make something that is organic and that other people can relate to. Caribbean music is an emotion. It is

something you feel and experience in every part of your being."

### Next Steps and Keys to Success

Between performances and promotions for *The Voice*, Tessanne is in Los Angeles working on her debut album for Universal Republic.

"I'm full steam ahead with this album and I'm fully aware of the momentum behind me so I'm building on it, but at the same time I have so much love and respect for my fans that I want to take my time so I don't put out an album that is rushed. It has to truly be my best."

Throughout this journey, Tessanne has had a tremendous support system.

"In this industry, a strong network and unconditional support from family is everything. This is what helped my career for so long. There are times when it gets really

tough, but a lot of my strength, apart from God, comes from my husband and my family."

On her recipe for success, Tessanne credits hard work and dedication.

"When you are relentless, whatever you work hard at becomes a passion and you can't imagine yourself doing anything else. I don't have a back-up plan, music is my instrument."

In her habitually humble way, the Solid Agency artiste had words of encouragement for emerging regional artistes. "Take chances and believe in yourself and do things in alignment with what you want to achieve."

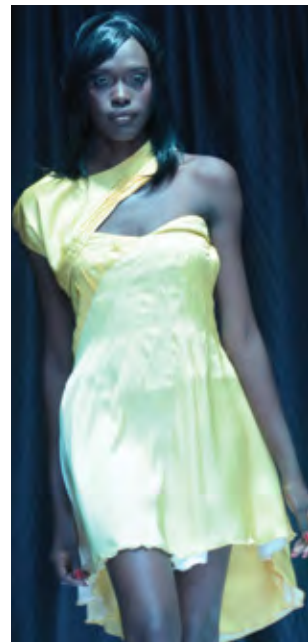
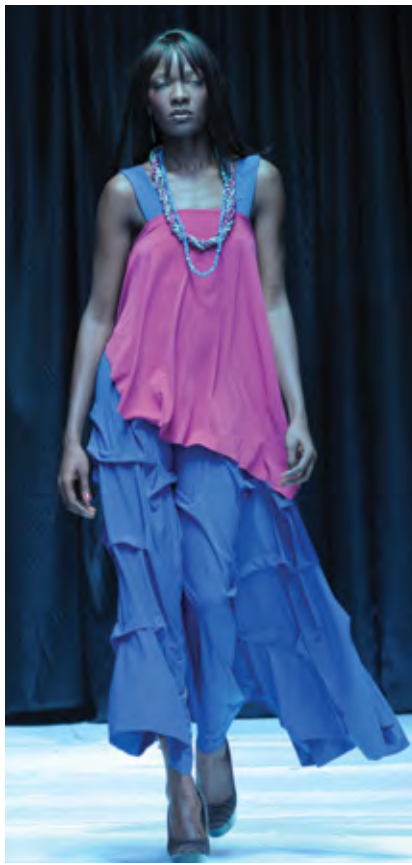
And for emerging female performers, she had some extra advice: "Just know who you are and continue to find out the kind of artiste you want to be, because if you don't, the world will decide it for you."

Stephanie Bishop is a Communications Advisor at the Caribbean Export Development Agency. She is a development communications specialist with over 10 years professional experience and holds a Masters in International Affairs.



# designing Haiti

BY JOELLEN R. LARYEA



All images provided by ModAyiti



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Since the catastrophic earthquake in 2010, the world has been gripped by Haiti, and dedicated to assisting in its recovery and redevelopment. The Haitian people are known for their resilience and creativity, so it is no wonder that the creative industries are being positioned to drive economic development.

In 2012, Haiti proudly staged its very first fashion week, also known as “ModAyiti” in Creole, in the centre of the recovering Port-au-Prince, just two years after the earthquake. The event provided local designers the opportunity to be noticed by international viewers, thanks to the attendance of international designers, guests and the press. The event was produced by the Haitian Centre for Support and Promotion of Enterprises (CHAPES) and the Haitian Network of Designers (HAND), which are playing an integral role in the development of the Haitian fashion industry.

*Caribbean Export* spoke to veteran designers Maïlle Figaro David, President of the Haitian Network of Designers (HAND) and Maguy Durcé, Vice President of HAND and CEO of ModAyiti, about the development of the Haitian garment design and manufacturing sector as a means to bolster their economy.

HAND is a non-profit association established in 2009 to unify Haitian designers and strengthen their capacity. The designers experienced “the same issues when it came to sourcing raw materials, promoting and selling their creations to international markets,” said David. Through the partnership between HAND and CHAPES, educational programmes, awareness campaigns, and market

research will now be available to support the development of the apparel, textiles, and craft sectors. CHAPES will provide the needed expertise in entrepreneurship training, project development, management and feasibility studies.

The team has secured funding from the Clinton Bush Haiti Fund to take ModAyiti a step beyond a yearly fashion event. The project will see the creation of a garment workshop facility that develops the skills of tailors and technicians who are required to support the growth of a garment manufacturing industry within Haiti. The ModAyiti Apparel Centre will provide Haiti’s talented textile professionals with the space, training, and resources needed, enabling them to bring their unique products to an international market.

The establishment of such a facility is significant for not only Haiti, but the region as a whole. The Haiti Hemispheric Opportunity through Partnership Encouragement Act (HOPE II) and the Haiti Economic Lift Programme Act (HELP) passed by the US Congress allows for quota-free access to the American market with generous rules of origin. Regional designers are encouraged to take advantage of such a facility for mass production. Moreover, the proximity of Haiti to North America allows for lower shipping costs and time-to-market. Haiti is well positioned to become the fashion manufacturing industry for the entire Caribbean region.

Culture and heritage are at the heart of every Haitian designer and this is proudly reflected through their work. Under the roof of ModAyiti, designers will come

together to design and produce a range of clothing, shoes, jewellery, and handbags for local and international markets. By means of ModAyiti’s expertise, designers and technicians will be provided with the tools to expand and standardise garment production using modern sewing equipment.

Haiti’s cultural intrigue will also contribute to the success of its creative industries. The mixture of cultures as a result of colonisation by both the Spanish and French, fused with African and voodoo influences, has given birth to a unique cultural heritage. Those outside of the region are fascinated by the colour, the creativity and flair that David believes is “innate in Haitians.” Durcé echoed these sentiments fervently, saying that the “difference is in the mind, in the creativity” of people from the Caribbean.

Haiti and the rest of the Caribbean’s creative sector is a niche poised to be exploited for the benefit of the region’s economy. David believes that two approaches are necessary for this to occur. One, there is a need to focus on developing high-end products because of the limited capacity of individual garment workshops to support large mass production orders. Two, increasing volume and building capacity for mass production is an area the ModAyiti Apparel Centre should focus on to bolster the sector; but it is a balancing act to ensure that both market segments can be pursued simultaneously.

One thing is certain; the fashion industry is no longer quiescent in Haiti, with the ModAyiti Apparel Centre scheduled for completion soon, which will increase Haiti’s competitive advantage in this niche sector.

JoEllen R. Laryea is the PR, Communication and Marketing Advisor at The Caribbean Export Development Agency and offers a wealth of international experience having worked with leading brands Nike, Sony and Apple.



# company to look out for:

## mag'art



### Company Name

MAG'ART

### Email Address

durce24@yahoo.com

### Chief Executive Officer

Maguy Durce

### Years in Existence

11 years

### Location

Haiti

### Product Summary

Apparel and accessories

### Export Markets

Dominican Republic, Miami, Tokyo

### Major Exporting Achievements

In November 2013, Durce was awarded the first prize Afro K 2013 at the fifth edition of the prestigious International Competition of the Afro Caribbean Fashion, organized by the Association Afro K in Paris, the fashion capital of the world. As the winner, she was given the opportunity to present her newest collection at London Fashion Week 2014.

### Market Entry Strategies:

MAG'ART has made a name through constant exposure at local, regional and international fashion shows. Durce's debut appearance was at the Haitian Femme de Democratie in 2003. Seven years later, after becoming a local fashion icon, MAG'ART burst on to the regional scene at the Islands of the World showcase, in the Bahamas. In 2011, Durce took MAG'ART to Miami Fashion Week and to another level. MAG'ART has since graced the runways at showcases across the region and in Europe. The year 2012 saw the inaugural staging of Haiti Fashion Week, organized by ModAyiti of which Durce is the Chief Operating Officer. The event garnered major international attention in



All images provided by MAG'ART



the wake of the devastating earthquake which affected the island in 2010.

### Greatest Exporting Lessons Learnt

It is key to target niche markets. As a designer one would, of course, like to export internationally and to be present in all markets, but, in order to survive, it is important to have a solid and growing fan base that you can constantly cater to.

Trade legislation has a tremendous impact on what is possible when it comes to exporting. It is important to be involved in the process of creating and refining the legal framework in which exporters can effectively operate. Equally important is the formation of bi-

national agreements in order to open up to other markets and to allow tax exceptions which can make exporting more feasible for designers and manufacturers.

### Support Received

Caribbean Export selected MAG'ART to be part of its designer delegation to Dominicana Moda 2013. The collection was showcased in the prestigious Designers' Mall. Through this experience, the line not only gained further exposure but very useful industry contacts from across the region and the world.

### General Recommendation on Support Needed by Exporters

Firms need support at all stages of the exporting process. Initially, they need to understand the demands and specifications of their markets. Once the enterprises have a clear idea of how to proceed with market penetration, they will require assistance with marketing in order to raise awareness about their brand and to target niche markets. Finally, when the much anticipated order comes in, firms will be in great need of support to secure subsidized raw materials to produce in an economically viable manner. In exporting, governmental support is required to create tax concessions and tariffs, so that exporting arrangements can be as lucrative as possible.



# creole music reaps benefits for the Dominican tourism industry

BY COLIN PIPER

In the mid-90s, Dominica was looking to improve its positioning in the tourism industry. This gem, replete with rivers, valleys, mountains and waterfalls, wanted to showcase more than its fair share of nature's bounty in order to grab mindshare and more foreign exchange from the tourism industry. In 1996, out of a new collective and creative thinking, the Dominica Festivals Commission was established to stage national and annual festivals in Dominica.

Dominica, the youngest island of the Caribbean archipelago, had created two musical genres namely Cadence-lypso in the mid-70s and Bouyon in the late-80s. To showcase a wealth of creativity and our Creolite, Dominica's World Creole Music Festival (WCMF) was conceptualized. Dominica's leadership role in shaping Creole music was considered a major force in world music and the island's geographic location, positioned between two major music consuming markets of Guadeloupe and Martinique, would provide the impetus for the growth of this new experience.

The festival was positioned to create a new buzz in Dominica and to help increase visitor arrivals by attracting a new and growing group of visitors

All images provided by  
Discover Dominica Authority



who were looking to consume indigenous musical idioms such as Creole music and the related offerings in Caribbean popular music. Dominica's independence was specifically chosen as the distinctive period for staging the event and to attract music aficionados who were searching for these unique musical forms and to experience a cultural milieu that was different and authentic. Careful consideration was given to the name and make-up of this festival so as to give it a particular identity and a comparative advantage against other prominent music festivals.

Since 1997, Dominica has staged one of the most indigenous music festivals in the Caribbean, highlighting the Creole musical idioms of Cadence-lypso and Bouyon from Dominica, Kompas from Haiti and Antillean Zouk from the French West Indies.

To add variety and to complement the infectious Creole rhythms, the festival has attracted a wide sampling of African, Latin and other Caribbean music. Since inception, the WCMF has lured the most significant artistes and performing talent representing this aspect of world music. Artistes such as Exile One, creators of Cadence-lypso; Kassav, the French Antilles Zouk band;

Haitian Kompas kings Tabou Combo; Carimi, and the current President Martelli; Louisaina zydeco group Buckwheat Zydeco, reggae stars Shaggy, Beenie Man, Damian Marley, Third World and Steel Pulse; and many top soca artistes including Destra and Machel Montano, and Haitian American superstar Wyclef Jean have all graced the WCMF stage.

In 2008, the Discover Dominica Authority was established as the tourism authority, and shortly thereafter, a Cabinet decision changed the Commission to a Committee, and placed it under the ambit of the Discover Dominica Authority. The change took place to establish a closer and tighter link between the authority responsible for developing and marketing the destination's tourism and the secretariat responsible for implementing the two marquis festivals of the island—Carnival and the World Creole Music Festival. Since then a third, Jazz'n Creole, has been established and will celebrate its fifth anniversary in 2014.

The World Creole Music Festival which celebrated its 17th staging in October 2013 is fulfilling much of its original mandate. This includes increasing visitor arrivals, creating a

world-class event to attract new audiences to the destination, building local capacity for festival tourism, providing exposure to unknown local artistes and the island's rich musical heritage, and gaining greater international exposure.

Since the festival's inception, it has catapulted the month of October into the top three of stay-over visitor arrivals. Between October 21 and 28, 2012, 83.7% (2,606) of the people visiting specifically for the festival of that year arrived. Prior to the introduction of the festival, arrivals in October averaged 3,000 visitors, with a peak of 4,090 in 1990. October was also historically one of the lowest arrival months for stay-over visitors to Dominica.

In 1996, October's visitor arrivals were 3,683; in 1997, with the introduction of the WCMF, there was an instant growth in arrivals of 28% to 4,715. This growth in arrivals in October continued almost seamlessly for the first 10 years of the festival, reaching 9,451 in 2006, a 156.5% growth from 1996. In 2008, notably also the celebration of 30 years of independence, Dominica welcomed 12,126 visitors during October, and just about half (5,883) arrived during the week of the festival.







Guadeloupe and Martinique, which were instrumental in the development of Cadence-lypso music in the Seventies (with a more developed musical infrastructure which allowed the production and distribution of Dominican music to their markets and other markets in Europe and Africa), have supported the festival in a variety of ways.

The festival has received technical and financial support from cultural and political institutions in the French West Indies (FWI). It has received the largest numbers of visitors from both Martinique and Guadeloupe each year since its inception; built important links with media and communications networks in the promotion and marketing of the festival to audiences in the FWI and France; and has helped in giving greater legitimacy to the survival of the festival. The festival has helped to increase business-to-business links between Dominica and the FWI in areas such as transportation, export and sale of agricultural produce and in tourism. In general, the WCMF has helped to increase awareness of Dominica in the FWI and has stimulated cultural, economic and social connections.

The WCMF has also impacted on the rest of the insular Caribbean, providing an important platform for exposure for artistes and contributing to the strengthening of cultural

and historical linkages. Visitors from the Caribbean constitute a significant proportion of arrivals during the festival, contributing significantly to the successes and helping to give greater legitimacy and validation to the authentic nature of the festival.

Dominica has benefited tremendously from staging the World Creole Music Festival. The festival is firmly entrenched in the calendar of events for the year and you can't mention the event without acknowledging the host. So awareness of the destination is up.

Visitation during that time of the year has picked up as well and the attendant economic benefits of visitor spend both within the hospitality sector and trickling down to the ancillary services is evident; accommodation is in demand, restaurants are busy, car rental agencies are sold out and even hair salons are packed because folks want to look their best at festival time.

Dr Keith Nurse conducted a study that showed the returns to the economy are up to nine times the government's investment in the festival, making it one of the highest "returns on investments" festivals in the Caribbean. Surveys of WCMF 2012 show that patrons to the festival spent up to EC \$200 per person outside of ticket price. It

is estimated that the festival accounted for up to EC \$5 million of economic activity.

The destination is not the only winner. Traditional acts have performed and done cultural exchanges to Guadeloupe and Martinique. Also Dominica's most recent music creation Bouyon music is taking root in Guadeloupe; and one of the most consistent performers of that music Tripple Kay have seen success which coincidentally has occurred during the period of their performances at the last eight World Creole Music Festivals. Asa Banton, also known as the prince of Bouyon music, is also experiencing success in Guadeloupe, St Maarten, USVI and further afield, buoyed by his performances on the WCMF main stage over the past three years. As many as four local bands have been invited to perform in the Antilliaanse Feesten held annually in Belgium, a relationship strengthened by annual visits to the WCMF by the festival organizer.

The festival has created spin-offs and investment opportunities, albeit linked to the music sector currently. Local entrepreneurs have invested in musical equipment and in sound systems and stage and roofing infrastructure to bid for WCMF and other festivals during the year.

For more information on the Discover Dominica Authority visit [www.dominica.dm](http://www.dominica.dm)

# clearing the hurdles





# evaluating the main challenges to Caribbean private sector development

BY SYLVIA DOHNERT

Access to finance is the biggest constraint for the private sector. Here is how firms can get the support they need.



## Growing Pains

The Caribbean region has grown at lower rates than other small, comparable economies in the past few years. Although the region is expected to grow 2.4% in 2014, against 1.9% in 2013, this will be below that of other small-

country peers. Moreover, the region's stock of debt/GDP is about 24% higher than in other small economies, and all of the Caribbean countries, except for Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago, appear in the global list of highest ratios of debt/GDP.

Constrained by this debt overhang, the region's level of investment/GDP is merely 15% or half of that of the rest of the world. While the region boasts relatively high levels of capital investment per worker, total factor productivity growth in the region has stalled,

indicating that there are issues affecting the efficiency with which the region uses its factors of production.

Given this context of scarce fiscal space for governments to even sustain the levels of investment required to sustain development, and stationary total factor productivity growth, the region relies on private sector development and innovation to reignite growth. However, are Caribbean firms prepared to grow? A comparison between the characteristics of Caribbean firms with those in other small economies indicates that the average Caribbean firm does not have characteristics associated with dynamism.

