MEASURING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF TOURISM
THE CASE OF JAMAICA

SIDE EVENT TO THE 52ND SESSION OF THE UN STATISTICAL COMMISSION

Carol Coy, Director General
Statistical Institute of Jamaica
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BACKGROUND
Jamaica - Small Island Developing State

- Many SIDS are low-lying countries with development centred along the coast
- Particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change
- In the tropics
- Seasonally affected by extreme weather events such as hurricanes, tropical storms, and cyclones
- Affected by climate variability: droughts and flooding which are threats to human settlements, infrastructure, and the economy

Contribution of Tourism to the Jamaican Economy

- 2019, Tourism share of GDP in the Jamaican economy: 9.8%
- 2019, Inbound tourism expenditure was J$485 billion: 60% of total exports
- July 2019, Employment in tourism industries: 161,500, 13% of total employed labour force
- July 2020, Employment in tourism industries: 122,500, 11% of total employed labour force
- Decline of 24.2%, reflection of the impact of COVID-19
## Existing Data on Tourism

- In-bound arrivals
- Expenditure: inbound, domestic
- Occupancy levels
- Tourism Satellite Account
- Tourism Direct GDP
- Tourism Industry value added
- Employment in Tourism Industries

### Existing Data on Tourism

- Mainly economic
- Based on:
  - *The International Recommendations for Tourism*
  - *Tourism Satellite Accounts: Recommended Methodological Framework*
  - *UN System of National Accounts*

- Provide data for SDG indicator 8.9.1; *Tourism direct GDP as a proportion of total GDP 7 and in growth rate.*
Development of a Measurement Framework for Sustainable Tourism

- There is limited information to measure the sustainability of tourism in Jamaica
- The Ministry of Tourism is leading the development of a framework to measure the sustainability of tourism
- Draft concept paper on the development of a measurement framework for sustainable tourism
- Based on a review of existing international recommendations on tourism indicators e.g. UNWTO, CTO, OECD, EUROSTAT
Sustainability Tourism Framework

**Purpose**

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<td>To measure tourism’s role in sustainable development</td>
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<td>To expand the current statistics beyond economics to include</td>
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<td>To improve data collection in the tourism sector</td>
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<td>To develop, implement and monitor more robust sustainable tourism</td>
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**Main Policy Issues Being Addressed**

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<td>Tourism dependence on the environment</td>
<td>Beaches, healthy reefs, clean water, forests. Jamaica like other Small Island Developing States (SIDS) is being impacted by climate change</td>
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<td>Environmental impacts</td>
<td>Disruption to ecosystem &amp; biodiversity, water quality, waste management, energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions</td>
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<td>Perception &amp; response of the sector</td>
<td>Environmental protection expenditure, environmental taxes</td>
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<td>Social impacts</td>
<td>Employment, pension benefits, housing, local traditions &amp; customs</td>
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<td>Impact on local infrastructure</td>
<td>Roads, hospitals, sewage systems</td>
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Sustainable Tourism Indicators

- Sustainable tourism indicators present a comprehensive system for identifying potential risks and possible actions.
- Need to develop indicators that measure:
  - The change in internal factors and structure of tourism
  - Changes in external factors that affect tourism
  - Impacts caused by tourism

Possible Tourism Indicators

- Economic Dimension:
  - Employment
  - Visitor expenditure
  - Contribution to GDP
  - Labour Productivity
  - Length of stay

- Environmental Dimension:
  - Water consumption
  - Energy consumption
  - Renewable sources of energy
  - Solid waste
  - Recycling initiatives
  - Water quality
  - Protected areas

- Socio-cultural Dimension:
  - Inclusiveness
  - Housing
  - Social benefits e.g. pensions
  - Decent work
Challenges

- Environment statistics; limited data available when compared to economic & social statistics.
- Jamaica has not yet started the development of the System of Environmental Economic Accounting (SEEA)
- Disaggregate data to isolate the tourism sector
- An underdeveloped National Statistics System (NSS) which presents challenges for coordination

Next Steps

- Engagement with critical stakeholders including the National Statistics Office, other Public Sector Agencies, academia
- Establish a technical working group to provide oversight to the development of the indicators
- Identify existing data gaps, develop a programme for data collection
- Identify resources for the development of the measurement framework
- Engage UNWTO to provide technical assistance
- To get a wide stakeholder involvement and buy-in into the process
Thank You for Your Attention