

**For immediate release:**

**Handing Over of Tourism Security Transportation Vehicles through the Sustainable Tourism Program II**

The Ministry of Tourism and Diaspora Relations (MTDR) through the Sustainable Tourism Program II handed over three (3) additional vehicles as part of scheduled program activities under Component (3) Institutional Strengthening geared towards the provision of tourism transportation security vehicles, bringing to date the total number of vehicles handed over to five (5). These vehicles will assist and improve on the destination management of the tourism sector.

Chief Executive Officer Kevin Arthurs, in the Ministry of Home Affairs and New Growth Industries received the first vehicle on behalf of the Belize Police Department and Tourism Police Unit while the National Institute of Culture and History (NICH) President Marilyn Young received the second vehicle on behalf of the Institute of Archaeology (IA). Chief Executive Officer Dr. Kenrick Williams, in the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Disaster Management received the third vehicle on behalf of the Forest Department.

These three additional vehicles were handed over by Chief Executive Officer Nicole Solano, in the Ministry of Tourism and Diaspora Relations on behalf of the Sustainable Tourism Program II (STPII). Minister Anthony Mahler had previously handed over two vehicles in a ceremony held on September 2, 2022. The five vehicles, valued at \$65,000.00 BZE each, will serve to support the respective institutions to further strengthen their capabilities in providing support security services.

The TPU, a specialized unit with the Belize Police Department, is mandated with policing the tourism industry countrywide has now received two (2) vehicles. Likewise, the NICH and IA are mandated to manage a host of archaeological sites distributed across multiple areas with our borders and have now received two (2) vehicles. The Forest Department is tasked with the management of several Forest Reserves countrywide including the Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve has received one (1) vehicle. All three institutions are tasked with maintaining the safety and security of the visitors to these sites and other tourism facilities.

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