An analysis of the 2010 Enterprise Surveys shows that on average, the Caribbean region's private sector's performance between 2007 and 2010 is lacklustre when compared to the Rest of Small Economies (ROSE). This is particularly in terms of sales growth, employment growth and productivity, even when adjusting for lower rates of growth in the Caribbean relative to ROSE during those three years.

The Enterprise Survey data also reveal significant differences between the profiles of the Caribbean and ROSE's business sectors, which could explain these differences in performance. Caribbean firms tend to be smaller (three quarters have less than 20 permanent, full-time employees), older (more than 20 years of operation) and less involved in foreign trade than their ROSE counterparts. Moreover, they are concentrated in the tourism and retail sectors located in middle-sized jurisdictions, and ownership is predominantly local.

These differences matter. Across the world, firm size influences productivity, profitability and survival rates, and a proven relationship exists between firm size and the cost and ability to access finance. Caribbean firms report more difficulty in obtaining credit

than their ROSE counterparts. Difficulty in accessing finance matters, as the literature shows how credit affects sales growth rates, regardless of the size of the firm. The age of the firm also matters, as older firms are less likely to innovate, and evidence lower rates of sales growth. Most worryingly, Caribbean firms are less open to trade than firms in other small economies, as only 11% of firms export, 8% import, and 2.3% trade both ways.

In sum, in the Caribbean, 82.5% of firms compete for limited domestic markets, a trade orientation that inhibits their growth and productivity-enhancing prospects. Conclusions arising from this analysis indicate that in order to improve the possibilities of the Caribbean private sector to drive growth, efforts should be focused on making finance available, stimulating firms to undertake innovation, and increasing pressure on productivity by involving more of the region's firms in international trade.

Caribbean firms' growth prospects are not only affected by the characteristics of the firms themselves, but also by the environment in which they operate. Across most of the region, this environment is characterized by very small domestic markets (Haiti and Dominican Republic being exceptions) and low national economic growth rates (with the commodity exporters and Dominican Republic being the exception).

In addition to small domestic markets, the region's business climate makes it difficult to mobilize capital (land, finance), and imposes significant transactions costs on the daily activities of the firm. Regardless of firm size, the Enterprise Survey 2010 data reveals that for the Caribbean, access to finance is the major constraint (34% of respondents). Access to finance appears to be significantly more difficult in the Caribbean than in other small economies—34% of surveyed firms report it as a constraint, against 24.7% in the rest of small economies.

The World Bank's Doing Business indicators support these findings. Despite differences across countries, a mapping of the 2013 Doing Business indicators reveals "Access to Finance" as the second worst-ranked constraint across the region, with 14 out of 15 countries ranking 83 and above out of 183 countries (Trinidad and Tobago, being the only outlier ranked at 23).

Registering property, which affects the ability to access credit through its effects on collateral, is the worst ranked constraint common to the 15 countries in the region. The best-performing country (Jamaica) ranks at 105 out of 183 countries. Enforcing contracts, which affects access to finance through its impact on risk, is the third worst-ranked constraint shared by the region, with the best-performer (Antigua and Barbuda) ranked at 72. Other constraints, such as protecting investors, getting electricity, starting a business, dealing with construction permits, resolving insolvency, paying taxes and trading across borders show a diverse picture in the region, with some countries ranking in the 25th percentile, while others in the 75th.

Regional agencies and donors need to ensure that access to finance is available to firms and clusters which demonstrate the potential to implement innovative, replicable and scalable business models with high growth, export and employment potential. This must be complemented with enhancing the national and regional environments in which firms invest and operate by strengthening both public and private sector institutions to undertake the necessary reforms to enable private sector growth. Through the Compete Caribbean Program, these constraints are being addressed through the Enterprise Innovation Challenge Fund and the Business Climate Enhancement Facility.

**For more information on Compete Caribbean, please refer to [www.competecaribbean.org](http://www.competecaribbean.org)**

The Compete Caribbean Program is jointly funded by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) and the Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada (DFATD), and supports projects in 15 Caribbean countries. Projects in the OECS countries are implemented in partnership with the Caribbean Development Bank.



# dilemma of difference

BY PROFESSOR DENSIL WILLIAMS

Regional firms produce the same items. That's one reason intra-regional trade is so low. But that's not all holding us back.



Tremendous opportunities for commerce abound in the CARICOM region. However, a large number of Caribbean firms have not been able to exploit these market opportunities. International trade data reveals that intra-regional trade in CARICOM is among the lowest among regional trading blocs across the globe.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) group, a regional integration movement of Asian countries, has intra-regional exports accounting for 22% of total exports; the EU, a regional integration movement of European countries, has intra-regional exports accounting for 55% of total trade, while in CARICOM, intra-regional exports account for merely 13% of total trade. These figures have underscored an

indisputable fact—there are opportunities within CARICOM for an increase in the level of intra-regional trade. So why are CARICOM firms unable to increase trade in the region?

While the problems are many, empirical research has pointed to a few issues on the supply side that have hindered increased trade among Caribbean firms. This article will highlight some of the issues.

## Supply side Factors

For trade to take place with any strong vibrancy there needs to be complementarity among trading partners. Trading partners cannot all produce the same things and expect to trade effectively. One partner has to have something that the other partner wants and vice versa. Then both partners

do not have a choice but to engage in trade as it will enhance the welfare of both sides.

In CARICOM, almost all the countries produce and trade the same items: sugar, bananas, rice, light manufactured goods, tourism. If all the countries are producing the same items, logically, why would they want to trade among themselves? It would be easier for the firms to find other locations such as North America or Europe and sell their outputs because those countries will be more in need of the items that are produced in the region in order to increase their overall welfare. So it is no surprise that trade from CARICOM countries to North America and Europe is much higher than trade within CARICOM.

The main supply side constraint to exploiting business opportunities in the CARICOM region is the similarity of production networks or the lack of complementarity among countries. Caribbean researchers have termed this problem the dilemma of difference (Wint, 1995). Business executives will have to think long and hard about how to overcome the dilemma of difference by building complementarities in their production networks.

Several other micro-economic and environmental issues affect the supply side of doing business in the Caribbean and prevent firms from exploiting business opportunities. These include:

- Unstable macro-economic environment in most of the CARICOM countries.
- Lack of adroit corporate leadership at the enterprise level.
- Ineffective business and competitive strategies.

### Unstable macro-economic environment

Macro-economic instability brings unanticipated cost to the operations of enterprises. The larger markets in CARICOM, Jamaica and Haiti are generally seen as strong consumer markets for the other countries of the region. However, the macro-economic environment in these markets is generally unstable because of the high debt burden of the central government, the high level of fiscal deficit, high interest rates, high inflation rate, and the unstable exchange rate.

These markets are characterized by macro-economic instability which leads to unanticipated cost for doing business. So firms find it difficult to exploit business opportunities there because the cost of doing business in these larger markets can become burdensome.

Smaller markets in the CARICOM region are also facing serious issues of macro-economic instability because of the high debt burden of their central government operations, and the reducing foreign exchange inflows. Foreign exchange income fell because of the drop in international business activities

which resulted from the global financial crisis of 2008. Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, and Antigua and Barbuda, for example, have witnessed periods of macro-economic instability, although not as prolonged as Jamaica, which have increased the cost of doing business in those locations.

### Corporate leadership at the enterprise level

Studies have shown consistently that ineffective leadership at the corporate level also prevents firms from taking advantage of business opportunities (Williams, 2007; Wint, 2003). Corporate leaders who do not have an international focus and are unable to adapt to the changing environment in which their businesses operate will generally fail to spot international business opportunities. And so their firms miss valuable chances for improving their value to shareholders and stakeholders.

### Ineffective business and competitive strategies

A less talked about supply side constraint is the lack of appropriate business and competitive strategies (Barclay, 2005; Williams & Clegg, 2008). A number of Caribbean firms do not practise generic competitive strategies nor do they have a strategic plan. They generally base their business model on relationships and interconnectedness of social and business ties, otherwise called networks (Williams, 2007). Without carrying out effective and proper strategic planning where market dynamics are taken into consideration and fore-sighting is used to spot opportunities, Caribbean firms will always be behind the eight ball when it comes to identifying and exploiting international business opportunities.

### Overcoming the constraints

Caribbean firms will have to find ways to overcome the supply side constraints to their growth and profitability. Importantly, they cannot merely copy and paste solutions from other jurisdictions in order to deal with their inherent problems. Targeted context specific research will have to be conducted in order to identify the problem and then design specific solutions.

Here are some approaches to resolving supply side constraints:

- Deal with the issues of similarity in production networks. Firms will have to share production networks to limit the production of similar goods and to gain economies of scale in production. For example, light manufacturing firms may want to consider doing their manufacturing in Trinidad and Tobago, where the cost of energy is cheap, and then do the distribution in the wider CARICOM market from a point of easy access such as Jamaica in the Northern Caribbean and Barbados in the Southern Caribbean. Firms will have to decide not to produce the same items. This will require strategic thinking and proper rationalization of plants. Research and development on the production networks in CARICOM will be important to help firms deal with this issue.
- Place greater emphasis on business and management training among Caribbean firms in order to get the correct talents in the right place. Corporate leadership is both an art and a science and will require astute and visionary individuals to hold the key positions of change agents in these enterprises. Training in the key principles of management, decision making, networking and strategic planning will help executives to better spot and exploit business opportunities. The business schools in the region must take the lead in designing curriculum that is appropriate to the needs of the enterprises in the region.
- Fix the macro-economic environment, more a task for the national leaders than business people. A stronger focus on generating macro-economic stability in all countries is required, so that firms can be more confident and have greater certitude in doing business across the region. This will help savvy corporate leaders to better position their businesses to take advantage of international business opportunities in the regional space.



# trade finance: essential fuel for Caribbean trade growth

BY LORNE DYKE AND ALEXANDER R. MALAKET





International trade is vital for economic development, especially for smaller countries with a paucity of endowed resources. Despite the imperfections of the global system of trade, robust, rules-based trade creates economic value, raises standards of living and can play an important role in poverty alleviation and international development. The CARICOM-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) as well as the Caribbean Single Market & Economy (CSME) have brought this reality into sharp focus, as well as the prospect of a renewed Caribbean-Canada trade agreement (CARIBCAN).

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) worldwide have long identified access to financing as an obstacle to growth. Similarly, challenges and obstacles in accessing trade finance impede the ability of SMEs to enter and succeed in international markets. The scope of the challenge is clear: over 80-90% of merchandise trade flows globally rely on some form of trade finance. This obstacle is amplified in developing and emerging markets.

### Commercial Considerations in Trade Finance

In a post-crisis environment, still exhibiting constrained liquidity, exporters' ability to offer an attractive financing package for potential buyers, provides significant competitive advantage. An importer is more likely today to do business with an exporter who offers both a quality product and

advantageous payment/financing terms: a market competitive reality with direct implications for export success at the firm level as well as at the national/regional level.

### Trade Finance in Practice

Trade finance, at its core and irrespective of the particular complexities of a single transaction, involves some combination of four elements:

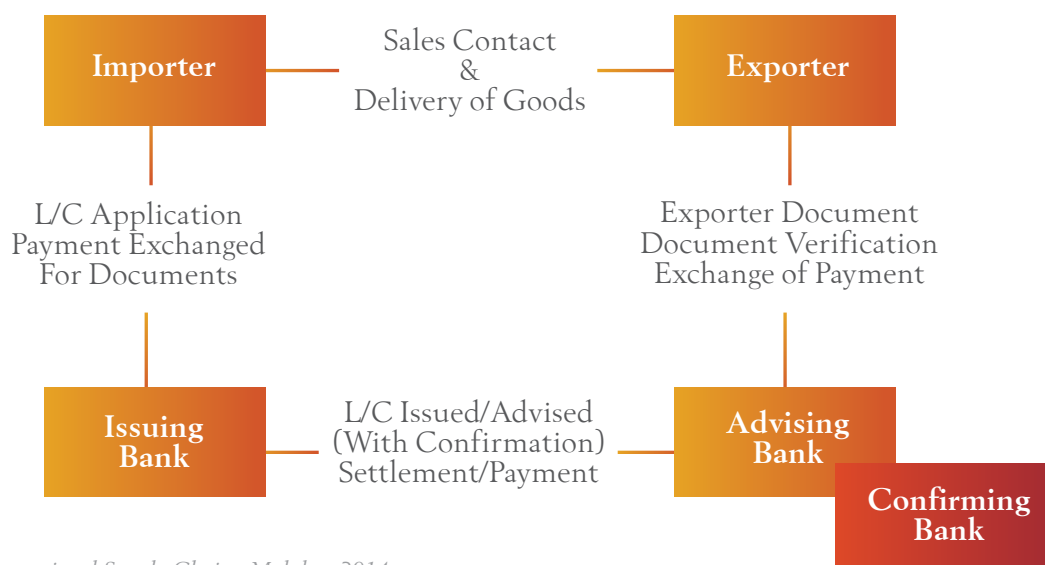
- Secure and timely payment across borders;
- Timely and affordable financing;
- Effective mitigation of risk; and
- Provision of financial and transactional information.

If a buyer and seller navigate all the complexities and challenges of international business, from legal and cultural issues, to logistics, to product adaptation and beyond, but fail in the final step—delivery of the promised product and payment for same—the entire transaction is for naught.

Documentary letters of credit, also referred to as letters of credit or LCs, are supported by a set of guiding rules first developed by the Paris-based International Chamber of Commerce in 1933, and their use and interpretation is highly consistent across markets, across legal traditions and across political systems. LCs also provide the most balanced protection of the interests of buyer and seller, importer and exporter, with banks taking a critical role in the structuring, interpretation and execution of letter of credit transactions.



## LC Transaction Flow



Source: *Financing Trade and International Supply Chains*, Malaket, 2014

An importer requests its bank to issue a letter of credit—a legal promise by the bank to pay the exporter. In so doing, the importer provides assurance to the exporter that he or she is relying on the payment undertaking of a (theoretically) well-established and financially solid bank, as opposed to that of the importer. At the same time, the use of an LC assures the importer that payment will only be made, once it has been demonstrated through the submission of agreed documents, that the exporter has fully met all agreed contractual terms.

The exporter receives assurance of payment, and the importer receives the security of knowing precisely the conditions under which payment will be effected. Documentary credits provide a variety of features and

mechanisms that can meet a wide range of needs, including risk-transfer between parties, and financing to one or more trading partners in a transaction.

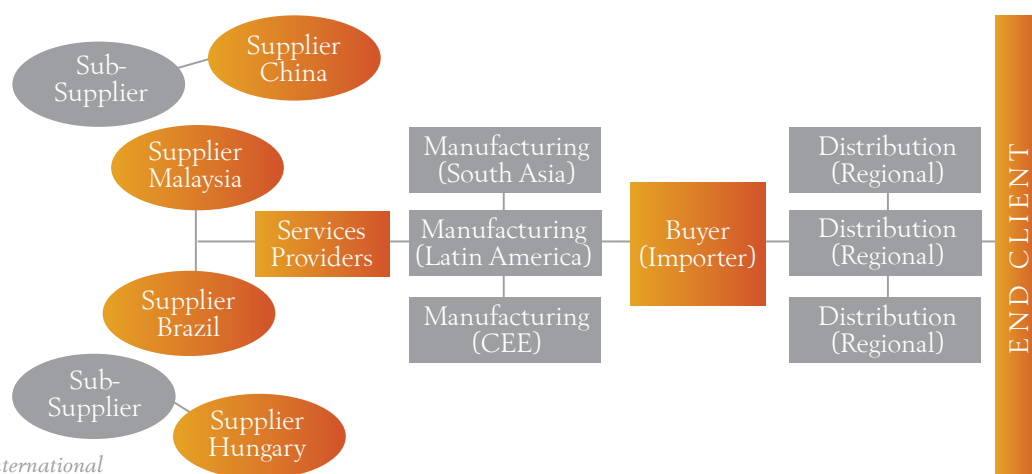
Letters of credit have earned such trust, that there is a perception in some circles that an LC is “just like cash.” Such misconceptions, and the nuances and complexity in structuring trade finance instruments, suggest the need for careful research, good advice, or both. The International Trade Centre in Geneva published *How to Access Trade Finance: A Guide for Exporting SMEs* in 2009—a comprehensive guide to trade finance. Leading international banks, as well as government agencies have also published various guides and resources, many accessible online and at no cost.

## Open Account and Supply Chain Finance

Recent international trade patterns and practices have seen a marked shift away from traditional trade finance instruments, with LC’s now accounting for only about 10-20% of trade transactions globally, and so-called “open account” transactions now used in the majority of transactions globally. In open account trade, an importer sends payment at an agreed time (say, on shipment of the goods, or on receipt of same), and little or no risk mitigation is provided to either party.

In response to growing open account trade, banks have been working to devise solutions in supply chain finance (SCF), where the focus is on an ecosystem of trading relationships, as opposed to one importer and exporter at a time. Supply chain finance provides some excellent opportunities for Caribbean SMEs to access trade financing.

## Supply Chain Finance



Source: *Financing Trade and International Supply Chains*, Malaket, 2014

One recent innovation is the “buyer-centric” SCF programme, where a large global buyer/importer with hundreds, perhaps thousands of supplier relationships across the globe, works with a bank to provide financing/liquidity to suppliers (often SMEs located in emerging markets) on the basis of the buyer’s borrowing capacity, with a view to assuring a healthy supply chain.

