



Ministry of Tourism  
and Civil Aviation



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Key Emerging Tourism Destinations to Launch Destination Plans**

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Over the next few weeks, stakeholders in the tourism destinations of Toledo, Caye Caulker, Corozal and the Mountain Pine Ridge/Caracol/Chiquibul area will launch Destination Plans that reflect the collective vision for tourism development, in coordination with the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation (MTCA). The Destination Plans identify key tourism infrastructure projects and priorities that are considered critical for further sustainable development of tourism in the respective destination.

The Plans are the culmination of a process started over a year ago with the support of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), that brought together multiple community, private and public stakeholders to craft a common, integrated approach to tourism development. This approach follows the recommendations of the National Sustainable Tourism Masterplan 2030 (NSTMP), which highlights the need for greater involvement of multiple stakeholders in destination coordination and management, and encourages local stakeholder leadership within all facets of tourism development including planning, branding and promotion, and quality management.

A number of the activities identified within the Plans will be supported through investments under the Sustainable Tourism Program II (STP II), a five-year program for sustainable and resilient tourism development being implemented by the MTCA with the support of the IDB.

The USD 15.5 million STP II aims to increase income and employment from tourism and stimulate private sector investment, while recognizing the significance of the natural assets and cultural diversity upon which each local tourism product is based. As with the Cayo Welcome Center developed under the first STP, investment will be made in new infrastructure to create centers for leisure and recreation for tourists and locals alike as well as for business opportunities.

Each of the destinations face unique challenges from climate change and disaster risk - ranging from erosion of shorelines, sea-level rise, storm threat, and sargassum in the coastal areas, to increased fire risk in the Mountain Pine Ridge and limited water availability at the archaeological sites. STP II will fully integrate ecosystem health and environmental and disaster risk management within its program for tourism development, and is the first of its



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kind in Belize Details on the specific local investments of STP II will be presented at each respective Destination Plan Launch.

The launch of the Destination Plan for Corozal is scheduled for Saturday July 22<sup>nd</sup> at Corozal Town Hall (3pm-5pm) prior to the monthly Art in the Park event. Similar launches will be held in Punta Gorda Town on Friday July 22<sup>nd</sup> (10-12 noon); in Cayo (the tourism plan for the four protected areas) at Center for Employment Training on Thursday July 28<sup>th</sup> (2pm-4pm); and in Caye Caulker on Monday August 1 on the new beach in the Palapa area from 6pm-8pm. All with an interest in the sustainable development of tourism in Corozal, Toledo, Caye Caulker and the Mountain Pine Ridge/Chiquibul/Caracol are encouraged to attend.

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*For more information on the Destination Launch or the STP II project please contact the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation (MTCA) at [mtca.project@gmail.com](mailto:mtca.project@gmail.com) or visit the new MTCA website [www.tourism.gov.bz](http://www.tourism.gov.bz)*

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**Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation**

106 South Street, Belize City  
Belize, Central America  
P.O. Box 325

Tel: +501-227-2801/02\*\*\*Fax:+501-227-2810

E-mail: [info@tourism.gov.bz](mailto:info@tourism.gov.bz)



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