

Conquering new frontiers in tourism

The tourism industry has been one of the main planks that have sustained the economy over many years. While recognizing the value of its contribution and the growth that has occurred, we believe that there is vast potential for expansion and diversification that needs to be exploited.

While Jamaica's tourism has been dominant in the mass and mid-price segments of the leisure market, the focus of our strategy for the future will be to develop new, high-value options while enhancing the attractiveness of the existing offerings.

Our Pledge

11.1 Measuring tourism's contribution to the economy

Disaggregate our National Accounts and identify tourism as an accounting sector in order to measure its direct contribution to the GDP.

11.2 Giving export status to hotel operators

Recognizing that tourism is an invisible export, we will accord hotel operators the benefits and concessions enjoyed by export manufacturers.

11.3 Diversifying the tourism industry

- Promote the development of more high-value luxury accommodation including condominiums.
- Promote the development of wellness facilities to take advantage of our natural spas as well as facilities geared toward long-stay convalescents.
- Attract healthcare entrepreneurs to establish medical facilities offering clinical and surgical procedures to foreign patients.
- Provide renewed support for the development of South Coast adventure and eco-tourism.
- Promote heritage tourism consistent with our policy on the development of our heritage sites and

the marketing of our rich cultural traditions.

11.4 Tourism development for eastern Jamaica

Formulate a strategic plan for the development of Portland and St. Thomas as a unique tourist resort area to take advantage of their unique attributes as well as provide a new economic catalyst to mitigate the decline in sugar and bananas.

11.5 Development of attractions

Encourage the development of new state-of-the-art attractions especially for night time entertainment and offer incentives similar to those provided for new hotel construction.

11.6 Preservation and appropriate utilization of the Cockpit Country

Declare the Cockpit Country a no-mining zone and encourage the development of environment-friendly attractions.

11.7 Transformation of Fern Gully

Reroute traffic currently traversing Fern Gully and develop it into a botanical attraction with boutique restaurants and craft shops.

11.8 Upgrading and marketing of small hotels and villas

Provide grants and concessionary loans for the upgrading of small hotels and villas and assist them in developing a special programme for advertising and marketing.

11.9 Expansion of Ocho Rios Cruise Ship Pier

Relocate the shipping operations for bauxite, sugar and aggregates from the Reynolds Pier in Ocho Rios to facilitate its redevelopment and expansion as a modern cruise ship port.

11.10 New cruise ship port at Falmouth

Support the development of a major cruise ship port and ancillary facilities in Falmouth.

11.11 Development of marinas

Promote the expansion of marinas in Ocho Rios and Montego Bay which, together with the Port Antonio marina, will be aggressively marketed to attract mega-yacht visitors and sport fishing activities.

11.12 Modern airport facilities for Port Antonio

Redevelop the Ken Jones aerodrome to accommodate private and mid-size commercial aircraft as an important element in the revitalization of Port Antonio as a high-end resort area as well as facilitating tourism development in St. Thomas

11.13 Enhancing Jamaica's duty-free shopping appeal

Establish a new regime for in-bond merchants to enhance Jamaica's appeal as a duty-free shopping destination.

11.14 New impetus for craft production and marketing

- Establish a sophisticated craft training centre on the north coast to enable our craftsmen to produce high quality craft items and ensure that our craft vendors can offer first-rate indigenous craft items.
- Upgrade and improve the management of existing craft markets and we institute a programme to promote them especially among cruise ship passengers.

11.15 Major Convention Centre for Montego Bay

Support the construction of a major stand-alone Convention Centre in Montego Bay to attract more convention visitors.

11.16 Establishment of Hospitality

College

Pursue the development of a Hospitality College either as an independent entity or as a college of one of our existing universities to train persons for middle and senior level positions in the tourism sector.

11.17 Teaching the value of tourism in schools

Develop a tourism-related course to be taught in schools and to be an accredited curriculum subject to increase awareness and appreciation of the value of tourism to the nation.

11.18 Pension scheme for tourism sector workers

Institute in collaboration with employers and workers in the tourism sector a pension scheme for workers whose NIS pension entitlement is low because it is calculated on basic wages and does not include non-taxable gratuities which make up a substantial portion of their earnings.