### National/Regional Policies and Trade Finance

Caribbean exporters could benefit from linking up with global supply chains, to gain access to financing through buyer-led programmes, at substantially lower cost. The support of a regional financial institution specifically mandated to provide trade and supply chain finance solutions to Caribbean companies would be invaluable. Such an

institution could work collaboratively with national entities and other institutions, such as the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the World Bank/IFC, already active in the region. Some harmonisation of trade finance programmes and facilities has the potential to enhance the region’s trade finance capacity and capability, complementing trade development initiatives and practices in a synergistic manner.

Access to trade and supply chain finance should be encouraged and facilitated by national and regional political leaders to create an environment which enables firms to access appropriate levels of finance, including adequate risk mitigation in the conduct of international commerce.

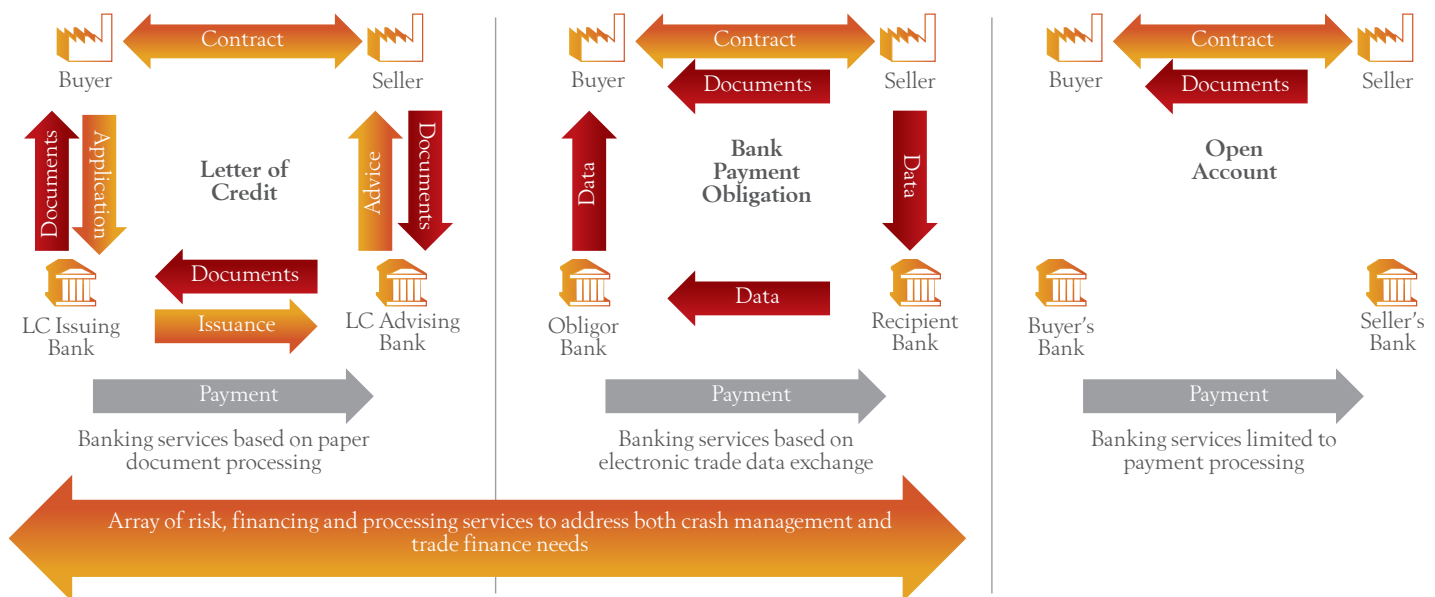
Trade finance is now understood to be extremely well risk-mitigated and very low risk as a

business. The IDB trade finance programme, established in 2005, has supported nearly 2000 transactions worth almost \$2 billion, with zero losses. Bank activity demonstrates comparable levels of default or loss experience. (See *International Chamber of Commerce Rethinking Trade and Trade Finance* 2013.)

### Twenty-First Century Trade Finance

A senior UK-based finance executive recently noted that his company could move 150,000 cubic metres of liquefied natural gas faster than it could move 500 grams of paper (through a traditional trade finance transaction process). This costly reality highlights the motivation for developing more efficient, technology-enabled trade and trade finance capabilities, including the increasing use of electronic documents and payment mechanisms.

### Positioning the BPO



Source SWIFT/ICC Industry Education Group

The Bank Payment Obligation (BPO), a solution now jointly marketed by Belgium-based SWIFT, and the Paris-based International Chamber of Commerce, aims to provide a data-driven payment and financing solution, through participating banks, to importers and exporters prepared to transact, and to

trigger payment decisions based on automated matching of electronic data. The BPO offers a cost-effective option somewhere between an LC and an open account transaction, improving the efficiency of the former and enhancing the risk mitigation and financing options of the latter.

Market needs and conditions are ideal today, for political and business leaders to ensure adequate access to trade and supply chain finance for Caribbean companies—the essential fuel to sustainable success in international commerce.

Lorne Dyke is an international business consultant and Alexander R. Malaket, CITP, president, OPUS Advisory Services International Inc.



# regional food safety in focus: insights with technological solutions limited

BY STEPHANIE BISHOP



All images provided by Technological Solutions Limited

Technological Solutions Limited (TSL) is a regionally-based global consulting firm, which provides guidance in trade-related technical requirements with a specialization in food safety, quality assurance, production system design and implementation, as well as an extensive range of analytical systems. In addition to international recognition by regulatory bodies such as the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA), TSL is the only company in the CARIFORUM region that implemented Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) systems that have been approved by the US and the European Union (EU). Now in its 18th year of operation, TSL has clients in the Caribbean, Africa, Canada, Europe, Latin America, and the US.

*Caribbean Export OUTLOOK* sat down recently with Managing Director and Principal Consultant Dr André Gordon to discuss the ability of the regional agro-processing and manufacturing sector to meet international food safety requirements. Dr Gordon has over 25 years of experience in the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) in conducting audits, implementing systems and training, and designing layouts for food production facilities, as well as providing consultation to companies seeking validation and/or certification of their systems to regulatory and other industry driven standards. He is recognized by the Europe-Africa-Caribbean-Pacific Liaison Committee, Guelph Food Technology Centre, and FDA and is a Royal Institute of Public Health certified trainer in various aspects of food processing and food safety. Dr Gordon has extensive experience in standards development, conformity assessment, analytical services development and delivery and standards-based organization development.

**Tell us about your company and how you have assisted firms in meeting international food safety standards.**

Technological Solutions Limited is in the business of helping companies meet all of the requirements for exporting into global markets, meaning we provide the technical support for

market access. This includes anything from designing the facilities, and training staff, to putting all the production systems in place that are necessary for firms to meet the market entry requirements of countries to which they want to export. We also do a lot of work as it relates to labelling for companies who export to the EU, USA and Canada. Above all, Technological Solutions focuses on building permanent capacity within regional firms to be able to manage both the technical and business related aspects of operations.

**Has your company partnered with any firms regionally or internationally as part of your operations?**

In 1997, TSL was selected by Caribbean Export to introduce the concept of Food Safety across the region, which significantly helped us in expanding our business outside of Jamaica. We introduced people to good manufacturing practices, certifications such as HACCP, and other systems and requirements that were coming on stream globally. Outside of Caribbean Export, we partner with the various Bureaus of Standards across the region. Our associates are based in the OECS, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and Europe.

In Europe, we have worked with Landell Mills of the UK, Sociedade Portuguesa de Inovação from Portugal, as well as entities in France and Brussels. We also have a very important partnership with Guelph Food Technology Centre in Canada, on whose behalf we conduct certification audits, as well as training; and more recently with the US-based NSF International, one of the largest certification bodies in the world, on whose behalf we also conduct audits, to make sure that Caribbean businesses have cutting-edge knowledge and the same kind of access as international firms.

**In your opinion, what are the first steps that a firm must take in order to comply with international food safety standards?**

One of the major challenges we have seen with businesses is that the production facilities are poorly designed. This costs

the companies as it relates to efficiencies, compliance, expansion and growth. We strongly advise firms that it is a fraction of the cost to ensure that the facility is properly designed as a first step, rather than having to make these adjustments later.

We have also come to realize that although we focus on the technical side of the business, this alone is not sufficient. So typically, we work with companies to help them understand their business objectives, the markets to which they want to export their products, the markets within which they are most competitive, and then use that information to help guide them in their decision making, because all of these factors affect the type of labelling, packaging, ingredients and shelf life that is required.

Most of the issues that people deal with last, we like to examine first, and then work backwards. A lot of companies have a product and then try to sell it. What we do is start by having the company identify the specific markets for their products, and work back from there. But, if you already have a product we try to identify the markets that are best suited to your product, and then we tailor the technical support that is required for firms to gain entry into those markets.

**In addition to poorly designed facilities, what are some of the greatest challenges that regional firms are facing in meeting these food safety requirements?**

The ability to have good manufacturing practices (GMP) systems in place is a huge challenge. This is something we urge companies to focus on first, and then seek certification for the programme. In order to gain any other type of certification, firms are first required to have this GMP certification in place. This allows buyers to be certain that your firm has all of the systems and requirements in place, at least at the basic level. This includes pest control, a proper sanitation programme, staff training, familiarity with the production environment, preventative maintenance and traceability and recall, to name a few.





**How would you describe the readiness of CARIFORUM agro-processing firms as it relates to meeting food safety standards in international export markets?**

It is a bit of a dichotomy, as many regional companies are in a very good position to meet the basic standards for food safety. Oftentimes we think that because we are developing countries that we are way behind the more developed ones. This may be true in general, but there are many producers operating in the markets that we want to enter, that have their own issues in meeting requirements as well. By and large, several regional exporters would find themselves meeting the basic requirements reasonably comfortably. There are many exporters who have very sophisticated operations, but the issue is the systems they have in place and the maintenance of these systems.

**Can you elaborate on the other types of assistance that firms may need in order to meet food safety requirements?**

Today, most operations are technologically driven, so firms are required to make sure that their staff members are competent, and not only with general training, but also that they are trained in the specific areas in which they operate. In addition to training and evidence of competence, firms must have good knowledge of their products, and its characteristics, because buyers are increasingly asking for this type of information. Similarly, firms must also understand the shelf life of their products, and this must be supported by scientific evidence, including shelf life studies.

Companies also need to be aware of the ingredients, such as allergens, as the wording of declarations regarding these allergens is also critical. Knowledge of process flows and

food safety and quality systems are additional factors requiring familiarity. Training in labelling is also extremely important, as the requirements are constantly changing. The second largest reason for rejection of exports to the US market is improper labelling, and many firms aren't aware of this until their goods are held at the port of entry.

**Can you provide specific examples of CARIFORUM firms which have become more competitive and are doing well in the export market as a result of complying with international food safety standards?**

In 2001, the Barbados Investment and Development Corporation asked TSL to work with local sauce producers to help them get into the international markets. We helped the members of this sector get their products filed, optimized their operations, implement basic GMPs, and trained their staff as part of our programme. Following this, between 2001





and 2008, the exports from the sauce sector quadrupled, and they are now three times what they were when the process started.

In St Vincent and the Grenadines, we worked with Mountain Tops Springs Limited. The company had never exported and asked us to work with them in this regard. We worked to implement GMPs, improve their production flows, and train staff. As a result, these improvements not only led to exports, but also resulted in the staff and firm now being in a better position professionally and financially, as sales have grown in excess of 10 times. This company successfully changed its operations and implemented systems that opened up regional and extra-regional export markets to their products.

Another example is the Seafood industry in Jamaica, which like other Caribbean countries, were barred from exporting to the EU, because they didn't meet market entry requirements. In

2002, we worked with the companies in that sector to transform their production systems and implement HACCP, as well as with the industry and the veterinary services division to change the legislation governing the processing of meat, dairy products and seafood, which allowed their seafood to enter the EU market again.

We also worked with the canned fruit and vegetable exporters to get Jamaican ackee back into the US market. This required a transformation of the domestic industry, changing the regulations, and working closely with the FDA, with whom we continue to have a collaborative relationship today. Access to the US market required scientific proof that the traditional ackee product was safe, and this will be an increasing need as we export our traditional products from the region. Overall, it was a mammoth effort, but it resulted in the exports of that particular product increasing from US \$4.4 million to US \$15.2 million over a period of 12 years.

We have also worked with firms that are now household names, and have successfully met international requirements. Firms like Grace Kennedy Limited; LASCO Manufacturing Limited; and Seprod Limited in Jamaica; as well as Solo Beverages Limited; Cannings Foods Limited; a former Neal & Massy subsidiary; and K.C. Confectionery Limited in Trinidad and Tobago. The benefits of following the requirements and ensuring that the right processes and programmes are in place are immeasurable.

A concern, however, is that many firms are implementing systems and gaining certification, which is good from a marketing perspective, but they don't actually meet the requirements of the market they are seeking to enter. Firms therefore need to access current information, understand their needs, and budget adequately to make the adjustments, as this is all a part of doing business.

Stephanie Bishop is a Communications Advisor at the Caribbean Export Development Agency. She is a development communications specialist with over 10 years professional experience and holds a Masters in International Affairs.



# company to look out for:

## baron foods limited

### Company Name

Baron Foods (St Lucia) Ltd.

### Website

www.baronfoodsltd.com

### Chief Executive Officer

Ronald Ramjattan

### Years in Existence

22 years

### Location

Vieux-Fort Industrial Estate,  
St Jude's Highway,  
Vieux-Fort, Saint Lucia

### Product Summary

Baron Foods produces over 150 different products, which includes spices and an FSSC 22000:2010 certified product range of exotic and gourmet sauces, condiments, essences, dressings and drink cocktails, packaged in glass bottles for local and international distribution. The Baron range caters for every palate and delivers a distinctive taste and aroma.

### Export Market

**The Caribbean:** Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Haiti, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Puerto Rico, Guyana, Jamaica, Anguilla, Dominica, St. Thomas, Martinique, Guadeloupe, Tortola, Grenada, and St. Croix  
**North America:** United States and Canada  
**Europe:** United Kingdom, France, Germany, Spain, and Slovakia.

### Major Exporting Achievements

One of our major achievements was the attainment of quality certifications. We established a comprehensive quality programme through international certifications such as the ISO 22000:2005 and FSSC 22000:2010; these standards have definitely set us apart in the quality arena. Being quality approved has allowed our products to be accepted by major supermarket chains such as Tesco and Sainsbury's in the UK. Our product, as is regulated by our quality programme, adheres to every aspect of the food regulations of any importing country, simply because we have pursued and acquired the foremost quality standard globally.

Another achievement is the use of private labelling. We have utilised this as a major export tool and have seen this contribute considerably to our yearly export percentage. Currently, we are the only Caribbean agro-processor that has penetrated the French island of Martinique utilising private labelling, and we were also able to secure two separate distributors on the island. We have also been able to successfully employ private labelling to penetrate the territories of St Thomas, St Martin, Puerto Rico, and the USA.

Furthermore, having copped several major awards at the 2012 Caribbean Business Awards, namely the Award for Innovation, Manufacturing Excellence Award, and Small to Medium Business of the Year Award, we have again demonstrated a stellar level of competence as well as raised our



All images provided by  
Baron Foods Limited

brand awareness. This ultimately resulted in increased customer satisfaction and strengthened customer loyalty, which translated into increased repeat purchases, cross-selling of related services, and recommendations to others, which is what was needed to build a successful, sustainable export platform.

### Market Entry Strategies

Over the years, Baron Foods has gained mastery in the area of market entry. Foremost, detailed research was conducted to find foreign markets where our products could be profitably exported, to identify competitors and the necessary marketing adjustments that had to be made and possible barriers that existed in that chosen trade arena. Becoming internationally certified was also part of our market entry strategy.

Innovativeness is another fundamental instrument in Baron Food's market entry strategies. Motivated by the increasing competition in global markets, our company has grasped the importance of innovation,



since swiftly changing technologies and severe global competition rapidly erode the value in existing products and services.

We also formed strategic alliances with companies in other countries (e.g.) Wanis and Trin- Jam. This has been a major advantage since it enabled our company to access the home market of other companies and thereby market our products as being affiliated with a well-known host company.

### Greatest Exporting Lessons Learnt

Our company has indeed faced some hurdles when venturing into the export arena. However, one of the greatest exporting lessons learnt was staying abreast of all that is needed before our products can be accepted into the various export markets. A recent experience was making modifications to our product labels to reflect the labelling parameters of the importing country. A complete redesigning of the labels had to be done to reflect changes in the nutritional analysis, ingredients information, main panel

design, etc. Subsequently, various policies and procedures have been employed to ensure the reviewing of regulations for the particular territories that Baron Foods Ltd exports to in an effort to assure the overall compliance of our products to exporting countries.

### Support Received by Caribbean Export

Baron Foods (St Lucia) has been a beneficiary to a few Direct Assistance Grants made available by Caribbean Export, which all directly contributed to propelling us into the export arena. These include:

- The implementation of the project titled "Increasing of Baron Foods Export Production Capacity," where our company received assistance in setting up a semi-automated processing operation;
- Caribbean Export has also assisted us in setting up a HACCP certification scheme;
- Caribbean Export's interventions have also helped to offset expenses of participating in trade shows and exhibitions abroad such as in North

America and the Dominican Republic and at ANUGA in Germany;

- Direct exposure to the EU-CARIFORUM EPA agreement.

