Terms of Reference for Preparing the

CHIQUIBUL

Tourism Enterprise Development Plan and
Visitor Impact Monitoring Framework
1. Background

The 18-year National Sustainable Tourism Master Plan (NSTMP) of Belize for 2011 - 2030, formulated by the Tourism and Leisure EuroPraxis Consulting for the Government of Belize and the Belize Tourism Board serves as the blueprint for the orderly and rationale development of the Belize tourism industry as it provides for policy reforms, identification for tourism development areas, as well as programs and projects to ensure the sustained growth of tourism. The NSTMP also gives a synthesis of the structures and programs, and the strategic approaches that must guide the implementation plan.

The vision statement for the NSTMP follows that: “Belize is an exclusive multicultural sustainable destination in the Central American Caribbean. It is a destination where the authenticity and friendliness of its people, coupled with the uniqueness of an exotic natural environment can be actively experienced within a conserved world.”

Belize as a tourism destination is characterized by having excellent natural resources and a strong cultural heritage that make it possible for eco-tourism, adventure and cultural tourism to flourish as its main tourism destinations, a fact that has enriched its attractiveness and motivated an increasing number of tourists. Belize hosts four “unique tourism assets” with international recognition attracting tourists by themselves. These assets are the Barrier Reef Reserve System, the Blue Hole Marine Reserve being unique of its characteristics in the world, the Caracol Mayan site with a highest level of competition but with special tourism interest and known as the most important of all Belizean Mayan sites and the Chiquibul National Park an Forest, hosting the Chiquibul Caves System, a great network of karst caves.

2. Purpose of the Tourism Enterprise Development Plan and Visitor Impact Monitoring Framework

a. To assess, through an exploration and investigation of the Chiquibul natural assets and the current tourism market segmentation, the potential for sustainable and no-harm tourism markets and products in the Chiquibul National Park and Forest areas;
b. To develop on the basis of the identified potential the portfolio of tourism destinations an packaged or stand-alone products and services that are maximally aligned with the concept of sustainable tourism, the regional (Cayo District) tourism development plan, FCD’s vision and mission, and the principles of business development;

c. To introduce and incorporate the foreseen revenue streams of identified destinations and tourism products in the Chiquibul into the existing FCD business plan, guided by the concept of sustainable revenue generation by and for FCD and its affiliates;

d. To develop, on the basis of the identified portfolio of destinations, products and services, a corresponding detailed marketing plan that interacts with other users and interested groups of the Chiquibul National Park, and that promotes a high level of visibility, awareness and acceptance of the destination points by the identified markets and target groups;

e. To provide a measurement framework for the monitoring of the impact of visitors of destinations in the Chiquibul (National Park, Forest, and Cave System), enabling the development of mitigation and control measures that enhance the environmental integrity of the various eco-systems.

3. Scope of Work

FCD wishes to contract the services of an expert consultant team to formulate the FCD Tourism Enterprise Development Plan and Visitor Impact Monitoring Framework, and who shall undertake the following tasks:

a. **Tourism Development Potential**

*Consultations*

- Define a consultative process and mechanism for the preparation of the Tourism Development component of the overall plan, taking into consideration the involvement of key stakeholders, organizations and entities in the public and private sector;
- Organize and conduct consultations, meetings, focus group discussions, and interviews with various stakeholders in the tourism industry, including local communities, to solicit inputs, opinions and recommendations on the main goals, strategies and objectives of the Plan;
- Collate, analyse, consolidate and prepare reports on consultations, meetings and interviews undertaken and conducted throughout the planning process.

