

## **WELCOME REMARKS**

**Ena Harvey, IICA Representative, Barbados**

**GOOD MORNING, BUENOS DIAS, GOODEMORGEN, BON JOUR**

- **H.E. Ambassador Elizabeth Thompson, Barbados' Ambassador to the United Nations**
- **Hon. Indar Weir, Minister of Agriculture and Food Security**
- **Ms. Nicole Alleyne, Chief Tourism Development Officer, Ministry of Tourism and International Transport**
- **Isolina Boto, Manager CTA Brussels Office**
- **Katja Svensson, Program Manager, Regional Cooperation and Trade, Delegation of the European Union to Barbados, the Eastern Caribbean States, the OECS and CARICOM/CARIFORUM**
- **Distinguished Presenters, Development Partners, Representatives from public and private sector**
- **Members of the media**
- **IICA Technical specialists**

I bring you greetings from the IICA Director General, Manuel Otero and from the staff of the IICA Barbados Delegation.

I first wish to place on record our thanks to the CTA for co-hosting not only this Regional Workshop but six national workshops on agrotourism over past few months, and my thanks to Mrs. Isolina Boto for her collaboration, commitment and the wonderful working relationship we have with the CTA through her office in Brussels.

As IICA's Hemispheric Specialist in Agrotourism I have had the honour to lead this initiative for the past 16 years. Our work has focussed on strengthening the

institutional framework for linkages, documenting lessons learned and successes across Latin America and the Caribbean, and undertaking diagnostic evaluations for investment.

### **BENEFITS OF AGROTOURISM**

- Retention of a higher percentage of income by rural people
- Direct transfer of foreign exchange (poverty reduction)
- Diversification of farm income while keeping land in production
- Investment and income earning opportunities for SMEs - employment of women, families, youth and indigenous communities
- Value added and retention of origin in rural areas

### **SOME KEY MESSAGES**

- Need to be clear on why we are into Tourism and who should benefit from Tourism
- Local communities cannot be an “*after thought*” or a means to an end to protect tourism investments
- Tourism cannot be successful without a sustainable food production sector and climate smart agriculture
- Agricultural biodiversity and heritage and the culture of food in the Caribbean enhance the “value proposition” of a sustainable tourism product
- Agrotourism must be integrally linked to Food & Nutrition Security and to the management of Chronic Non Communicable Diseases (CNCDs)

Why are we here: to discuss regional opportunities for increasing trade of Agri-Food products, and investment in agribusiness development, particularly in rural communities, in partnership with the tourism sector. The expected outcome of

the workshop is the identification of a major regional project on agrotourism which will be submitted for funding under the 11<sup>th</sup> EDF envelope.

I look forward to a full 2 days of presentations and rich discussions, and to our joint efforts in contributing to creating a sustainable future for us all.

## INTRODUCTION OF KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Barbados' Ambassador to the United Nations

Her Excellency H. Elizabeth Thompson

Welcome Home Ambassador Thompson.

I would like to thank Ambassador Thompson for so graciously accepting our invitation to deliver the Keynote Address at today's Workshop. Ambassador Thompson delivered the Keynote Address at the Caribbean Tourism Organisation's Sustainable Tourism Workshop in St. Vincent

Everything she spoke about resonated with me as her presentation validated the fact that tourism and the agri-food sector are intricately linked and that sustainable development in our countries and across our region cannot be attained without the creation of linkages between these two sectors.

Liz Thompson is a Barbadian who has worked in development policy for nearly 25 years. She is currently Barbados' Ambassador to the United Nations. She previously served in a number of professional roles including as an elected Member of Parliament from 1994 to 2008 and as Minister of Government during this period. At various times, she held the portfolios of Energy and environment, Housing and Lands, physical Development and Planning and Health. Ms. Thompson also led Minority business in the Barbados Senate from 2008 to 2010.

From 2010 to 2012 she served as Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations, with specific responsibility as one of two Executive Coordinators of the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development. In this role she also developed the highly successful Higher Education Sustainability Initiative. Thereafter, she was engaged in a number of advisory roles within the UN system, including on the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals in the office of the UN Secretary General, UNDP, the President of the General Assembly and on the Secretary General's global energy initiative, Sustainable Energy for All.

Liz has considerable experience in national and international policy and negotiations, including with international financial institutions and within the UN system and processes. As a Minister, she led major policy initiatives in Barbados

such as the island's national sustainable development, green economy, sustainable energy, policies and the greening of government facilities. Her professional engagements have included consultancy in the Caribbean and Internationally to private sector entities, governments and UN agencies.

Liz has lectured and spoke in many countries and at universities including Harvard, Yale, Colombia, North Carolina, AWaterloo and the West Indies on a number of issues in development, environment and energy. She has authored several papers and articles on these themes and is the co-author of two books on sustainable development published in 2014. She is certified in negotiations, alternative dispute resolution and arbitration, is an attorney at law (LLB abd LEC) and holds two Masters degrees a general MBA with distinction from the University of Liverpool and an LLM in Energy Law, with minors in the law and policy of renewable energy and environment from the Robert Gordon University.

**It is my distinct honour to welcome Amb. Thompson today to present the Keynote Addres. ENJOY**