### Key Support Needed by Exporters

As an exporter in the Caribbean, we believe that firms require assistance with branding. Some are suffering from ailments such as the "Who Are We Today?" syndrome and are in need of brand development support. While few companies in our region can provide consistently superior products and service experiences, the various mechanics and techniques in establishing a bond with customers are somewhat unfamiliar to some companies. Furthermore, the up-front costs involved in developing promotional materials, allocating personnel to travel and other administrative costs associated with product marketing make brand awareness an expensive feat. Assistance in branding to applicable firms should be a priority. In addition, we also believe that firms need assistance in dealing with the high freight rates of shipping companies.



# building the bridge to mutual recognition of Caribbean professionals

BY ANDREA M. EWART



To facilitate the cross-border movement of goods, countries negotiate agreements that lower the tariffs and non-tariff requirements that can prevent or obstruct the smooth flow of goods across their respective borders. Conversely, facilitating the cross-border movement of people, particularly professionals, can be more challenging.

The receiving country wants to be able to ensure that the doctor, engineer, or architect wishing to offer his or her services within its borders is adequately qualified. On the other hand, the sending country wants to ensure that its nurses, accountants, and other professionals, who have already trained and earned their professional qualifications, are not going to be required to pursue additional years of schooling before being able to practise.

These challenges are addressed through mutual recognition. Mutual recognition of professional qualifications allows the qualifications held by a professional to be recognised in the country in which he or she is seeking to practise, removing the necessity for re-qualification.

For the most part, mutual recognition of professional qualifications is accomplished through the negotiation of Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs). As an agreement between the European Union (EU), on the one hand, and the Forum of the Caribbean Group of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (CARIFORUM) countries on the other, it was essential that the services commitment of the CARIFORUM-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) contain provisions for mutual recognition of professional qualifications. Without an effective

mechanism for mutual recognition, the EPA commitments for the movement of service professionals will be difficult to realise.

## The EPA on Negotiating MRAs

Market access commitments for the entry of CARIFORUM professionals into the EU markets, and vice versa, are contained in Title II of the CARIFORUM-EU EPA. Article 85 of the EPA provides a mechanism for negotiation of MRAs.

Article 85 on Mutual Recognition first stipulates that each receiving country has the right to require that incoming persons hold the same professional qualifications and/or experience that is necessary for national professionals. Accordingly, it charges the parties to the Agreement with encouraging





the professional bodies to work with their counterparts, i.e. CARIFORUM with EU, to develop recommendations for the mutual recognition of qualifications within their respective fields. Once developed, the recommendations are to be presented to the CARIFORUM-EU Trade and Development Committee. The Committee will determine whether: (i) the recommendation is consistent with the EPA; and (ii) the regulatory environments of the relevant EU and CARIFORUM States are compatible enough to conclude an MRA. Only then can an agreement for mutual recognition of “requirements, qualifications, licences and other regulations” be concluded.

The language of Article 85 provides some indication of the hurdles that will need to

be cleared on the path to negotiating MRAs. Most importantly, the MRA negotiation process will require professional associations in CARIFORUM and the EU to reach an agreement on each other’s criteria for authorising the operation of their professional members on their respective territories.

### Negotiating MRAs

There will be no “one size fits all” approach to negotiating the MRAs. Depending on the profession, an agreement may need to be reached on such substantive requirements as professional qualifications, course studies and licensing examinations. An alternative approach focuses on conformity assessment procedures, such as examinations and the process by which the examining/certifying bodies are themselves certified. A number

of MRAs will include both approaches and incorporate recognition of the equivalence of existing professional qualifications as well as of the sending country’s authority to certify the training and to grant diplomas.

### Equivalence

At the heart of all these approaches is the search for equivalence, meaning to what extent do the degrees and other academic qualifications in the respective territories mean more or less the same thing.

For example, a study of the engineering professions in CARIFORUM and EU countries would assess such factors as:

- How many years of study does it take to become an engineer in each country?
- How are the training institutions





certified or accredited?

- Training requirements and compulsory competencies.
- Was work experience required?
- What does it mean to be an “engineer” in each country?

### Other Requirements

Once equivalence is determined, the MRA may also address other requirements. These could include compensation measures, such as additional professional or practical experience, or an examination, to address determined gaps in education and training. There may also be local knowledge requirements, such as language, cultural norms, and professional practices. However, these local knowledge requirements can be used as a means of excluding foreign professionals and need to be assessed carefully. While it could be quite reasonable to require the foreign professional to have a working knowledge of the country’s language, mandatory residency requirements in order to obtain the required licence almost always function as a disguised

restraint on the professional’s ability to work in the receiving country.

### Regulatory Environment

As Article 85 of the EPA makes clear, a key factor in being able to successfully conclude an MRA will be the extent to which the regulatory environments converge. To what extent is the profession regulated in each region, through licensing or registration requirements? More importantly, to the extent there are regulatory requirements, to what degree are they enforced? Only those persons who meet the required standards should be allowed to practice that given profession and there need to be mechanisms for finding, sanctioning and excluding violators. For some professions within the CARIFORUM countries, this requirement could provide a challenge. Areas of weakness may include:

- Lack of legal or regulatory framework in some States;
- Lack of capacity for administration and enforcement in some States;

- Absence of professional indemnity coverage and of continuing education requirements; and
- Absence of an authoritative CARIFORUM accrediting agency and professional association.

### Intra-Regional Mobility

Both the EU and the Caribbean Community member states of the CARIFORUM grouping have determined to create regional markets for the provision of services. Furthermore, the regional preference clause of the EPA requires that the CARIFORUM states extend to each other any benefits they have extended to the EU parties. As a practical matter, therefore, the degree of mobility that exists within each region for the respective professions is going to be a determining factor in negotiating MRAs. This may entail that, as they negotiate an MRA with their EU counterpart, some professions within CARIFORUM states first, or simultaneously, negotiate their own MRA to facilitate mobility within CARIFORUM.



In general, two basic approaches can be identified for using MRAs to facilitate intra-regional mobility of professionals. One approach achieves automatic recognition of professional qualifications through the harmonisation on a profession-by-profession basis of the education and training requirements across countries. The second approach avoids any attempt at harmonisation and relies on determining equivalence. After attempting harmonisation, the EU abandoned this effort to rely on broad guidelines by which each receiving EU member state determines the professional qualifications that are required for practice by a given profession and against which it reviews the qualifications of a professional from a sending country. Compensation measures may be used to address a significant gap between the requirements of the receiving country and those of the sending country.

An effective regime to address mobility of professional qualifications within the CARICOM Single Market has not as yet been established.

Furthermore, the Dominican Republic needs to be incorporated into this process.

### Selective Approach to the EU Market

Given the hurdles to be cleared, an important first step will be for the respective professional associations to investigate the potential to capitalise on an MRA, once it has been signed. This process can begin with identifying and reaching out to potential professional partners with which to initiate discussions towards an MRA. With 27 EU Member States from which to choose, it also involves identifying priority EU countries with which to begin work. Pertinent factors in making this determination include:

- How open is the profession to doing business with foreign professionals?
- Is this reflected in their regulatory regime?
- What are available or potential market opportunities for partnering or for specializing?
- Are there cultural and/or language affinities?

### Time is of the Essence

When the EPA was concluded in 2008, the inclusion of a services component in a trade agreement was still a relative novelty. Since then, the EU has concluded comprehensive agreements containing services provisions with several countries, including Colombia, Peru, and Singapore. In 2013, the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership negotiations were launched with its biggest trading partner, the United States. Multilateral negotiations toward an International Services Agreement have also been launched. These developments promise to erode the comparative advantage that the EPA provided CARIFORUM States with respect to access to the EU services market. Despite these challenges, the successful negotiation of an MRA between a specified professional grouping of CARIFORUM and the EU continues to hold significant promise for the CARIFORUM professional.

Andrea Ewart is a Jamaican national and US-trained customs and International Trade attorney who also consults for Caribbean businesses and governments on World Trade Organization (WTO), Caribbean Single Market & Economy (CSME), U.S.-Caribbean trade relations, trade negotiations, and other trade issues.



# attracting investment to enhance trade

BY SUZETTE HUDSON



Image provided by Grand Bahama Port Authority Limited

It is amazing how the eyes of the world are constantly drawn to the 7,000 islands, islets and cays of the Caribbean archipelago—small economies, in terms of population size and GDP growth, but whose athletes are the best in the world, whose musical giants span generations and whose cuisine tantalizes.

The renowned beauty of the Caribbean and its people makes the region a mecca for tourism. The region has capitalized on these

endowments, with the tourism industry being one of its strongest investment opportunities.

But tourism remains the region's 'Achilles' heel' as within this strength lies one of the foremost challenges that has been at the core of the development malaise in the Caribbean—a perception of the region as not necessarily being the place for doing business, besides tourism or related services.

And the Caribbean has had to swallow many a bitter pill because of its heavy dependence on the tourism sector.

Efforts to position other sectors as viable investment opportunities remain hamstrung by this perception and the limited resources available to position the region for other investment opportunities. In the wake of the latest global recession, investors have been slow to take notice of the Caribbean,





the East Coast and permitting large retailers and manufacturers to reconfigure their network of factories and distribution centers so that more inventory can be stored closer to East Coast population centres.

This development presents an opportunity for the Caribbean to take advantage of its strategic positioning in terms of north-south and east-west trade and the natural endowments of several deep water ports in the region. This will allow the region's ports, suitably outfitted, to serve as logistic centres and transshipment hubs for the increased cargo expected to pass through the region. There has been some jostling in the Caribbean to capitalize on the increased business that will move through the Canal after the Post-Panamax locks have been opened in 2015. Jamaica and the Dominican Republic (DR) are among the frontrunners.

For Jamaica, the vision is the transformation of its natural harbour in Kingston into a transshipment and air cargo logistics hub for the Americas, a strategic handling point for bulk commodities and a centre for aviation-related maintenance, repair and overhaul as well as ship repair and dry docking. The Jamaica Logistics Hub Initiative is already underway with the mobilization of several cornerstone or support projects including the Caymanas Special Economic Zone (CEZ) development where the Jamaican Government is set to develop 10,000 acres of the Caymanas Estate lands for purposes directly related to the Initiative such as logistical planning and warehousing.

It is expected that a significant economic stimulus will be generated from the construction activities related to the logistics hub, with jobs created in areas such as mechatronics integration of marine engineering (mechanical, electrical and informatics), ship board professions such as electromechanical engineering, port operations management, heavy duty equipment operations, logistics and supply chain management.

The Government of Jamaica is also in the process of setting up a Global Financial

particularly given an increased competition for scarce foreign investment.

But the tides may be turning.

There are regional developments that present opportunities to position the Caribbean in sectors other than tourism, diversifying the region's investment offerings. There are projects underway in Jamaica and the Dominican Republic for the planned

development of logistics and transshipment hubs and the Caracol Industrial Park in Haiti.

Recently, the buzz in the Caribbean has been the widening of the Panama Canal to allow for the passage of a new class of supersized cargo ships, known as Post Panamax ships, which are more than twice as big as the historical cargo shipping fleet. The expanded Canal is expected to open in 2015, allowing for lower cost shipments to





All images provided by The Port Authority of Jamaica

Hub to complement the Logistics Hub as it recognizes that goods have to be paid for with investments grounded in sound vehicles. The investment promotion agency (IPA), Jamaican Promotions Corporation (JAMPRO), has been mobilized and is engaging investors for investment in the multi-faceted project.

The DR is also engaging investors for its transshipment and logistics initiative which seeks to position the country as the “Hub of the Caribbean.” The DR’s preparation for the Panama Canal’s expansion is founded on a historical opportunity, which dates back to the Discovery of the Americas. The Canal has been a point where imports and exports converged, not only with the Old and the New World, but also linking the Old World with Central America and South America. This historical advantage is being strengthened by the government’s support of the initiative with the benchmarking of DR ports with the best ports in the world already undertaken. The local IPA, the Center for Investment and Export for the Dominican Republic (CEI-RD) is taking a lead in positioning the country’s excellent system of roads, nine international

airports, four cruise ports and 12 modern cargo ports, including the Dubai Ports operated Caucedo Multimodal Port, which is one of the 25 largest ports in the world.

The DR “Hub of the Caribbean” project envisages the implementation of a strategy which includes the development of port and maritime infrastructure, financial free zones, tourism, shipping and air connectivity. Dubai Ports is already attracting shipping lines to transship through the DR port, which is strategically located near the Las Americas International Airport, with a capacity to handle 1,300 ships a year.

These are only two of the national initiatives underway in the Caribbean that would position the region in the transshipment and logistics sector. That means the Caribbean would be taking advantage of “the biggest shift in the freight business since the 1950s,” according to *The New York Times* (December 2010). This opportunity has not been lost on other countries in the region, namely Trinidad and Tobago and the Bahamas, where the ports in Port of Spain and Freeport are

also considering improvements. And the significant investment which would follow this kind of opportunity could transform the face of Caribbean economies over the next decade, positioning the region for even greater investment flows.

The DR and Jamaican Governments have already indicated significant interest from investors in advancing these plans and, indeed, the air is thick with the anticipation of a brighter future, not just for the countries implementing these plans but for the region as a whole which stands to benefit from the spill-over effects.

Also attracting the attention of investors is the Caracol Industrial Park in Haiti. The project includes the construction of an industrial park of 250 hectares with an investment of US \$280 million. The full-service industrial park will entail state-of-the-art waste water treatment facilities and modern industrial buildings in the northern part of the country, at Caracol. The project is a partnership between the Government of Haiti, the United States Government, the Inter-American Development Bank and





the South Korean textile companies SAE-A and will be the largest and most modern industrial park in the Western Caribbean and Latin America. The anchor investor, SEA-A, is establishing a state-of-the-art apparel manufacturing complex that is vertically integrated to include on site fabric mills, printing and embroidery facilities. Considerable investment will be made to upgrade the infrastructure within that part of Haiti, including accessible roads, a new port facility, supply of electricity and the construction of homes. The initial phase of the project includes 350.000 m<sup>2</sup> of covered industrial space, of which 120.000 m<sup>2</sup> will be made available for lease. By December 2013, five companies had already occupied spaces at the Park specializing in apparel manufacturing, paint production and construction and more than 2,500 direct jobs have been created in 2013 as a result of the initiative.

Haiti is strategically positioning the Industrial Park for the garment/textile industry, a sector in which it had an advantage in years gone by, an advantage that still remains, with wages at about 30% and 50% the cost of those in

similar enterprises in China and Central America. The near-shore advantage of Haiti added to the duty free benefits and the more flexible sourcing rules under the HELP and HOPE II Acts for Haitian exports into the US market, gives an added attraction to the manufacturing of textiles in that Caribbean country. For Haiti, the creation of much-needed jobs will be the greatest economic impact for a country with an estimated unemployment rate of 40% in 2010.

Other investor-friendly developments include the region's push to reduce the high cost of energy. Grenada, for example, is targeting investments in the green economy, partnering with Sir Richard Branson's Carbon War Room to court investors and finalize a road map focused on improving the regulatory environment, energy efficiency in government buildings and infrastructure and affordable green energy services for major users in the private sector. Dominica has been exploring geothermal energy with the drilling of two full size wells for a 15MW geothermal power plant which is projected to be completed by the end of 2015. The proposed supply is for local consumption and export markets

in Martinique and Guadeloupe. Additional untapped reservoirs exist in the north and south of the island. In Barbados and Nevis, there are plans for waste-to-energy plants and there have been expansions in wind farms in Curacao, Jamaica and the DR.

Connectivity is being aggressively addressed with the development of a new airport in St Vincent and the Grenadines, the Argyle International Airport, and Caribbean's first airport city or aerotropolis (a planned development in which a city-like site and commercial centre grow around an airport), at the Piarco AeroPark in Trinidad and Tobago. And then there is the Royal Caribbean International Port Castries Project which will be undertaken by the second largest cruise line operating in the Caribbean, the Royal Caribbean International (RCI).

Niche sector developments are also taking place in offshore education, with the expansion of the St George's University School of Medicine in Grenada and the space tourism programme in Curacao, with XCOR Aerospace to begin operational flights from Curacao in 2014.

Suzette Hudson is the Senior Advisor, Investment Promotion at Caribbean Export. She has direct responsibility for managing all matters related to the Agency's role as the Secretariat for the Caribbean Association for Investment Promotion Agencies (CAIPA) and the development and implementation of the Regional Investment Promotion Strategy and Implementation Plan for CARIFORUM.





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# exporters' insights





# the story of sandals: life's a beach and ready for business

BY STEPHANIE BISHOP

For over three decades the name Sandals has been globally recognized as an epitome of world-class luxury and excellence. As a leader in the Caribbean ultra all-inclusive industry, the resort is well positioned to stay at the forefront of this market because of its rich history and optimistic outlook.

The mastermind behind the masterpiece is the illustrious Gordon "Butch" Stewart, and like his own life story, the genesis of Sandals Resorts is unprecedented.

## Selling the Caribbean Dream

Stewart has successfully made his fortune selling

the Caribbean dream, an art he fostered for nearly eight years including several as a salesman at the Dutch-owned Curacao Trading Company and, before that, a spell studying in England. Then in 1968, he started his first company, Appliance Traders Limited (ATL), and within less than two years became the leading distributor of air-conditioning units in Jamaica.

"We were number one within 18 months and this was just the beginning, where everything came from," recounted Stewart.

The air-conditioner service and distribution company quickly mushroomed, adding

refrigerators, freezers and other appliances. Today, the company produces and trades everything from automobile parts to water pumps.

In 1981, ATL provided the capital required to acquire and renovate a rundown hotel in Montego Bay, Jamaica. Seven months and US \$4 million in renovations later, the country's first Sandals Resort opened.

