



TRADE WATCH

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CARIBBEAN EXPORT DIGEST

DEVELOPMENT OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

The Caribbean Export Development Agency (Caribbean Export) with funding from the Commonwealth Secretariat is embarking on a project to develop the economies of the Commonwealth Caribbean through the diversification and development of the services sector, in particular the professional services.

The Project will consist of four (4) phases and will be implemented by **Caribbean Export**, the Commonwealth Secretariat and international consultants. A needs assessment will be completed in Phase I, where initial contact will be made with Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, Dominica and St. Lucia, the four countries selected to serve as models for the development of individual strategies and marketing plan. In Phase II the working team will visit the four countries and will develop a regional strategy and individual strategies for each of the four countries.

A series of national seminars to present the strategies to public and private sectors stakeholders will be undertaken in Phase III of the project. This will be followed by a regional seminar in the final phase of the project where the regional strategy will be presented to representatives of all CARICOM countries who are members of the Commonwealth.

According to Anthony Bradshaw, Manager, Operations at **Caribbean Export**, “The project is expected to begin in earnest in April but preliminary discussions have already taken place with some key stakeholders to get their buy-in to the project.” Mr Bradshaw also noted that “Caribbean consulting companies can join the project team and contribute to the development of a meaningful programme for the professional services sector.”

Caribbean companies which have vast experience in the professional services sector in the Commonwealth Caribbean, a thorough understanding of the issues and implications of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and experience in professional services policy formulation and development are encouraged to register with the Commonwealth secretariat. For relevant information visit the Secretariat’s Website: www.thecommonwealth.org to download the relevant pages, and complete and submit them for registration in the Commonwealth Secretariat’s system.

SECOND CALL FOR PROPOSALS FOR THE 9TH EDF CTPSDP COMPETITIVENESS GRANT FUND

The Caribbean Export Development Agency (Caribbean Export) announces a second call for proposals for the 9th European Development Fund (EDF) Competitiveness Grant Fund. The Competitiveness Grant Fund is financed by the European Union under the Caribbean Trade and Private Sector Development Programme (CTPSDP) and seeks to increase the competitiveness of groups of firms in CARIFORUM countries. The deadline for submission of this second call for proposals is April 27th, 2006 at 4:00 p.m.

The first call for proposals closed on February 24, 2006, and according to **Caribbean Export's** Business Development Officer, Sam Kruiner, "The applications are now being processed and the successful applicants will shortly be notified."

The full Guidelines for Applicants are available at **Caribbean Export's** offices in Barbados (Mutual Building, 1st Floor, Hastings Main Road, Christ Church) and Dominican Republic (Erick Leonard Eckman# 17. Arroyo Hondo. Santo Domingo) and on Caribbean Export's Website: www.carib-export.com.

WORKSHOP "EFFECTIVE TRADE FAIR PARTICIPATION"

The **Caribbean Export Development Agency (Caribbean Export)** will be hosting a workshop on "Effective Trade Fair Participation" from May 29 – 31, 2006 in Suriname. This workshop is the second collaborative effort between **Caribbean Export**, the Center for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries (CBI) and the Suriname Trade and Development Association (VSB) and is expected to be attended by some forty-five (45) participants from across the region.

According to Clarecia Christie, **Caribbean Export's** Marketing Officer, "the workshop "Effective Trade Fair Participation" is targeted at officials of Business Support Organisations (BSOs) who are responsible for organising and coordinating group or country participation in international trade fairs."

The first workshop in the series "Interior Decorating and Design" will be held from March 27-28 also in Suriname. For full details of the objectives and content of the "Effective Trade Fair Participation" workshop contact: Clarecia Christie at Tel: (246) 436 0578; Fax: (246) 436 9999; E-mail: cchristie@carib-export.com.

MEETING ON CREATIVE INDUSTRIES AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

The Caribbean Community Secretariat (CARICOM) in collaboration with World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) hosted a meeting on Creative Industries and Intellectual Property in Guyana from February 8-9, 2006 for statisticians and IP officials from the region with guest speakers from Colombia, Netherlands and United Kingdom also in attendance.