*Situation Assessment*

- Review the NSTMP and the ongoing Cayo (Tourism) Destination Development Plan in order to extract and follow guidelines to enhance maximum alignment of the plan;
- Review any and all agreement and policies pertaining to the Chiquibul National Park, Forest and Cave System, developed by the main state agencies (Forest Department;
Institute of Archaeology) and any other pertinent guidelines for consistency in the development of tourism in the Chiquibul area;

- Review FCD documentation and field reports of the Chiquibul National Park, Forest and Cave System in order to assess the viability for tourism in the system and the Chiquibul Forest;
- Conduct site visits (minimum two) to assess the reality on the ground for viability and preferred areas for tourism development;
- Review of tourism-related work and projects undertaken at the national and local levels by various national and international organizations;
- Identify the specific geographic areas with potential tourism value, based on set of criteria, and provide recommendations and approaches to developing such areas, including the identification of relevant infrastructure and capacity needs.

b. Development of tourism destinations and packaged or stand-alone products and services

- Synthesis an extrapolation of the situation assessment towards the classification of tourism destinations and products. This extrapolation includes a market focused approach in the areas of protected area infrastructure, marketing and promotions, regulation and licensing, standards, manpower development, and investments;
- Delineation of the multi-dimensional characteristics of viable and profitable tourism products and services constituting the initial FCD portfolio;
- Development of an overview of investments, required for the development and realization of identified products and services.

c. The business and revenue aspects

- Review of FCD’s Chiquibul National Park Business Plan to identify scope and function of current planned strategies for generating income in the Chiquibul National Park, including the creation of *Eco-Quest Expeditions*;
- An articulated analysis of the constraints, challenges and weaknesses of the current strategies with recommendations for actions to address the detected weaknesses at the institutional level;
- A financial analysis and projection of the investment costs and return on investments in view of the most promising tourism destinations, products and services;
- The incorporation of the projections into the current business plan, resulting in a comprehensive FCD business plan.

d. The market and marketing aspects

*Consultations*
• Organize and conduct consultations, surveys, and interviews with various stakeholders in the tourism industry, including local communities, to elicit inputs, ideas, opinions and recommendations on the objectives and strategies for the Plan;

Situation Assessment
• A market analysis, including competitors, the demand for the product or service, and the strengths and weaknesses from a market standpoint of both the business and its competitors;
• Review of the product or service including special features;
• Review of the tag-name and logos used in publicity of the product;
• Review of FCD documentation related to *Eco-Quest Expeditions* and Las Cuevas Research Station;
• Assessment of the publicity contents including the advertising and promotional materials utilized by FCD in written form and internet marketing;
• Assessment of the viability for success given the present conditions.

The marketing plan
• Description of the business location, including advantages and disadvantages for marketing;
• Key messages for stakeholders from launch through to full implementation and a timeline covering the launch of program and any activities needed for ongoing support and growth of the business;
• The promotional and educational resources needed to support the plan particularly in reference to the priority areas, plus identification of when those resources would be needed by the business;
• Identification of the most efficient and effective modes of delivery;
• Identification of opportunities for participants in the public use process to participate in this process;
• Mock-up of any recommended materials;
• Marketing budget, including the advertising and promotional plan;
• Pricing strategy;
• Market segmentation.

e. The Visitor Impact Monitoring Framework

• Define a consultative process and mechanism for the preparation of the Tourism Development component of the overall framework, taking into consideration the involvement of key stakeholders, organizations and entities in the public and private sector both at the national and local level;
• Identify Limits of Acceptable Change for the Chiquibul area, especially for the Chiquibul Cave System, including the Natural Arch and Holec;
• Develop a visitor impact monitoring framework to serve as a mechanism to maintain proper control of visitor numbers and assess integrity of cave and the other features of the system.

4. Deliverables

The interim products
• Reports on all consultations and meetings, highlighting on sectoral issues, priorities and recommended interventions/programs;
• Comprehensive mid-term report on process results and progress of the entire assignment.

The final product
The final version of the FCD Tourism Enterprise Development Plan and Visitor Impact Monitoring Framework is a plan that will build and present the arguments for FCD’s involvement in the development of tourism activities, products and services that promote the environmental integrity of the Chiquibul area while providing a sustainable revenue stream that will finance FCD’s mission to pioneer adaptive management of the Chiquibul Forest to improve the ecological and cultural integrity of the western Maya Mountains.