Success, however, was not automatic. Most of the major tour operators already had exclusive deals with some of his competitors, and because of the resort's close proximity to the airport (Sangster International), guests complained about the

All images provided by  
Sandals Resorts International





noise. Further, the business was too small to break even.

"We had a lot of enthusiasm, but we didn't know what we were doing. We lost a lot of money for a couple of years, and if you lose money in the hotel business you lose a lot of money."

Sandals eventually gained traction in the 1980s consumer boom.

"It was the era of President Reagan and Prime Minister Thatcher and I rode the wave."

Even with the economic malaise afflicting consumers and the competition, there was solace at the heart of Sandals Resorts.

"In a crisis, the inexpensive stuff sells. The middle stuff is under pressure. But the top market does business."

### Early Expansion

A decade after transforming the sublime shoreline of the Jamaica north coast with five Sandals Resorts, Stewart expanded his brand to Antigua and Barbuda.



"Antigua was really the only island aside from Jamaica with which I had any experience. I used to visit for a couple of days at a time to unwind and I loved it. The Anchorage Hotel with its 99 rooms was for sale so we bought it, added another 50 rooms, and the rest is history."

Following Antigua, the all-inclusive brand has opened in Saint Lucia, Bahamas, Barbados, and Grenada.

"There are certain things we look for when expanding such as the overall quality of the country and its beaches. Does it have a stable, democratic government? Does it have a low crime rate? There is a multitude of different aspects that need to align. Plus of course there's the human factor too. I'm a very emotional person and if I'm not personally in love with the place, I find it difficult to sell out in the marketplace. I love every country we operate in."

### Conquering Challenges

The astute entrepreneur believes that in business, there will always be mistakes. A sense of accomplishment comes, however,

in conquering these challenges.

"There are mistakes. When you go into business, from my experience, it's never quite what you think it is. There are always surprises. It's the cost of experience, the cost of learning, the cost of growth."

### Exceeding Expectations

From inception, Sandals Resorts has earned just about every award and accolade in the industry. And with the likes of competitors such as Club Méditerranée (Club Med) and the Hilton Hotels, this continues to be a tremendous feat.

"The competitive advantage of Sandals is the uniqueness of the brand. What differentiates us from another all-inclusive is the influence of luxury in every aspect of the resort experience, hence the introduction of the Luxury Included® concept in 2007. At its core, this concept was introduced as a commitment to exceed expectations with real and tangible points of distinction that customers could experience and that our











partners could articulate and market with confidence.”

The family-owned company transformed itself from a single resort in Jamaica to one of the most recognized award-winning hospitality brands in the world. With over 12,000 employees and two new hotels in Barbados and Grenada, Sandals Resorts are but jewels in the crown of the “King of All-Inclusive Resorts.”

In the beginning, Stewart had no hotel experience, but he approached business with a simple philosophy: “The winning formula is to find out what people want, give it to them and, in doing so, exceed their expectations.”

Today, under the Sandals Resorts International umbrella, Stewart has established 24 properties in seven countries. In addition to Sandals Resorts, the four other premium brands include Beaches Resorts, Grand Pineapple Beach Resorts, Fowl Cay Resort and The Private Villas Collection.

“What would I tell someone who is looking to expand? Give it your all. Find your market, pick your staff well and give good direction. Pick your country wisely because some welcome you with open arms, while others see you as an intruder.”

## Corporate Social Responsibility

As a result of his entrepreneurial exploits, Stewart has successfully spearheaded over two dozen companies that are collectively Jamaica’s largest private sector group, and the country’s biggest foreign exchange earner. Similar patterns of growth are also evident in the economic impact of his business throughout the region.

Through the philanthropic arm, The Sandals Foundation, the company provides active support to more than 150 major projects in its host communities. This support ranges from the building of schools to providing access to healthcare.

“The Sandals Foundation represents a way for Sandals and Beaches to give back to our community through initiatives that support, uplift and improve the lives of the Caribbean people. It is our way of better enabling us to take on more of what needs to be done in the islands where we operate.”

Stewart’s philosophies about life are reflected not only in his company’s approach to corporate social responsibility, but also in the way he conducts business, an underpinning that augurs well for any venture.

## Company Profile

Sandals Resorts is an operator of all-inclusive resorts in the Caribbean and a part of Sandals Resorts International (SRI), parent company Beaches Resort, Grand Pineapple Beach Resorts, Fowl Cay Resort and several private villas. Sandals Resorts has 15 properties located in six Caribbean islands: Antigua, Bahamas, Barbados, Grenada, Jamaica, and Saint Lucia. For additional information visit: [www.sandals.com](http://www.sandals.com).

### Sandals Resorts Properties

#### Jamaica

Sandals Montego Bay  
Sandals Royal Caribbean Resort & Private Island  
Sandals Grande Riviera Beach & Villa Golf Resort  
Sandals Negril Beach Resort & Spa  
Sandals Whitehouse European Village & Spa  
Sandals Royal Plantation Ocho Rios  
Sandals Carlyle Montego Bay

#### Antigua

Sandals Grande Antigua Resort & Spa

#### Barbados

Sandals Barbados Resort

#### Bahamas

Sandals Royal Bahamian Spa Resort & Offshore Island  
Sandals Emerald Bay Great Exuma

#### Grenada

Sandals LaSource Grenada Resort & Spa  
Grenada

#### Saint Lucia

Sandals Grande Saint Lucian Spa & Beach Resort  
Sandals La Toc Golf Resort & Spa  
Sandals Halcyon Beach



# driving success: the automotive art strategy for growth & sustainability

BY STEPHANIE BISHOP



All images provided by Automotive Art

Mention the name Dereck Foster, and most people will associate him with leadership, success and innovation. These attributes are also synonymous with the company he co-founded, Automotive Art.

Armed with more than 10 years' experience in the automotive paint business and the desire to revolutionize the industry in Barbados, Foster, and his business partner Hugh Blades established what has become the Caribbean's largest auto-care retailer of car enhancement products and services.

### A well-oiled machine

In order to be differentiated from the competition, Automotive Art had to be revolutionary.

"I saw that the industry was changing, particularly with the introduction of new high-tech paint systems," Dereck explained. "I believed that there was an opportunity to change the industry in Barbados by embracing this new technology."

The Automotive Art revolution meant transforming the environment in which paint was being sold.

"The automotive paint business, as it was then, was a 'dirty business'. Everything was covered in paint droplets, from the counter to the customer. Everything and everyone was covered in paint and that had to change."

What followed was a clean, professional-looking store with a supermarket-type format, where products were on shelves and fully accessible to customers. The company also invested in state-of-the-art computerized colour-mixing equipment, which allowed it to produce every car colour on the market. The next step was staff development.

"We trained our staff in how to use the products. This allowed them to produce better results for our customers, dramatically improving efficiency, and ultimately increasing productivity and lowering costs, which resulted in excellent profitability."

The results were undeniable. Within three

years of entering the automotive paint business in Barbados, Automotive Art had only one competitor remaining.

"When we started there were over 10 paint stores in Barbados, but many of them never capitalized on the market opportunities that were available. Today there are still a few players in the market, but Automotive Art holds a dominant share."

### Export-driven

Automotive Art commenced operations in Barbados in 1990 and began exporting two years later. The company was able to transform the face of the auto care industry in the island within record time, and saw the opportunity to do the same in other Caribbean territories, beginning with Dominica.

"In order to expand across the region, we needed to find the right partners. Harris Paints was an investor in Automotive Art and they had a factory on the ground in Dominica, so it made good business sense."

With expansion outside of CARICOM came the realisation that the company could not manufacture in Barbados and still be competitive. This component was therefore outsourced to a European firm and a distribution centre was established in Miami to facilitate logistics.

"From there (Miami), we started to export to Latin America. Every country has its own strengths. For Barbados, manufacturing goods for export, other than niche products like rum, is not it. Services and knowledge on the other hand is where we can be globally competitive."

Today, the aftermarket franchise chain and distribution company operates stores in nine countries and sells products in 62 countries around the world through operations in the USA and Poland. Automotive Art also exports knowledge from the Barbados operations, via a franchise system and head office functions.

### Navigating the challenges

Automotive Art faced many challenges in exporting regionally, but Foster pointed out that one of the biggest trials that Caribbean

entrepreneurs encounter comes from a logistical viewport, namely regional ports, customs and air transportation.

"We live in small countries, yet want to have some of the most draconian rules in the world, which then becomes a deterrent to manufacturers. Instead of helping countries with the ability to move goods, regionally and internationally, we are actually harming them."

Though the company successfully conquered the English-speaking Caribbean, the same could not be said for the rest of the region. Automotive Art was restricted to the English-speaking Caribbean because their German supplier already had distribution in the Latin American and French-speaking territories. This meant finding a new supplier that could provide similar quality without the restrictions.

In addition to finding a new supplier, the company recognised that there was a need to develop its own brand, the Automotive Art brand. This was achieved with a Dutch supplier, who not only facilitated access throughout the remaining territories, but also later opened the door to the United States market. This progress however was short-lived.

"Shortly after starting our US expansion, our Dutch supplier was bought out by a multibillion-dollar American paint company, who immediately informed us that they were going to break our contract, and while they were happy to continue to supply us for Caribbean and Latin America, we would not be able to sell in North America."

While this development proved perplexing, with research, insight and the right approach, the Automotive Art team secured a new supplier from Poland, two years later, to facilitate their strategy.

One of the Polish owners eventually sold his shares to Automotive Art, which led to its acquisition of 50% stake in the factory. This procurement completed the chain from production to sales, and heralded a new direction for the company.

"Now we can take on the world and no one





can tell us where to go. We have already started selling in North America, and while challenging we are making headway."

### Keys to Success

Dereck Foster defines success as a desire to be the best, and with this comes the attainment of wealth, favour or eminence.

"The keys to success for Automotive Art are recruiting good people, and more importantly keeping them. Our team is passionate about the industry and our company. This translates into a good experience for our customers, investors and business partners."

Foster added that there is an infinite value in the staff being knowledgeable about the company's products and the services provided. This expertise adds immeasurable

worth to the Automotive Art brand.

"I remember having this conversation with a very successful business person in Barbados, and when I told him the effort that our management spent on training, he asked me how we could spend so much on employees and then they leave. I told him, imagine what would happen if we didn't [invest in their training] and they stayed!"

In addition to a great team, Foster believes that there are five essential elements that contribute to the company's achievements in export:

1. A great brand is critical to success. It defines you and it is of vital importance that you nurture it, care for it and protect it. Your brand is your reputation.

"With a well-managed brand, your

company hardly needs to introduce itself. In your industry, people will already know your business, its personality, and the promise you make to customers is cemented in their experience when doing business with you."

2. Make sure your company is built to last. Leaders in companies have to make decisions daily that could produce short-term gains, but have dire consequences for the long-term health of the company. At Automotive Art, the desire is to see the company grow and prosper long after the founders have moved on.

"I read a great book that speaks about the difference between companies that adopt a built-to-last culture—it really

brought it home to me. The book is called *Built to Last*, by Jim Collins and Jerry Porras, and I would like to suggest that every leader hoping to build a great organization read this book."

3. Continue to innovate. As the only automotive aftermarket business in the Caribbean, and one of the few in the world, that has paint as one of its core business categories, Automotive Art consistently redefines its approach to business, from introducing the first air-conditioned customer waiting rooms to creating an ultramodern storefront by global standards.

"We completely changed the automotive business, and we were one of the first companies to brand everything—our building, vehicles, and staff uniforms. More importantly, we are one of the few paint companies in the world that has everything under one brand for refinishing a car from body filler to clear coat, and everything in between. Innovation keeps us ahead of the competition."

4. Undertake comprehensive market research. This will help in identifying the right target market, competitors, customers, distribution channels and the best approach for product promotion.

"Ensure you do your research on the market you plan to enter, make sure your products are competitive, identify the competitors you are targeting, their strategy and how they are marketing in that country."

5. Find the right partners. Partners that are committed, and share the company's vision and the team's passion are paramount.

However, businesses cannot succeed without the right infrastructure and support. Foster believes that governments can do more to facilitate exports by "staying out of the way of exporters and not pampering to the business communities that say they need more protection."

"I do not believe in protection. I believe in the free market, that's how nature operates. If you do something well, you get rewarded, if you handle your business poorly you close down. Regional governments tend to listen to individuals as opposed to sectors collectively, but this hinders export potential as opposed to helping the process. This builds inefficiency not exports. There is too much protectionism."

There is also the view that governments need to focus on the industries in which they can be globally competitive, taking a "think global-act local approach."

### The road ahead

"The future for Automotive Art is bright, and because of our team, I believe that any challenges we face now or in the future will not be insurmountable," Foster said.

The company is currently focused on the Americas [Caribbean, Latin America and North America], and the team in Poland is focused on Europe but the next big market is Africa, starting in South Africa as one of the continent's biggest economies.

"Our intention for our company is to be everywhere. We won't turn down a customer, regardless of where they are from. In fact we are speaking with a customer from Egypt in spite of the current problems that country is currently experiencing, so the possibilities are endless."

Foster also believes there is one more big thing the Caribbean should be exporting—our lifestyle.

"The Caribbean has a great climate, we are fantastically located half-way between the US and Latin America, and most countries are independent and relatively stable. We can be the headquarters for some of the biggest organizations on the planet and the home to some of the world's most pioneering entrepreneurs, because people want to live in this environment. But we need to have the infrastructure that supports the knowledge, investment, and innovation that these companies and entrepreneurs will bring to our region."

## Company Profile

Automotive Art directly employs over 200 persons in company-operated business; these include franchise locations and distribution points. Products include: accessories, batteries, paints, tyres, tools and wheels. For more information visit [www.automotiveart.com](http://www.automotiveart.com).

### Franchise locations:

Antigua and Barbuda • Barbados • Cayman Islands • Guyana • Jamaica • St Kitts and Nevis • Saint Lucia • Suriname • Turks and Caicos

### Distribution Partners:

#### Caribbean and Americas

Aruba • Bahamas • Belize • Bermuda • Canada • Dominica • Dominican Republic • French Guiana • Grenada • Nicaragua • Montserrat • Puerto Rico • St Maarten • St Vincent and the Grenadines • Tortola • Trinidad and Tobago • United States of America

#### Africa

Botswana • Morocco • South Africa

#### Asia

Bahrain • Bangladesh • Iraq • Israel • Pakistan • Saudi Arabia • United Arab Emirates

#### Europe

Belarus • Bulgaria • CEZET - Netherlands, Belgium, Luxemburg • Czech Republic • Croatia • Germany • Estonia • Finland • Hungary • Ireland • Italy • Latvia • Lithuania • Malta • Norway • Portugal • Romania • Russia • Sweden • Slovakia • Spain • United Kingdom • Ukraine

#### Pacific

Australia

Stephanie Bishop is a Communications Advisor at the Caribbean Export Development Agency. She is a development communications specialist with over 10 years professional experience and holds a Masters in International Affairs.



# recipe for success: rainforest seafoods on serving the region

BY STEPHANIE BISHOP

Jamaican home-grown company is region's largest supplier of premium seafood. Here's how they did it.



All images provided by Rainforest Seafoods

In just over 18 years, Brian Jardim took what began as “dabbling in fish brokerage from Guyana to Jamaica” and turned it into the Caribbean’s largest supplier of premium quality fish and seafood.

The journey started in 1995 and Jardim’s motivation was to fill the need in the hotel industry where he had been working for more than 10 years.

### The ability to seafood differently

“It became pretty apparent that most travellers to the region came for the full Caribbean experience,” Jardim explained. “In addition to sun, sea and sand, they assumed that we had bountiful and endless seafood in our offerings, but honestly many of the islands were fished out. And at that time, Jamaica was trading between the islands to meet their fish and seafood demands, because no one island was self-sufficient.”

Jardim realized there was a niche within the hotel industry to provide quality seafood and premium prices, so together with business partner Ian Dear, he bought an old restaurant on Montego Bay’s famous “Hip Strip” and restored the site into Marguerites, a premier dining spot specializing in seafood. The pair then built the now famous Margaritaville next door on the adjoining land, which mushroomed into the most successful chain of restaurants and clubs on Jamaica’s sandy shoreline.

“I saw an opportunity and I ran with it. In addition to brokering to hotels and resorts in Jamaica, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, and Saint Lucia, I was now providing seafood to our 12 restaurants and bars in Jamaica. We became self-sufficient in our seafood supply.”

Today, from its headquarters in Montego Bay and the recently established state-of-the-art processing plant centre in Kingston, Jamaica, Rainforest Seafoods is able to produce more than five million pounds of seafood in its distribution system at any given time.

As Chief Executive Officer, Brian Jardim heads a team of 350 employees who ensure the distribution of more than 400 different references of premium quality fish and seafood, from more than 100 recognised global suppliers, to customers across the region.

### Conquering Competition and Challenges

Rainforest Seafoods is dominant in its field, but competitors within the islands are mainly broad line wholesalers or distributors who carry seafood as one item in their portfolio, along with beef, chicken, lamb et cetera. “Our advantage is that we are specialized and we have found the niches in our business, but there will always be people selling what we have, so we just have to sell it better.”

The business has its challenges. “Our business is very seasonal, so the capital demands are extremely seasonal. There is a time of year when we buy, and time of year when we sell. Many times there was a mismatch, so that was probably one of our biggest challenges in the early days, finding capital we needed to meet our demand to supply.”