The objective of the meeting was to discuss the mapping of the Creative Industries in the Caribbean in order to determine appropriate strategies for their development and strengthening so as to increase their social, economic and cultural contributions in the Region

The meeting was a follow-up to the July 2005 series of Regional Workshops on Intellectual Property for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and SME support agencies, a joint initiative of the **Caribbean Export Development Agency (Caribbean Export)**, the CARICOM Secretariat and the WIPO. These workshops focused on increasing the awareness and use of intellectual property (IP) among small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in order to enhance their competitiveness at the national, regional and international levels.

Caribbean Export's representative at the meeting Sam Kruiner noted that a "Critical element in the mapping exercise is the recognized need to survey the economic contribution of the copyright-based industries and thereby highlight for national planners the important linkages between economic, social and cultural policies."

The meeting therefore recommended that more research should be undertaken in the creative sector to inform industry management, strategic planning and policy formulation. It also recommended that further work be undertaken towards establishing a Creative/Cultural Industry mapping Network and a Creative/Cultural Industry Research Centre and particular that:

- (i) The CARICOM Secretariat should work with a sub-committee of intellectual property experts to concretise proposals for the realisation of the Creative/Cultural Industry Mapping Network and the Creative/Cultural Industry Research Centre; and
- (ii) These proposals would be forwarded for the consideration of the Regional Cultural Committee (RCC) in March 2006, the Standing Committee of CARICOM Statisticians, the Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD) and the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED).

OAS TRADE REFERENCE CENTRE

Researchers and students of trade policy matters are being encouraged by the **Caribbean Export Development Agency (Caribbean Export)** to use the Organisation of American States (OAS) Trade Reference Centre which is housed in the Trade Information Centre (TIC) of **Caribbean Export**.

Cora Lowe, **Caribbean Export's** Research and Communications Officer is reporting that the Caribbean Trade Reference Centre comprises thirteen country specific Trade Information Databases (TID) namely Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago. Each database contains the texts of official trade agreements, related national legislation, studies as well as other analytical tools that may facilitate a better understanding of trade policy issues confronting Caribbean countries.

Persons interested in using the center should contact Cora Lowe. Tel: (246) 436 0578; Fax: (246) 436 9999; E-mail: clowe@carib-export.com.

CSME NEWS

CSM FACTS

The CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) will operate as a unit of sovereign states and not as a single union like the European Union, and will be fully implemented by December 31, 2008 according to Ivor Carryl, Programme Manager of the CSME Regional Unit in Barbados. Mr Carryl while speaking in Jamaica further noted that in addition to maintaining sovereignty member states will have specific portfolios within the CSME. The specific portfolios of the Member States are as follows:

- Barbados - the CSME, including the Monetary Union
- Antigua and Barbuda - Services, including Information Technology and Telecommunications.
- Belize - Sustainable Development, including Environment and Disaster Management and Water,
- Dominica - Labour, including Intra-Community Movement of Skills.
- Grenada - Science and Technology
- Guyana - Agriculture and Food Security;
- Jamaica - External Trade Negotiations;
- St. Kitts and Nevis - Health, including HIV/AIDS and Human Resource Development;
- St. Lucia - Justice and Governance
- St. Vincent and the Grenadines - Bananas and Air Transport.
- Suriname - Community Development and Cultural Co-operation, including Culture, Gender, Youth and Sport,
- Trinidad and Tobago - Security as this relates to Drugs and Illicit Arms, and Energy.

Meanwhile in other CSME news, Suriname, St. Kitts and Nevis, Dominica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Antigua and Barbuda have introduced passports that identify their holders as firstly a CARICOM national and secondly a national of the individual state.