The plan document is expected to present, discuss and synthesize the following aspects:
• Potential for development of tourism;
• Overview of most adequate, appropriate and effective portfolio of FCD or FCD promote tourism destinations, products and services;
• A comprehensive financial analysis of the require investments and financing avenues, as well as the expected tourism revenues streams, additional to the streams projected in the current FCD business plan;
• A articulated marketing plan that clearly presents the most viable and effective options for maximum product visibility, awareness, acceptance and demand.

Suggested content components of final plan

Tourism Development Potential
• Assessment of Current Situation and justification of a Tourism Enterprise Development Plan for the Chiquibul Forest with special focus on the Chiquibul Caverns and its features;
• Statement of challenges and issues;
• Institutional and capacity building needs to manage a tourism growth;
• Other additional supporting investments (security, marketing, etc.) required to achieve the objectives;
• Vision, objectives, goals and targets;
• Policies and strategies for development;
- Action plan/roadmap on specific concerns (e.g. transportation, infrastructure, product development, human resources development, marketing, investments, environment, socio-cultural, poverty reduction, ecotourism and community-based tourism, public-private sector partnership, and international relations);
- Infrastructure needs for tourism in the area of concern;
- Security aspect of providing tourism services and measures to mitigate the risks;
- Priority tourism development sites and recommended projects;
- Opportunities for FCD’s tour operator, and recommendations for *EcoQuest Expeditions* to ensure it is compliant with the tour operating regulations and maximise its effectiveness as the tour operator of choice for Chiquibul.

**Tourism Destinations, Products and Services**

- Characteristics of portfolio of tourism products and services;
- Required investments
- Require institutional capacities

**Enterprising**

- Products & Services;
- Sales Projections & Forecast;
- Overall Marketing Strategy;
- Management & Staffing;
- Implementation Plan;
- Investments, Financing, Cash Flow
- Risk Analysis

**Marketing**

- Markets, market segmentation and market demands;
- Key products and pricing strategy;
- Key messages and pitches;
- Message delivery modes and require marketing & promotional materials;
- Estimated marketing budget, including the advertising and promotional plan;

**Visitor Impact Monitoring Framework**

- Carrying capacity of the targeted sites;
- Description of method and indicators to monitor visitor impact over time;
- Management measures to safeguard the targeted site from visitor impact

**5. Duration of Assignment**
The preparation of the Tourism Enterprise Development Plan and Visitor Impact Monitoring Framework shall be completed in four (4) months.

6. Qualifications of Consultancy Firm

- Has extensive national experience in the preparation of tourism plans, strategies, frameworks or roadmaps. Experience in developing public use-based and tourism-based products and services that are linked strongly with Protected Areas Management is an asset;
- Has highly-competent technical experts with national experience, including projects local, as well as relevant education and trainings on tourism planning, marketing, infrastructure, transportation, product development, standards setting, local governance, environment, social. For this assignment, the team shall consist of the following expertise or experts:
  - A team leader with extensive national experience in tourism planning;
  - An expert in tourism product development;
  - Expertise in financial aspects of tourism development
  - Tourism marketing expertise on a national and/or international level;
  - An M&E expert with experience in concept and content of environmental monitoring

7. Budget breakdown

To include fee charges of consultant and all other expenses pertaining to consultations, data gathering and report generation.

8. Submission of Proposal

Interested consultancy firms can submit a technical proposal which shall include the following elements:

- Overall project approach, including stakeholder consultations, reporting and data gathering. The approach demonstrates understanding and knowledge of the issues to be addressed, including previous experience, knowledge of issues associated with tourism and marketing in Belize;
- Proposed structure and content of the plan document (proponents may use their own discretion and creativity to suggest an alternative structure and content to attain the objective of the assignment);
- Timetable;
- Budget lay out, showing individual consultancy costs, travel costs and administrative costs (including GST)
- Identification of any major risks foreseen in undertaking and completing the project and strategies for countering the risks.
○ Enumeration and qualifications of project team members;
○ List of local projects undertaken on strategic tourism planning or relevant undertakings to the project;

Interested consultancy firms must submit proposals to the Friends for Conservation and Development (FCD) electronically at fcd@btl.net

**Deadline for submission is Friday 30 October 2015**