The ability to earn foreign currency and net income as an entrepreneur goes a long way in securing investment and capital, Jardim said. “Your ideas exceed your wallet most times, so you have to start with the financial institutions to sell your idea. However, the fact that we were earning US dollars from a very early stage was very helpful in the financing process.”

### Hooked on Exports

Since selling his interest in Margaritaville in 2010, Jardim has been able to concentrate 100 per cent on expanding Rainforest Seafoods.

In Jamaica, that expansion has led to 15 retail stores and delis, in addition to offering catering services. Regional expansion began with exports to Trinidad and Tobago.

“They were the first choice because of the great symbiotic relationship we have with Trinidad Seafood Limited for more than 15 years. We bought from them and we sold to them and today they are still one of our best customers and we are one of their best, so it was always going to be a win-win situation for both of us.”

Rainforest Seafoods currently exports to 10 countries, which includes nine Caribbean Islands and the United States through their processing plant in Honduras. The company also airfreights fresh to brokers in the

southeast of the US for distribution along the continent’s eastern seaboard.

Today approximately 20% of their sales comes from exports and a target of 50 per cent has been set for the next three years.

“In order to meet this target, we have expanded our product portfolio to include value-added products, which should push us into new and exciting territories.”

A major aspect of the company’s export plans includes breaking into the European market. “We already have our US Department of Agriculture certification and have exceeded the Food and Drug Administration’s Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point guidelines which has allowed us to start our first exports to the US from Jamaica. But Europe is in our sights so we are working on gaining EU certification. We are also hoping to get into Asia with some of our products in 2014.”

### Recipe for Success

Jardim said that the company’s single biggest strength and reason for success is its outstanding team. “Coming from a dozen to nearly 350-plus with a shared vision is a big part of our success. We are still a young company and there is no room for bureaucracy. Everyone has access and the opportunity to bring their ideas forward.”

But success does not come without hard work and dedication. “We were knocking on doors for a long time, but we were dedicated to our brand and the potential it had. The strength of a brand is a powerful thing and I think we have grown exponentially over the last few years as a direct result of awareness created around our new products.”

Rainforest Seafoods may be Jamaican home-grown, but increasingly people across the region are recognising the product within their hotels, supermarkets and restaurants.

“We have also been able to step up in visibility with our active and passive advertising: billboards, bus sheds, television advertisements and social media are a few avenues we have explored.”

Another factor of success is getting the business plan right the first time.





"Bankers love exporters and those earning foreign currency. Investors also find an export-driven business attractive so strive towards this goal when seeking capital. When you develop your business plan, think about how you can export all or at least a portion of your business."

Jardim also has a list of common pitfalls for entrepreneurs to avoid.

"The Chief Customs Officer in every island is a very powerful person. So, do the necessary research and be aware of the red tape and the requirements for export. It sounds easy but many times it will be trial and error."

Regional governments are also urged to establish a clear set of guidelines of what is required within each island so that exporters are able to meet them.

"Something as simple as packaging and the way the date is written, or as complex as phytosanitary requirements and food restrictions can become a barrier to entry."

The role of governments and relevant agencies in regional export success went beyond ports of entry, he added. "They need to talk a little more amongst themselves and create a common playbook. We need to stop being so self-consumed as individual islands and work towards a more seamless and bureaucracy-free system because it can impact on our competitive advantage as a country and eventually as a region as a whole."



## Company Profile

Rainforest Seafoods processes and distributes over 400 references of fish and assorted shellfish sourced from recognized suppliers around the world and we are committed to acquiring product from sustainable sources that use environmentally sensitive methods. For additional information visit: [www.rainforestseafoods.com](http://www.rainforestseafoods.com)

Rainforest products are distributed in the following countries:

Antigua and Barbuda • Barbados • Cayman Islands • Dominica • Grenada • Saint Kitts and Nevis • Saint Lucia • St Vincent and the Grenadines • Trinidad and Tobago • United States of America

Stephanie Bishop is a Communications Advisor at the Caribbean Export Development Agency. She is a development communications specialist with over 10 years professional experience and holds a Masters in International Affairs.





The Caribbean's **largest supplier of premium quality seafood** with processing plants, boats, farms and distribution centers strategically located in **Jamaica, Belize and Honduras.**

Rainforest Seafoods is equipped to efficiently and **consistently supply the Caribbean market** with all its seafood needs.

# RAINFOREST SEAFOODS

[rainforestseafoods.com](http://rainforestseafoods.com)





# company to look out for:

## smaks luxury group limited



**Company Name:**

SMAKS Luxury Group

**Website**

www.chairum.com

**Chief Executive Officer:**

Dr Kiran Akal

**Year Established:**

2011

**Location (s):**

SMAKS teas are blended in the United Kingdom (UK) and packaged in Trinidad and Tobago.

**Product Summary:**

SMAKS is the Caribbean's premier luxury tea brand. There are currently eleven teas in the SMAKS range: Antillean Green, Barbados Silver, Bermuda Pink, Caribbean Chai, Grenadines Purple, Hispaniola, Parang, Tobago Afternoon, Trinidad Breakfast, Trinitario Dark, and Trinitario Light. In addition to bespoke teas, the company is also the creator of Chai Rum, the world's first tea-infused rum.

**Export Markets:**

The company currently exports across the Caribbean and within Europe, specifically in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK.

**Major Exporting Achievements:**

The first achievement for SMAKS teas was winning the pilot launch of Caribbean Export's Break Point in Grenada in 2012. During the presentation, we were able to present our Trinidad Breakfast and Tobago afternoon to the

Earl and Countess of Wessex on board the Fort Rosalie. Following that presentation a request was made for our teas to be presented to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom.

The company was also one of 50 winners in 2012 Idea to Innovation (i2i) competition organized by the Council for Competitiveness and Innovation (CCI) of the Ministry of Planning and Sustainable Development in Trinidad and Tobago for budding entrepreneurs and innovators to bring their ideas to proof of concept. SMAKS was chosen for their newest product Chai Rum.

SMAKS has also made an arrangement with Camper and Nicholson's International, the largest yacht brokerage in the world, to become a global brand partner in which the Chai Rum will be poured at some of the most prestigious events organized by this company, including the Grand Prix, in Monaco.

Chai Rum has also most recently won silver in the Wine & Spirits tasting competition at the world renowned Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas.

**Market Entry Strategies:**

The first step is assessing the marketplace to get some exposure and a holistic view of the market you intend to enter. Next, identify the right types of people with whom you wish to partner. The right partnership is important, sometimes it's not about the big distributor, but more about connecting with people who share your passion and are focused on your niche. Finally, after all the research and networking, just start to distribute and stay focused on the end goal.

**Greatest Exporting Lessons Learnt:**

In addition to choosing the right partners, it is important to stay focused. Many big companies will try to discourage you because you are entering their market with a unique product but don't veer away from your vision or your goal.

Quality is also important, when you're coming from the Caribbean and looking to compete in a global market, going medium to low can be disastrous, especially as it relates to any marketing challenges you will face. Finally, believe in your brand and carry yourself with that confidence when approaching dealers.

**Support Received:**

Caribbean Export has played an incredibly important role in our export success. It started in 2011 when they gave us the very first break by facilitating our participation in Design Caribbean in Santo Domingo, and the response of the public in general was phenomenal.

Following that there were other tradeshow and opportunities to attend meetings. In 2012, I was also a finalist in the pilot launch of Break Point and eventually chosen as a winner in the competition in Grenada with the chance to pitch to judges in London. We also were awarded a Direct Assistance Grant that year and it has helped us with our visibility. With each Caribbean Export activity, we tried to maximise the opportunity that was given to us.

I was also involved in ANUGA in 2013, which of all the experiences I've had with Caribbean Export over the last three years was by far the best. Not only because of the opportunities



for export gained, but because of the sense of camaraderie among the group of Caribbean firms exhibiting.

ANUGA was a tremendous success with five contacts being made. SMAKS is in Switzerland because of ANUGA with our Chai Rum. We have on-going discussions with a coffee company in Belgium to collaborate with them and we are also in France at the Intercontinental in Cannes. The company is also planning exports to the UK and we are in discussions with Germany.

### General Recommendation on Support Needed by Exporters:

Bigger firms need to begin to understand that innovation is important and that working with small entrepreneurs is the way to go. These small entrepreneurs don't have the bureaucracy that comes with bigger organizations, but they have the speed to move and ideas to innovate. Bigger firms also need to understand that small companies are not their competition, but that they should be embraced. This is the model that is seen globally from the music industry to wines and spirits.

Small entrepreneurs also have to be sure that they have a good idea or product and if you think you have this, face the public. Bring it to market and gauge the reaction you receive. Also, be sure to have a vision for your brand: passion, product and personality.

After that, there are many government agencies, and regional agencies like Caribbean Export, and international organisations that have initiatives available from which SMEs can take advantage. The important thing is having a product or idea first.

All images provided by Smaaks Luxury Group Ltd



# exporters' tool box







# Caribbean Export's suite of services

Caribbean Export seeks to provide CARIFORUM small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) with the tools to strengthen their capacity to export by offering a range of programmes and initiatives designed to enable private sector development and export promotion.

## EXPORT DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

### CAPACITY BUILDING

Caribbean Export has a range of training and certification programmes, which are intended not only to build firm capacity, but to also increase their knowledge base about the global marketplace:

#### Direct Assistance Grant Scheme (DAGS) Proposal Writing Workshops

The DAGS Proposal Writing Workshops provide firms with training on grant proposal construction and methodology and the process for applying for grant funding. This information can be used not only for the DAGS but may also be useful for other grant funding schemes.

### Productivity Network (ProNET)

ProNET is a modular training programme for SME owners who want to grow their business and become more competitive.

#### ProNET Train-the-Trainer Programme

ProNET's Train-the-Trainer initiative is designed to allow management and business consultants to further develop their capacity to effectively deliver the ProNET modules.

### Study Tours

Study Tours provide both SMEs and BSOs with the opportunity to visit new markets and benefit from in-market research, and learn the best practices from some of the most productive businesses and organizations in the world.

### Benchmarking Assessment

Benchmarking provides Trade Promotion Organizations (TPOs) with a reliable and objective assessment of their institution, its efficiency, and its performance in relation to best business practices of TPOs across the world. The assessment identifies areas for improvement through the use of a full complement of benchmark measures developed specifically for TPOs.

### Brand Development and Packaging Workshops

The Brand Development and Packaging Workshop was developed to address some of the weaknesses in regional product branding/packaging and overall product presentation for the export market.

### Market Intelligence Training Workshops

Market Intelligence Training Workshops for private sector firms and BSOs are designed to assist in the capacity building of the regional private sector to procure high quality market intelligence information through the identification and use of various trade information data sources and platforms.

### Regional Trade Information Training Programme

The Regional Trade Information Training Programme builds the capacity of regional experts from various BSOs and Trade Promotion Organizations (TPOs) in trade information management.

## EXPORTERS' TOOLKIT

The Exporters' Toolkit provides a step by step guide on how to export goods and services successfully. It provides templates and resources that can help any business to export regionally or internationally.

## MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Caribbean Export provides a range of services in the area of market intelligence to equip firms with the tools required for effective market research, and provides critical information used to inform the businesses decisions necessary when embarking on exporting goods and services to new markets.

### Market Intelligence Portal (CE-MIP)

The CE-MIP is designed to be an online platform, which gives the user the ability to obtain market reports on products, sectors and countries of interest. Key data the portal will report on will be Trade/Economic data, Market/Sector Profiles and reports, Tariff and Non-Tariff data, a business register/database of regional companies, trade agreements analysis, directory of Business Support Organisations, Trade regulation and related documentation, and links to important data sources.

### Market Pointers

Given the fact that exporters usually have little time to plough through tedious and complicated market research publications, Caribbean Export provides information on areas which are important for exporting in a succinct and well organized manner. Upon

request, the Agency can provide Market Pointers on a specific product and target export market. The tool represents an effective tool for presenting data collected on potential markets in a way which is easy to understand.

### Market Opportunity Brief

Market Opportunity Briefs provide key insights on the demand conditions for a particular product in both traditional and non-traditional markets. This tool analyses various trends such as market size, market growth rate, market consumption capacity, wholesale and retail trends, social factors affecting demand, supply factors, and opportunities for regional companies.

## EXPORT PROMOTION SERVICES

Caribbean Export offers direct market penetration opportunities for firms through branded platforms for specific industries.

### Design Caribbean

Design Caribbean is the region's leading contemporary design event displaying the Caribbean's finest handmade designs and innovative products. (<http://www.designcaribbean.com/>)

### Caribbean Essence

The Caribbean Essence Fashion Showcase is a Caribbean Export project that demonstrates the vibrancy and creative expression for which we are known. This is where Caribbean Export presents the region's trends in fashion design and the amazing potential within this industry.

### Caribbean Kitchen

Caribbean Kitchen seeks to expose CARIFORUM firms in the agro-processing and specialty foods sector that have the DNA to be globally competitive.

### Soul Fusion

Soul Fusion is a musical showcase of Caribbean culture with artists from the diverse nature of musical genres from across the Caribbean namely Reggae, Soca, Creole Music (Zouk, Kompa), Caribbean Jazz, Folk and Afro-Haitian.

## ACCESS TO FINANCE

One of the most direct ways in which Caribbean Export impacts SMEs is through its funding programmes. The two main programmes are:

### The Direct Assistant Grant Scheme(DAGS)

The DAGS is a reimbursement grant funding facility specifically designed to provide financial assistance to legally registered firms/individuals/ BSOs with the potential to export their goods and services.

### Special Call for Proposals

The Agency also provides special calls for proposals allowing applicants to submit proposals for funding outside of the regular DAGS facility e.g. Special Call for Proposals-Food Safety.

## INVESTMENT PROMOTION

### Caribbean Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (CAIPA)

As the Secretariat for CAIPA, Caribbean Export is deeply involved in the support and strengthening of regional investment promotion agencies.

### Regional Investor of the Year Awards

The Agency stages the Regional Investor of the Year Awards, in collaboration with CAIPA which invites nominations for foreign and local investors who have had a significant impact on regional industries. The Award also seeks to recognize investors in strategic areas of importance to the region, e.g. green energy, research and development, projects that involve a high degree of innovation and creativity and those that are championed by women.

## BUSINESS ADVOCACY

Caribbean Export seeks to create an enabling business environment for regional SMEs on a macro level by establishing relationships between territories through:

- Bi-national Programmes
- Trade agreements
- Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)

Within the context of Business Advocacy the Agency convenes a number of public/private sector engagement to facilitate the exchange of ideas, experiences and explore opportunities for regional growth and development. Examples of these include; the Caribbean Exporter's Colloquium, the Private Sector Advisory Group, the Caribbean Conference on the International Financial Services Sector and the Regional Innovation Advisory Group.



# directory of key contacts in CARIFORUM STATES

## Chambers of Commerce

### Antigua and Barbuda Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ltd

Cnr. North and Popeshead Streets  
P. O. Box 774  
St. John's  
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA  
Tel: (268) 462-0743  
Fax: (268) 462-4575  
Email: chamcom@candw.ag

### The Bahamas Chamber of Commerce and Employers' Confederation

Shirley Street & Collins Avenue  
P. O. Box: N-665  
Nassau  
THE BAHAMAS  
Phone: (242) 322-2145  
Fax: (242) 322-4649  
Website: www.thebahamaschamber.com

### Barbados Chamber of Commerce & Industry

Braemar Court  
Deighton Road  
St. Michael BB 14017  
OR  
P. O. Box 109B  
Brittons Hill  
St. Michael  
BARBADOS  
Tel: (246) 434-4750  
Fax: (246) 228-2907  
Email: bcci@bdscham.com  
Website:  
www.barbadoschamberofcommerce.com

### Belize Chamber of Commerce and Industry

P. O. Box 291, Second Floor, Withfield  
Tower  
4792 Coney Drive  
Belize City  
BELIZE  
Tel: (501) 223-5330  
Fax: (501) 223-5333  
Email: bcci@belize.org  
Website: www.belize.org/bcci

### Dominica Association of Industry and Commerce

14 Church Street  
P. O. Box 85  
Roseau  
COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA  
Tel: (767) 449-1962  
Fax: (767) 448-6868  
Email: daic@cwdom.dm  
Website: www.daic.dm

### Chamber of Commerce and Production of Santo Domingo

Avenida 27 de Febrero  
No. 228, Torre Fruisa  
Sector Esperilla  
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC  
Tel: (809) 682-2688  
Fax: (809) 685-2228  
Email: info@camarasantadomingo.do  
Website: www.camarasantodomingo.do

### Grenada Chamber of Industry & Commerce

Building # 11  
Fremente  
P.O. Box 129  
St. George's  
GRENADA  
Tel: (473) 440-2937/4485  
Fax: (473) 440-6627  
Email: info@grenadachamber.org  
Website: www.grenadachamber.org

### Georgetown Chamber of Commerce

P. O. Box 10110  
156 Waterloo Street  
North Cummingsburg  
Georgetown  
GUYANA  
Tel: (592) 225-5846/ (592) 227-6441  
Fax: (592) 226-3519  
Email: gtchambe@networksgy.com  
Website: www.gccigy.org

### Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie d'Haïti

4th Floor, Digicel Building 151  
Angle Ave. John Paul II & Impasse  
Duverger  
Turgeau  
Port au Prince  
HAITI  
Tel: (509) 2946-7777/ 2943-1173  
Email: directionexecutive@ccih.org.ht  
Website: www.ccih.org.ht