According to Steven MacAndrew, Free Movement Specialist at the CSME regional Unit, "Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana have indicated that by July, 2006, they would have introduced the CARICOM passport." He further stated that Jamaica will institute the passport by 2007, having recently upgraded its passport to a machine-readable state. With the introduction of the CARICOM passport, the need for a national passport will be eliminated.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND (RDF)

The CARICOM Regional Development Fund (RDF) is expected to be launched by July, 2006. The Fund is viewed as integral to the successful functioning of the emerging CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), which is expected to be fully implemented by 2008. It is expected that arrangements for the financing mechanism could be completed by June 30, 2006 to coincide with the scheduled accession to the CARICOM Single Market (CSM) by Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

A firm commitment coming out of the Finance Minister Meeting held in Trinidad on January 31, 2006, was that the Fund will now be moved from its initial allocation of US\$12 million to a minimum of US\$50 million. The Fund was originally expected to be established with between US\$210 million and US\$250 million. However, critical reviews of factors such as criteria in determining its size and how it is managed were undertaken and the bulk of the financial resources would be sought from traditional donors. There are also plans to involve the European Union as a major partner in the process.

Trinidad and Tobago is expected to increase its commitment to approximately US\$40 million, Jamaica's commitment is likely to be approximately US\$5 million and Barbados is likely to increase its previously pledged US\$2 million.

TRADE POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

CARICOM'S MISSION TO EUROPE TO DISCUSS SUGAR

St Kitts and Nevis Prime Minister, Dr Denzil Douglas, and the President of Guyana, Bharrat Jagdeo, have been selected by the CARICOM Heads of Government to mount a mission to Europe next month to discuss the African-Caribbean and Pacific/European Union (ACP/EU) Sugar Regime. The decision was taken at the 17th Inter-Sessional of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community held in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago on February 9 – 10, 2006.

The mission to select European capitals and European Union institutions, will outline the Region's concerns with respect to the proposed measures, in advance of the decision to be taken in April by the EU. The Mission will seek to convey that the measures could have permanent repercussions not only for the sugar industry but for the Region as a whole. Developments relating to reform of the ACP/EU Sugar Regime have resulted in a 36 per cent reduction in price over the next four years with the first five per cent being instituted in July 2006. Caribbean sugar producers include Jamaica, Guyana, Trinidad, Barbados and Belize.

ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN CARICOM AND EU TO ENTER NEW PHASE

The Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between CARIFORUM and the European Union (EU) launched in April, 2004 are presently in phase III. This phase will combine the outcome of discussions on the priority issues for CARIFORUM regional integration that comprised the phase II negotiations, as well as establish the approach to trade liberalization with a view to promoting sustainable development within the CARIFORUM region. Matters to be discussed during this phase will be market access for agricultural and non agricultural goods, services and investment, trade related issues and legal and institutional issues.

According to Jamaica's Prime Minister P J Patterson, the EPA negotiations were progressing relatively well so far, but there are concerns that the disbursement of promised resources from the EU would have to be synchronised with the needs of the negotiating process. The Third Phase of negotiations is a critical one, allowing just one year to address a wide range of issues.

He also pointed to the need to strengthen the CARICOM integration process and said the trade agreement between CARICOM and the Dominican Republic would have to be completed to allow for a common CARIFORUM negotiating position. Mr Patterson who is chairman of the Prime Ministerial Sub-committee on External Trade Negotiations, was speaking at the 18th meeting which was held in Trinidad in February 8, 2006.

The meeting of the Prime Ministerial Sub-committee on External Trade Negotiations undertook a review of the various trade arenas in which the region was involved including the World Trade Organisation, the Free Trade Area of the Americas, the relationship between CARICOM and the MERCUSOR group, as well as with the countries of NAFTA.

MARKET NEWS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS IN THE REGION

The following is an extract from the Caribbean Development Bank's (CDB) "Highlights of CDB's Activities in 2005 and Economic Background and Prospects in 2005".

In 2005, the region's effort was focused on meeting the December 2005 deadline for putting arrangements in place for the start of the single market component of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) and some re-examination of the existing regional trading arrangements for petroleum products due to a proposal to buy petroleum from Venezuela. Social sector issues such as crime and drug trafficking as well as work stoppages and strikes, particularly in the construction sector also continued to occupy the attention of the authorities.

While Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth continued in most countries in 2005, the pace of that growth slowed somewhat, primarily in response to a deceleration in tourism activity, and a decline in agricultural production. The decline in the tourism sector was largely due to damage to hotel accommodations in some islands caused by Hurricane Ivan in 2004, hotel closures for renovation and a decline in visitor arrivals especially in the cruise-passenger segment of the market because of changes in cruise routes and sharp increases in fuel prices. In the agricultural sector sugar, bananas as well as non traditional crops contracted due mainly to adverse weather conditions. High incidences of cane fires and reduced acreage under cultivation also contributed to the decline in the sugar sub-sector.

Conversely, activity in the construction sector rose strongly across the region because of increased private and public sector investments due to hurricane damages in 2004 and 2005 and intensified preparations for Cricket World Cup 2007. In addition the financial services sector is estimated to have expanded in 2005 based on the higher number of registrations and licensing fees, particularly from international business companies.

Output in the manufacturing sector rose in Trinidad and Tobago, St Kitts and Nevis and Barbados partly in response to rising demand from the rest of the region, the USA, and as a result of strong marketing effort and support from the public sector, respectively. The mining and quarrying sector also showed some performance improvement in 2005, although output was mixed in Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, and Guyana. In Trinidad and Tobago, the energy sector subsector rose due to benefit from high oil and petrochemical prices and from past expansion in productive capacity. In Jamaica, bauxite production and output of alumina also increased. In Guyana, although the mining and quarrying sector contracted, bauxite production increased due to the entry of a large operator boosted output during the year.

The prospects for 2006 are reasonably favourable, driven largely by construction in anticipation of continued growth in tourism. As preparations for the 2007 world cup cricket competition gather momentum it is likely that there will be further acceleration in construction activity, increased demands on public revenues in the near term, on account of higher recurrent expenditures, and support for infrastructural development and accelerated preparations.

On the other hand, the future of sugar and bananas in most countries is not favourable; Efforts to identify and develop substitute products, preferably as specialty and niche market items may place further pressure on the external account, particularly if oil prices rise further.

The region's effort to create a single market and economy if successful should contribute to the development of globally competitive products, and the maintenance of production flexibility in the face of continuing changes in the global environment. Its success will require the pursuit of the integration of production and associated arrangements. The inevitable difficulties which will occur should be viewed as challenges to be overcome rather than obstacles to prevent the achievement of the objective.

JAMPRO LAUNCHES UNIT TO ASSIST SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

The Jamaica Promotions Corporation (JAMPRO) has created a new division the Corporate Finance Broker (CFB) unit, which will offer financial assistance to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The unit is expected to attract clients from those private sector members who have received assistance under the European Union/Government of Jamaica-funded Private Sector Development Programme (PSDP) designed to strengthen and build capacity of SMEs.

The Unit will offer a wide range of technical and financial services including financial planning, financial management, will help identify additional sources of technical and/or financial assistance and facilitate interfacing with banks and other lending institutions on behalf of CFB clients. The Unit is under the direct management of Lisa Bell, JAMPRO's Executive Director, Services.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

BOTTLES, glass or plastic suitable for wine and labels are sought. Pineapples, pineapple juice, jams Jack Up pineapple wine are available. Contact: Wilbert Jack, Proprietor, 108 Dueban Sr Werk En Rust, Georgetown, GUYANA. Tel: (592) 335-7283/621-2507/622-8654; E-mail: jacks@solutions200.net or deesward@yahoo.com.

WINDOW FILMS is available for export. Contact: Jay Morales, Sales Representative, P O Box 29904, 65th infanteria, San Juan PR 00929, PUERTO RICO. Tel: (787) 753-4952; Fax: (787) 791-0164; E-mail: jcfilm@hotmail.com

Instant Fish Cake Batter (a Caribbean culture dish); Blue Giant Fish Burgers, Fish Dog Sausage, and Packaged Seasoned Fish; 100 year old Tartar Sauce are available for export.. Importers or distributors are required for these products. Contact: Perry Edwards, CEO, EPL Building, Kendall Hill, Christ Church, BARBADOS. Tel: (246) 428-9316; Fax: (246) 428-3798; E-mail: sms_inc@caribsurf.com