### Jamaica Chamber of Commerce

Suite 13-15, UDC Office Centre Building  
12 Ocean Boulevard  
Kingston  
JAMAICA  
Tel: (876) 922-0150-1  
Fax: (876) 924-9056  
Email: info@jamaicachamber.org.jm  
Website: www.jamaicachamber.org.jm

### St. Kitts-Nevis Chamber of Commerce

P. O. Box 332  
Horsford Road  
Portlands  
Basseterre  
ST. KITTS AND NEVIS  
Tel: (869) 465-2980/3967  
Fax: (869) 465-4490  
Email: sknchamber@caribsurf.com

### Saint Lucia Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture

1st Floor, American Drywall Building  
Vide Bouteille  
P. O.Box 482  
Castries  
SAINT LUCIA  
Tel: (758) 452-3165/ 453-1540  
Fax: (758) 453-6907  
Email: info@stluciachamber.org  
Website: www.stluciachamber.org

### St. Vincent and the Grenadines Chamber of Industry and Commerce

Unit 27  
Cruise Ship Terminal  
Kingstown  
VC0100  
Kingstown  
ST VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES  
Tel: (784) 457-1464  
Fax: (784) 456- 2944  
Email: svgchamber@svg-cic.org  
Website: www.svg-cic.org

### Suriname Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Kamer van Koophandel en Fabrieken  
Prof. W.J.A. Kernkampweg 37  
P.O.Box 149  
Paramaribo  
SURINAME  
Tel: (597) 530-311/530-313  
Fax: (597) 437-971  
Email: chamber@sr.net  
Website: www.surinamechamber.com

### Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce

Chamber Building  
Columbus Circle  
Westmoorings  
P. O. Box 499  
Port-of-Spain  
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO  
Tel: (868) 637-6966  
Fax: (868) 637-7425  
Email: chamber@chamber.org.tt  
Website: www.chamber.org.tt

## Coalition of Service Industries

### Antigua and Barbuda Coalition of Services Inc

P.O. Box W536  
St. John's  
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA  
Tel: (268) 462-6628  
Email: info@abcsi.org  
Website: www.abcsi.org

### Barbados Coalition of Service Industries

Building #3 Unit 2B  
Harbour Industrial Estate  
BARBADOS  
Tel: (246) 429-5357  
Fax: (246) 429-5352  
E-mail: info@bcsi.org.bb  
Website: www.bcsi.org.bb

### Belize Coalition of Service Providers

Second Floor  
DFC Building  
828 Croney Drive  
Belize City  
BELIZE  
Tel: (501) 223-4785  
E-mail: info@bcsp.info  
Website: www.bcsp.info

### Dominica Coalition of Services Industries

14 Hanover Street  
Roseau  
COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA  
Tel: (767) 266-4092  
Fax: (767) 440-8740  
Email: info@dominicacoalition.org  
Website: www.dominicacoalition.org

### Dominican Republic Coalition of Services Industries

Av. 27 de Febrero esq. Tiradentes.  
Torre Friusa. Oficinas Camara de Comercio de Santo Domingo  
Santo Domingo  
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC  
Tel: (809) 540-6186  
Email: Info@csird.org

### Grenada Coalition of Service Industries

GIDC Building  
Frequente Industrial Park  
Grand Anse  
St. George's  
GRENADA  
Tel: (473) 439-9275  
Fax: (473) 439-9275  
Email: gcic@spiceisle.com

### Guyana Coalition of Service Providers

c/o Institute of Development Studies  
University of Turkeyen  
Georgetown  
GUYANA  
Tel: (592) 675-9923  
Email: gcsp.services@gmail.com

### Jamaica Coalition of Services Industries

C/o Jamaica Promotions Corporation (JAMPRO)  
Head Office: 18 Trafalgar Road  
Kingston 10  
JAMAICA  
Tel: (876) 978-7755/ 3337 Ext: 2157  
Fax: (876) 946-0090  
Website: www.jamaicatradeandinvest.org



### St. Kitts-Nevis Coalition of Services

P O Box 186  
C/o Ministry of International Trade  
Basseterre  
ST. KITTS AND NEVIS  
Tel: (869) 465-8631  
Email: [contact@woodsrite.com](mailto:contact@woodsrite.com)

### Saint Lucia Coalition of Services Industries

#14 Orange Park Commercial Centre  
Bois d'Orange  
P O Box Choc 8056  
Castries  
SAINT LUCIA  
Tel: (758) 452 7864  
Fax: (758) 452 8695  
Email: [slcsi@candw.lc](mailto:slcsi@candw.lc)  
Website: [www.slcsi.org](http://www.slcsi.org)

### St. Vincent and the Grenadines Coalition of Service Industries

c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Consumer Affairs  
3rd Floor, Administrative Building  
Kingstown  
ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES  
Tel: (784) 456-2060  
Email: [info@svgcsi.org](mailto:info@svgcsi.org)  
Website: [www.svgcsi.org](http://www.svgcsi.org)

### Trinidad and Tobago Coalition of Services Industries Limited

1st Floor, #45 Cornelio Street  
Woodbrook  
Port of Spain  
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO  
Tel: (868) 622-9229  
Fax: (868) 622-8985  
Email: [info@ttcsi.org](mailto:info@ttcsi.org)  
Website: [www.ttcsi.org](http://www.ttcsi.org)

## Manufacturers' Associations

### Barbados Manufacturers' Association

Suite 201, Bldg. #8  
Harbour Industrial Estate  
St. Michael  
BARBADOS  
Tel: (246) 426-4474/ 427-9898  
Fax: (246) 436-5182  
Email: [info@bma.bb](mailto:info@bma.bb)  
Website: [www.bma.bb](http://www.bma.bb)

### Dominica Manufacturers' Association

c/o Invest Dominica Authority  
1st Floor Financial Centre  
Kennedy Avenue  
Roseau  
DOMINICA  
Tel: (767) 448-2045  
Fax: (767) 448-5840  
Email: [info@investdominica.dm](mailto:info@investdominica.dm)

### Guyana Manufacturers' and Services Association Ltd

157 Waterloo Street  
North Cummingsburg  
Georgetown  
GUYANA  
Tel: (592) 223-7405/ 223-7406  
Fax: (592) 225-5615  
Email: [gma\\_guyana@yahoo.com](mailto:gma_guyana@yahoo.com)  
Website: [www.gmsagy.org](http://www.gmsagy.org)

### The Jamaica Manufacturers' Association Ltd.

85A Duke Street  
Kingston  
JAMAICA  
Tel: (876) 922-8880-3/ 922-8869  
Fax: (876) 922-9205  
Email: [jma@cwjamaica.com](mailto:jma@cwjamaica.com)  
Website: [www.jma.com.jm](http://www.jma.com.jm)

### St. Lucia Manufacturers Association

P.O. Box MF 7177  
Castries  
SAINT LUCIA  
Tel: (758) 451-2222  
Fax: (758) 451-0125  
Email: [slumanufac@candw.lc](mailto:slumanufac@candw.lc)  
Website: [www.madeinstlucia.com](http://www.madeinstlucia.com)

### Suriname Manufacturers' Association

Coppenamestraat 187  
Paramaribo  
SURINAME  
Tel: (597) 43-4014 / 43-9797  
Fax: (597) 43-9798  
Email: [info@asfasuriname.com](mailto:info@asfasuriname.com)  
Website: [www.asfasuriname.com](http://www.asfasuriname.com)

### Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers' Association

TTMA Building  
42 Tenth Avenue  
Barataria  
P.O. Box 971  
Port-of-Spain  
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO  
Tel: (868) 675-8862  
Fax: (868) 675-9000  
Email: [info@ttma.com](mailto:info@ttma.com)  
Website: [www.ttma.com](http://www.ttma.com)

## Trade Promotion Organizations

### Bahamas Agricultural and Industrial Corporation

BAIC Building, East Bay Street, Nassau,  
New Providence  
P.O. Box N-4940  
BAHAMAS  
Tel: (242) 322-3740-3/ 325-2288  
Fax: (242) 322-2130/ 2123  
Email: [baic@batelnet.bs](mailto:baic@batelnet.bs)  
Website: [www.bahamas.gov.bs/baic](http://www.bahamas.gov.bs/baic)

### Barbados Investment and Development Corporation

P.O. Box 1250, Pelican House  
Princess Alice Highway  
Bridgetown  
St. Michael BB11000  
BARBADOS  
Tel: (246) 427-5350  
Fax: (246) 426-7802/ 2300  
Email: [bidc@bidc.org](mailto:bidc@bidc.org)  
Website: [www.bidc.org](http://www.bidc.org)

### **Belize Trade and Investment Development Service**

14 Orchid Garden Street  
Belmopan City  
Cayo District  
BELIZE  
Tel: (501) 822-3737/ 233-1913/2472  
Fax: (501) 822 0595/ 233-2464  
Email: beltrade@belizeinvest.org.bz  
Website: www.belizeinvest.org.bz

### **Dominica Export Import Agency**

P. O. Box 173  
Bayfront  
Roseau  
COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA  
Tel: (767) 448-2780/ 3494/ 3495  
Fax: (767) 448-6308  
Email: dexia@cwdom.dm  
Website: www.dexiaexport.com

### **Eastern Caribbean States Export Development Unit**

P. O. Box 769  
4th Floor, Financial Center  
Kennedy Avenue  
Roseau  
COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA  
Tel: (767) 448-2240 / 5503/ 6555  
Fax: (767) 448-5554  
Email: eduinfocenter@oecs.org / edu@oecs.org  
Website: www.oecs.org/edu

### **Center for Export and Investment of the Dominican Republic**

Ave. 27 de Febrero  
Esq. Ave. Gregorio Luperon  
Plaza de la Bandera  
Santo Domingo  
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC  
Tel: (809) 530-5505  
Fax: (809) 534- 4447  
Website: www.cei-rd.gov.do

### **Guyana Office for Investment**

190 Camp & Church Streets  
Georgetown  
GUYANA  
Tel: (592) 227-0653/ 0654/ 0658  
Fax: (592) 225 0655  
Email: goinvest@goinvest.gov.gy  
Website: www.goinvest.gov.gy

### **Jamaica Promotions Corporation**

Head Office, 18 Trafalgar Road  
Kingston 10  
JAMAICA  
Tel: (876) 978 7755  
Fax: (876) 946-0090  
Email: info@jamprocorp.com  
Website: www.jamaicatradeandinvest.org

### **St. Kitts Investment Promotion Agency**

C.A.P. Southwell Industrial Park  
Basseterre  
ST. KITTS AND NEVIS  
Tel: (869) 465 1153  
Fax: (869) 465 1154  
Email: info@stkittsipa.org  
Website: www.stkittsipa.org

### **Office of Private Sector Relations/ Trade Export Promotion Agency**

2nd Floor, Hewanorra House  
Pointe Seraphine  
Castries  
SAINT LUCIA  
Tel: (758) 468-2145/ 2123  
Fax: (758) 452-4606  
Email: info@opsrslu.org  
Website: www.opsr.org.lc

### **Invest SVG**

2nd Floor, Reigate Building  
Granby Street  
P.O. Box 2442 Kingstown  
SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES  
Tel: (784) 457-2159  
Fax: (784) 456-2688  
Email: support@investsvg.com  
Website: www.investsvg.com

### **Suriname Business Development Center**

Executive Office of the Suriname  
Business Forum  
Hendrikstraat 69  
1st Floor  
Mottonsoop  
SURINAME  
Tel: (597) 49-9010  
Fax: (597) 49-9011  
Email: info@sbc.sr  
Website: www.sbc.sr

### **Exportt**

151B Charlotte Street  
Port of Spain  
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO  
Tel: (868) 623-5507  
Fax: (868) 625-8126  
Email: info@exportt.co.tt  
Website: www.exportt.co.tt

## **Exporters Associations**

### **Dominican Association of Exporters**

Virgilio Diaz Ordonez No. 42  
Esq. Viriato Fiallo  
Ens. Julieta  
Santo Domingo, D.N.  
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC  
Tel: (809) 567-6779/ 227-3388  
Fax: (809) 563-1926  
Website: www.adoexpo.org

### **Jamaica Exporters' Association**

1 Winchester Road, Kingston 10  
JAMAICA  
Tel: (876) 960-4908/ 968-5812  
Fax: (876) 960-9869  
Email: info@exportjamaica.org  
Website: www.exportjamaica.org

### **The Grenada Exporters Association**

C/O Grenada Bureau of Standards  
P.O. Box 2036  
Queen's Park  
St. George's  
GRENADA  
Tel: (473) 440-5886/ 440-6783  
Fax: (473) 440-5554  
Email: gdbs@spiceisle.com



# appendix



# appendix

## country profiles

### Antigua and Barbuda

Population	89,000
GDP (USD)	\$1,230,000,000
GDP Per Capita (USD)	\$13,669
GDP Growth Rate (%)	0.6
GDP Contribution by sector (%)	Agriculture - 2.2% Industry - 16.4% Services - 81.4%
Inflation rate (consumer prices)	1.1%
Official exchange rate (per US Dollar)	\$2.70
Merchandise Trade Export value	\$33,067,000
Top 5 Non-Traditional Exports	1) Other made textile articles, sets, worn clothing etc 2) Electrical, electronic equipment 3) Ships, boats and other floating structures 4) Articles of iron and steel 5) Beverages, spirits and vinegar
Top 5 Export Partners and (%) share in total Exports	1) United States of America – 26.5% 2) United Kingdom – 20.7% 3) New Zealand – 5.3% 4) Montserrat – 3% 5) St Kitts and Nevis – 3%
Merchandise Trade Import value	\$344,622,000
Top 5 Non-Traditional Imports	1) Beverages, spirits and vinegar 2) Electrical, electronic equipment 3) Miscellaneous edible preparations 4) Articles of iron or steel 5) Plastics and articles thereof
Top 5 Import Partners and (%) share in total Imports	1) United States of America – 52.2% 2) China – 5.7% 3) Trinidad and Tobago – 4.5% 4) United Kingdom – 4.1% 5) Japan – 3%
Doing Business Index /189	71

### The Bahamas

Population	351,461
GDP (USD)	\$8,149,004,000
GDP Per Capita (USD)	\$21,908
GDP Growth Rate (%)	1.8
GDP Contribution by sector (%)	Agriculture – 2.1 % Industry – 7.1 % Services – 90.8%
Inflation rate (consumer prices)	0.4%
Official exchange rate (per US Dollar)	\$1.00
Merchandise Trade Export value	\$2,545,558,000
Top 5 Non-Traditional Exports	1) Ships, boats and other floating structure 2) Plastics and articles thereof 3) Fish, crustaceans, molluscs, aquatic invertebrates nes 4) Works of art, collectors pieces and antiques 5) Salt, sulphur, earth, stone, plaster, lime and cement
Top 5 Export Partners and (%) share in total Exports	1) United States of America – 24.4% 2) Dominican Republic – 16.1% 3) Poland – 14.5% 4) Mozambique – 8.3% 5) Turkey – 5.4%
Merchandise Trade Import value	\$9,498,866,000
Top 5 Non-Traditional Imports	1) Ships, boats and other floating structures 2) Electrical, electronic equipment 3) Organic chemicals 4) Articles of iron or steel 5) Furniture, lighting, signs, prefabricated buildings
Top 5 Import Partners and (%) share in total Imports	1) United States of America – 39.2% 2) Republic of Korea – 10.7% 3) Singapore – 10.4% 4) India – 8.1% 5) Colombia – 6.2%
Doing Business Index /189	84



## Barbados

<b>Population</b>	268,792
<b>GDP (USD)</b>	\$4,224,850,000
<b>GDP Per Capita (USD)</b>	\$14,917
<b>GDP Growth Rate (%)</b>	0
<b>GDP Contribution by sector (%)</b>	Agriculture – 3.1% Industry – 13.9% Services – 83%
<b>Inflation rate (consumer prices)</b>	1.8%
<b>Official exchange rate (per US Dollar)</b>	\$1.98
<b>Merchandise Trade Export value</b>	\$467,424,000
<b>Top 5 Non-Traditional Exports</b>	1) Beverages, spirits and vinegar 2) Pharmaceutical products 3) Optical, photo, technical, medical, etc apparatus 4) Salt, sulphur, earth, stone, plaster, lime and cement 5) Paper and paperboard, articles of pulp, paper and board
<b>Top 5 Export Partners and (%) share in total Exports</b>	1) United States of America – 18.2% 2) Trinidad and Tobago – 11.5% 3) Guyana – 4.6% 4) Jamaica – 4.4% 5) St Lucia – 4.3%
<b>Merchandise Trade Import value</b>	\$1,768,742,000
<b>Top 5 Non-Traditional Imports</b>	1) Electrical, electronic equipment 2) Pharmaceutical products 3) Plastics and articles thereof 4) Beverages, spirits and vinegar 5) Paper and paperboard, articles of pulp, paper and board
<b>Top 5 Import Partners and (%) share in total Imports</b>	1) United States of America – 33% 2) Trinidad and Tobago – 26.2% 3) Suriname – 4.9% 4) China – 4.4% 5) United Kingdom – 4%
<b>Doing Business Index /189</b>	91