T-SHIRTS for men's, towels, ladies underwear and garments, fruit juice, wine, alcoholic and non alcoholic Etc are sought. Contact: Peter Morgan Aprilmongarm International Co. Ltd., 29 Rue D' Aniho, Lome,-TOGO, Tel: 00228-222-33-41; Fax: 00228-222-33-41; Email: aprilmongarm@yahoo.co.uk

ART and craft and decorative items, gourmet food, furniture, clothing, soft furnishings are sought. Contact: Gina Singh, Naturally Gifted Ltd, South Florida, USA. Email: gd23singh@comcast.net

TRADE AND INVESTMENT EVENTS

CompuExpo / DR-Tech and Software 2006, March 2-5, 2006, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC. Website: <http://www.compuexpo.com>

Meeting on ICTs and the Networked Economy – Training for the New Economy March 6-17, ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA. Email: rsanatan@uwichill.edu.bb.

Sci-Tech Green Expo, March 9-11, BARBADOS. Website: www.sci-techgreenexpo.org

The Bridal, Beauty & Beyond Expo (3BE) March 11-12, 2006, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO. Website: www.eventscaribbean.org

Workshop on the Relationship between CARICOM and its institutions, March 13-14, 2006, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO. Website: www.caricom.org.

WTO Seminar, March 15-17, 2006, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO. Website: www.caricom.org.

Conference on Small and Medium Sized Enterprises. March 16-17, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO. Website: www.chamber.org.tt

EPA Technical Negotiating Sessions, March 21-24, BARBADOS.

Barbados Fashion Week, 2006, March 22-26, 2006, BARBADOS.

CARIFORUM-EU Fifth EPA Principal Negotiators' Meeting, March 27-28, 2006. BARBADOS

International Management Conference, 2006 “*Driving Creative Management: Kickstarting Small Island Enterprise Competitiveness*”, March 26-28, 2006, BARBADOS. Website: <http://www.fimc-caribbean.com>

SALISES Seventh Annual Conference “*Social Policy Challenges in the Post Independence Era*”, March 29-31, 2006. Website: www.uwichill.edu.bb/salises

Other Upcoming Events

Caribbean Media Summit, March 01 – 03, 2006. Email: info@caribbeanmediasummit.com

Seatrade Cruise Shipping Convention, (Cruise Industry), March 13 – 16, 2006, U.S.A. Website: www.cruiseshipping.net

The 11 th Annual International Money Laundering Conference & Exhibition, March 15 – 17, USA, General Inquiries: alert@moneylaundering.com

World Food Market, Mar 23-24, 2006 USA. Tel +33 (0) 1 45 23 81 11; Fax + 33 (0) 1 47 70 51 75

NOTICES

BMA EMAIL ADDRESS

With effect from March 15, 2006, The Barbados Manufacturers' Association (BMA) will be using e-mail address bmex-products@caribsurf.com only.

APPOINTMENTS

ACS SG WELCOMES NEW OFFICIALS

Three senior officials have joined the ACS Secretariat. They are Manuel Madriz Fornos as Director of Trade and External Economic Relations; Watson Denis, Political Adviser to the Secretary General; and Sheldon McDonald, Legal Adviser. Regarding the new appointments, Secretary General of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), Dr. Rubén Silié said: "Their knowledge and expertise make them valuable additions to the ACS, and will undoubtedly help to achieve the organisation's vision of the Greater Caribbean as a space for cooperation and concerted action."

PUBLICATIONS

COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT PUBLICATIONS 2006

The Commonwealth Secretariat has issued its 2006 catalogue of books, working papers and expert reports from around the Commonwealth. Among the categories of publications are agriculture and environment; Commonwealth affairs; civil society; economics; education; elections; gender; health; human rights; information technology; law; management in public service; small states; tourism; world trade; and youth affairs. This catalogue is available online at www.publications.thecommonwealth.org.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & MULTILATERAL TRADE COOPERATION

This book focuses on the question how the development relevance of the trading system (WTO) could be enhanced, addressing both the traditional domain of trade negotiations, market access, and efforts to extend the coverage of the WTO to "behind-the-border" regulatory policies that may only have an indirect link to trade. For further details please visit the website: <http://publications.worldbank.org>