## Belize

<b>Population</b>	347,800
<b>GDP (USD)</b>	\$1,604,500,000
<b>GDP Per Capita (USD)</b>	\$4,834
<b>GDP Growth Rate (%)</b>	0.7
<b>GDP Contribution by sector (%)</b>	Agriculture - 13% Industry - 23% Services - 64%
<b>Inflation rate (consumer prices)</b>	0.5%
<b>Official exchange rate (per US Dollar)</b>	\$1.98
<b>Merchandise Trade Export value</b>	\$418,635,000
<b>Top 5 Non-Traditional Exports</b>	1) Sugars and sugar confectionery 2) Residues, wastes of food industry, animal fodder 3) Electrical, electronic equipment 4) Beverages, spirits and vinegar 5) Wood and articles of wood, wood charcoal
<b>Top 5 Export Partners and (%) share in total Exports</b>	1) United States of America – 37.4% 2) United Kingdom – 20.4% 3) Nicaragua – 5.5% 4) Netherlands – 5.5% 5) India – 5.3%
<b>Merchandise Trade Import value</b>	\$927,824,000
<b>Top 5 Non-Traditional Imports</b>	1) Electrical, electronic equipment 2) Plastics and articles thereof 3) Paper and paperboard, articles of pulp, paper and board 4) Fertilizers 5) Miscellaneous edible preparations
<b>Top 5 Import Partners and (%) share in total Imports</b>	1) United States of America – 32.2% 2) Mexico – 11.4% 3) China – 11.4% 4) Netherland Antilles – 9.6% 5) Guatemala – 6.8%
<b>Doing Business Index /189</b>	106

## Dominica

Population	73,449
GDP (USD)	\$504,814,815
GDP Per Capita (USD)	\$7,011
GDP Growth Rate (%)	-0.8
GDP Contribution by sector (%)	Agriculture – 15.7% Industry – 15.6% Services – 68.7%
Inflation rate (consumer prices)	-0.4%
Official exchange rate (per US Dollar)	\$2.70
Merchandise Trade Export value	\$48,315,000
Top 5 Non-Traditional Exports	1) Footwear, gaiters and the like, parts thereof 2) Salt, sulphur, earth, stone, plaster, lime and cement 3) Soaps, lubricants, waxes, candles, modelling pastes 4) Tobacco and manufactured tobacco substitutes 5) Optical, photo, technical, medical etc apparatus
Top 5 Export Partners and (%) share in total Exports	1) Guatemala – 11.8% 2) Israel – 11.7% 3) Guyana – 11.3% 4) France – 8% 5) Egypt – 6.5%
Merchandise Trade Import value	\$187,165,000
Top 5 Non-Traditional Imports	1) Plastics and articles thereof 2) Meat and edible meat offal 3) Animal, vegetable fats and oils, cleave products etc 4) Rubber and articles thereof 5) Iron and steel
Top 5 Import Partners and (%) share in total Imports	1) United States of America – 41.5% 2) China – 12.3% 3) United Kingdom – 4.7% 4) Singapore – 4.1% 5) Canada – 2.7%
Doing Business Index /189	77

## Dominican Republic

Population	9,378,818
GDP (USD)	\$60,613,625,980
GDP Per Capita (USD)	\$5,826
GDP Growth Rate (%)	4.1
GDP Contribution by sector (%)	Agriculture - 6% Industry - 29.1% Services - 64.9%
Inflation rate (consumer prices)	4.8%
Official exchange rate (per US Dollar)	\$43
Merchandise Trade Export value	\$7,960,986,000
Top 5 Non-Traditional Exports	1) Pearls, precious stones, metals, coins, etc 2) Tobacco and manufactured tobacco substitutes 3) Cotton 4) Iron and steel 5) Pharmaceutical products
Top 5 Export Partners and (%) share in total Exports	1) United States of America – 51.1% 2) Haiti – 13.1% 3) Canada – 12.2% 4) China – 2.9% 5) Netherlands – 1.6%
Merchandise Trade Import value	\$19,349,837,000
Top 5 Non-Traditional Imports	1) Pharmaceutical products 2) Cotton 3) Paper and paperboard, articles of pulp, paper and board 4) Cereals 5) Iron and steel
Top 5 Import Partners and (%) share in total Imports	1) United States of America – 38.5% 2) China – 10.6% 3) Venezuela – 6.6% 4) Mexico – 6.1% 5) Trinidad and Tobago – 4.6%
Doing Business Index /189	117



## Grenada

Population	110,152
GDP (USD)	\$834,074,059
GDP Per Capita (USD)	\$7,876
GDP Growth Rate (%)	1.8
GDP Contribution by sector (%)	griculture – 5.6% Industry – 15.8% Services – 78.5%
Inflation rate (consumer prices)	-0.0%
Official exchange rate (per US Dollar)	\$2.70
Merchandise Trade Export value	\$42,425,000
Top 5 Non-Traditional Exports	1) Coffee, tea, mate and spices 2) Copper and articles thereof 3) Fish, crustaceans, molluscs, aquatic invertebrates nes 4) Cocoa and cocoa preparations 5) Paper and paperboard, articles of pulp, paper and board
Top 5 Export Partners and (%) share in total Exports	1) United States of America – 24.2% 2) Malaysia – 19.8% 3) Germany – 16.4% 4) Netherlands – 11.3% 5) France – 4.8%
Merchandise Trade Import value	\$181,651,000
Top 5 Non-Traditional Imports	1) Meat and edible meat offal 2) Cereals 3) Furniture, lighting, signs, prefabricated buildings 4) Plastics and articles thereof 5) Wood and articles of wood, wood charcoal
Top 5 Import Partners and (%) share in total Imports	1) United States of America – 52.5% 2) Barbados – 5.7% 3) United Kingdom – 4.9% 4) Brazil – 4.3% 5) China – 4.3%
Doing Business Index /189	107

## Guyana

Population	753,554
GDP (USD)	\$3,075,733,571
GDP Per Capita (USD)	\$3,847
GDP Growth Rate (%)	5.3
GDP Contribution by sector (%)	Agriculture – 20.7% Industry – 38.5% Services – 40.8%
Inflation rate (consumer prices)	2.4%
Official exchange rate (per US Dollar)	\$205.70
Merchandise Trade Export value	\$1,074,133,000
Top 5 Non-Traditional Exports	1) Pearls, precious stones, metals, coins etc 2) Cereals 3) Ores, slag and ash 4) Sugars and sugar confectionery 5) Fish, crustaceans, molluscs, aquatic invertebrates nes
Top 5 Export Partners and (%) share in total Exports	1) United States of America – 30.9% 2) Venezuela – 13% 3) United Kingdom – 11.9% 4) Canada – 7% 5) Germany - 5.3%
Merchandise Trade Import value	\$1,740,954,000
Top 5 Non-Traditional Imports	1) Electrical, electronic equipment 2) Plastics and articles thereof 3) Dairy products, eggs, honey, edible animal product nes 4) Fertilizers 5) Iron and steel
Top 5 Import Partners and (%) share in total Imports	1) United States of America – 22.8% 2) Trinidad and Tobago – 18.7% 3) China – 9.2% 4) Venezuela – 7.5% 5) Netherland Antilles – 5.3%
Doing Business Index /189	115

## Haiti

Population	9,996,731
GDP (USD)	\$8,459,326,660
GDP Per Capita (USD)	\$820
GDP Growth Rate (%)	4.3
GDP Contribution by sector (%)	Agriculture – 24.1% Industry – 19.9% Services – 56%
Inflation rate (consumer prices)	5.9%
Official exchange rate (per US Dollar)	\$45
Merchandise Trade Export value	\$1,022,151,000
Top 5 Non-Traditional Exports	1) Articles of apparel, accessories, knit or crochet 2) Articles of apparel, accessories, not knit or crochet 3) Essential oils, perfumes, cosmetics, toiletries 4) Edible fruit, nuts, peel of citrus fruit, melons 5) Copper and articles thereof
Top 5 Export Partners and (%) share in total Exports	1) United States of America – 84.7% 2) Canada – 3.1% 3) Mexico – 2% 4) China – 1.5% 5) Republic of Korea – 1.3%
Merchandise Trade Import value	\$3,499,533,000
Top 5 Non-Traditional Imports	1) Cotton 2) Cereals 3) Electrical, electronic equipment 4) Animal, vegetable fats and oils, cleavage products etc 5) Plastics and articles thereof
Top 5 Import Partners and (%) share in total Imports	1) United States of America – 35.2% 2) Dominican Republic – 29.8% 3) China – 9.2% 4) Indonesia – 2.1% 5) India – 1.8%
Doing Business Index /189	177

## Jamaica

Population	2,930,050
GDP (USD)	\$14,362,262,585
GDP Per Capita (USD)	\$5,290
GDP Growth Rate (%)	1.3
GDP Contribution by sector (%)	Agriculture – 6.5% Industry – 29.4% Services – 64.1%
Inflation rate (consumer prices)	9.3%
Official exchange rate (per US Dollar)	\$111
Merchandise Trade Export value	\$1,298,424,000
Top 5 Non-Traditional Exports	1) Beverages, spirits and vinegar 2) Ores, slag and ash 3) Sugars and sugar confectionery 4) Edible vegetables and certain roots and tubers 5) Coffee, tea, mate and spices
Top 5 Export Partners and (%) share in total Exports	1) United States of America – 34.9% 2) Canada – 15.4% 3) Netherlands – 8.8% 4) Germany – 7.8% 5) United Kingdom – 6.9%
Merchandise Trade Import value	\$4,096,070,000
Top 5 Non-Traditional Imports	1) Cereals 2) Electrical, electronic equipment 3) Plastics and articles thereof 4) Beverage, spirits and vinegar 5) Furniture, lighting, signs, prefabricated buildings
Top 5 Import Partners and (%) share in total Imports	1) United States of America – 48.6% 2) China – 15.3% 3) Mexico – 4.4% 4) Japan – 3.5% 5) Brazil – 3%
Doing Business Index /189	94



## St Kitts and Nevis

Population	51,538
GDP (USD)	\$742,962,963
GDP Per Capita (USD)	\$13,710
GDP Growth Rate (%)	2.0
GDP Contribution by sector (%)	Agriculture – 1.8% Industry – 23.1% Services – 75.1%
Inflation rate (consumer prices)	0.7%
Official exchange rate (per US Dollar)	\$2.70
Merchandise Trade Export value	\$105,360,000
Top 5 Non-Traditional Exports	1) Electrical, electronic equipment 2) Ships, boats and other floating structures 3) Pharmaceutical products 4) Optical, photo, technical, medical etc apparatus 5) Beverages, spirits and vinegar
Top 5 Export Partners and (%) share in total Exports	1) United States of America – 53.4% 2) Belgium – 10% 3) Poland – 9.7% 4) Canada – 8% 5) Germany – 4.1%
Merchandise Trade Import value	\$389,334,000
Top 5 Non-Traditional Imports	1) Ships, boats and other floating structures 2) Electrical, electronic equipment 3) Pearls, precious stones, metals, coins, etc 4) Wood and articles of wood, wood charcoal 5) Meat and edible meat offal
Top 5 Import Partners and (%) share in total Imports	1) United States of America – 36.7% 2) Germany – 24% 3) Mexico – 8.7% 4) China – 4% 5) Italy – 3.5%
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## St Lucia

Population	163,362
GDP (USD)	\$1,322,222,222
GDP Per Capita (USD)	\$7,309
GDP Growth Rate (%)	-0.5
GDP Contribution by sector (%)	Agriculture – 3.1% Industry – 17.4% Services – 79.5%
Inflation rate (consumer prices)	1.5%
Official exchange rate (per US Dollar)	\$2.70
Merchandise Trade Export value	\$110,764,000
Top 5 Non-Traditional Exports	1) Electrical, electronic equipment 2) Edible fruit, nuts, peel of citrus fruit, melons 3) Beverages, spirits and vinegar 4) Paper and paperboard, articles of pulp, paper and board 5) Pearls, precious stones, metals, coins etc
Top 5 Export Partners and (%) share in total Exports	1) Dominican Republic – 56% 2) United States of America – 15.7% 3) United Kingdom – 10.7% 4) Guyana – 6.7% 5) Barbados - 4.4%
Merchandise Trade Import value	\$973,952,000
Top 5 Non-Traditional Imports	1) Electrical, electronic equipment 2) Meat and edible meat offal 3) Wood and articles of wood, wood charcoal 4) Plastics and articles thereof 5) Pearls, precious stones, metals, coins, etc
Top 5 Import Partners and (%) share in total Imports	1) United States of America – 68.1% 2) Brazil – 10.3% 3) Colombia – 6.1% 4) United Kingdom – 2.3% 5) Barbados – 2.1%
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## St Vincent and the Grenadines

<b>Population</b>	102,918
<b>GDP (USD)</b>	\$725,555,556
<b>GDP Per Capita (USD)</b>	\$6,634
<b>GDP Growth Rate (%)</b>	2.8
<b>GDP Contribution by sector (%)</b>	Agriculture – 5.4% Industry – 20.3% Services – 74.4%
<b>Inflation rate (consumer prices)</b>	0.8%
<b>Official exchange rate (per US Dollar)</b>	\$2.70
<b>Merchandise Trade Export value</b>	\$53,160,000
<b>Top 5 Non-Traditional Exports</b>	1) Ships, boats and other floating structures 2) Milling products, malt, starches, inulin, wheat gluten 3) Works of art, collectors pieces, antiques 4) Beverages, spirits and vinegar 5) Residues, wastes of food industry, animal fodder
<b>Top 5 Export Partners and (%) share in total Exports</b>	1) Barbados – 18.3% 2) Turkey – 18.1% 3) Antigua and Barbuda – 10.9% 4) Greece – 10.4% 5) Switzerland – 10.1%
<b>Merchandise Trade Import value</b>	\$454,833,000
<b>Top 5 Non-Traditional Imports</b>	1) Ships, boats and other floating structures 2) Pearls, precious stones, metals, coins etc 3) Cereals 4) Electrical, electronic equipment 5) Meat and edible meat offal
<b>Top 5 Import Partners and (%) share in total Imports</b>	1) Singapore – 22.7% 2) United States of America – 20.5% 3) Denmark – 14.2% 4) Switzerland – 6.5% 5) China – 5.6%
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## Suriname

<b>Population</b>	573,311
<b>GDP (USD)</b>	\$5,230,909,091
<b>GDP Per Capita (USD)</b>	\$9,700
<b>GDP Growth Rate (%)</b>	4.4
<b>GDP Contribution by sector (%)</b>	Agriculture – 8.9% Industry -36.6% Services – 54.5%
<b>Inflation rate (consumer prices)</b>	1.9%
<b>Official exchange rate (per US Dollar)</b>	\$3.25
<b>Merchandise Trade Export value</b>	\$1,006,754,000
<b>Top 5 Non-Traditional Exports</b>	1) Pearls, precious stones, metals, coins etc 2) Fish, crustaceans, molluscs, aquatic invertebrates nes 3) Edible fruit, nuts, peel of citrus fruit, melons 4) Wood and articles of wood, wood charcoal 5) Cereals
<b>Top 5 Export Partners and (%) share in total Exports</b>	1) The United States of America – 32.8% 2) Belgium – 22% 3) Canada – 11.9% 4) Barbados – 8.7% 5) France - 6.8%
<b>Merchandise Trade Import value</b>	\$1,706,622,000
<b>Top 5 Non-Traditional Imports</b>	1) Electrical, electronic equipment 2) Plastics and articles thereof 3) Articles of iron or steel 4) Beverages, spirits and vinegar 5) Iron and steel
<b>Top 5 Import Partners and (%) share in total Imports</b>	1) The United States of America – 26.3% 2) The Netherlands – 16.6% 3) Italy – 11.2% 4) China – 10.1% 5) Japan – 4.8%
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## Trinidad and Tobago

<b>Population</b>	1,341,151
<b>GDP (USD)</b>	\$24,640,839,008
<b>GDP Per Capita (USD)</b>	\$18,373
<b>GDP Growth Rate (%)</b>	1.6
<b>GDP Contribution by sector (%)</b>	Agriculture – 0.3% Industry – 57.7% Services – 42%
<b>Inflation rate (consumer prices)</b>	5.2%
<b>Official exchange rate (per US Dollar)</b>	\$6.36
<b>Merchandise Trade Export value</b>	\$18,091,718,000
<b>Top 5 Non-Traditional Exports</b>	1) Iron and steel 2) Fertilizers 3) Beverages, spirits and vinegar 4) Paper and paperboard, articles of pulp, paper and board 5) Fish, crustaceans, molluscs, aquatic invertebrates nes
<b>Top 5 Export Partners and (%) share in total Exports</b>	1) United States of America – 37.9% 2) Argentina – 10.2% 3) Brazil – 8.4% 4) Chile – 5.8% 5) Spain – 5.1%
<b>Merchandise Trade Import value</b>	\$6,908,544,000
<b>Top 5 Non-Traditional Imports</b>	1) Ores, slag and ash 2) Electrical, electronic equipment 3) Articles of iron and steel 4) Plastics and articles thereof 5) Optical, photo, technical, medical, etc apparatus
<b>Top 5 Import Partners and (%) share in total Imports</b>	1) United States of America – 34.8% 2) Russian Federation – 10.9% 3) Brazil – 6.9% 4) Colombia – 6.5% 5) Canada – 4.8%
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84 Independence Square  
Port of Spain, Trinidad  
Tel: +1 868 623-7589

**Barbados:**  
Solaris Global Energy Limited  
Building 7, Six Roads Industrial Park,  
Six Roads, St. Phillip, Barbados  
Tel: 1 246 271-7480

**Jamaica:**  
Solaris Global Energy Ltd  
7 Trafalgar Road,  
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1st Floor, Suite 201, The Atrium, Sky Mall Road,  
Haggatt Hall, St. Michael, Barbados, W.I. BB11059.  
tel: (246) 437-2214 e-mail: [info@gacaribbean.com](mailto:info@gacaribbean.com)  
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