

CTO Secretary-General Highlights Urgent Need for Climate Action at ITB Berlin

BERLIN, GERMANY, March 18, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) Secretary-General Dona Regis-Prosper called for immediate and tangible climate action, financing and collaboration to protect tourism-dependent destinations during a high-profile panel discussion at ITB Berlin, one of the world's leading travel trade shows, which concluded last week.



Regis-Prosper was speaking during a panel on the Orange Stage titled “From Promise to Progress: Steering Tourism in Challenging Times”, alongside global tourism executives from the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTTC), the World Sustainable Hospitality Alliance, the European Commission, and NECSTouR.

Highlighting the Caribbean’s vulnerability to climate change, Regis-Prosper stressed the urgent need for practical tools and financing to help tourism-dependent regions navigate escalating climate impacts.

“Sustainability is our currency,” Regis-Prosper explained, emphasizing the Caribbean’s unique economic dependency. “At least eight out of the 10 most [tourism]-dependent nations in the entire world are based in the Caribbean. And for some of our destinations, up to 80% of GDP is tourism-based.”

Regis-Prosper added that while Caribbean destinations have already taken significant steps toward sustainability, including community-based tourism, circular economy initiatives, and strict regulations on single-use plastics, access to financing remains a critical challenge.

“There’s a saying that faith without works is dead. We certainly have the faith in the Caribbean. We are willing to work – we are hardworking people – but the gap is that access to financing, and that’s how you get to work,” Regis-Prosper told attendees, referencing the Caribbean’s active

participation at COP29 in Baku last year.

The panel, moderated by Professor Willy Legrand of IU International University of Applied Sciences and Heleri Rande of Think Hospitality, also featured Virginia Messina, Senior Vice President of Advocacy and Communications at WTTC, who highlighted that more than half of the world's top travel and tourism companies have now committed to clear climate targets. "We are seeing some progress, but we know we need to do a lot more," Messina said on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Glen Mandziuk, CEO of the World Sustainable Hospitality Alliance, advocated for global adoption of standardized metrics to measure sustainability. "We want [transparent], verifiable real-time data," Mandziuk noted, adding that industry leadership is essential.

Misa Labarille, Policy Officer for Tourism with the EU, announced her organization's plans to launch its first dedicated tourism sustainability strategy next year, saying the commission is prioritizing tourism amid mounting global pressures and challenges. "Going forward, what we want to do is to launch a new strategy, a new strategy for sustainable tourism," Labarille said, noting extensive consultations planned throughout the year.

John Fitzgibbon, Managing Director of NECSTouR, underscored the essential role destination management organizations play in delivering these EU-wide strategies. "It's really important that the voice of the regions, who are at the sharp end, in [the] frontline of delivering these EU strategies and national policies as well ... have something to say about all of this," he stated.

Concluding the discussion, the panelists each chose one defining word for the tourism industry in the year ahead. Regis-Prosper selected "reimagine", reflecting her call for a fresh approach to tourism that balances economic growth and climate responsibility. Other panelists emphasized "together" (Messina), "innovation" (Mandziuk), "smart" (Labarille), and "opportunity" (Fitzgibbon).

ITB Berlin 2025, which attracted over 100,000 visitors (with 87% comprising international attendees), reinforced tourism's pivotal role in shaping sustainable futures.

PHOTO CAPTION: Tourism leaders tackled sustainability and financing challenges at ITB Berlin. Pictured L-R: Professor Willy Legrand (IU International University of Applied Sciences); Dona Regis-Prosper (CTO Secretary-General); Virginia Messina (WTTC); Glen Mandziuk (World Sustainable Hospitality Alliance); Misa Labarille (European Commission); John Fitzgibbon (NECSTouR); and Heleri Rande (Think Hospitality).

About the Caribbean Tourism Organization

The Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), headquartered in Barbados, is the Caribbean's

tourism development agency, comprising membership of the region's finest countries and territories, including Dutch-, English- and French-speaking, as well as a range of private sector allied members. The CTO's vision is to position the Caribbean as the most desirable, year-round, warm-weather destination, and its purpose is Leading Sustainable Tourism - One Sea, One Voice, One Caribbean.

Among the benefits to its members, the organization provides specialized support and technical assistance in sustainable tourism development, marketing, communications, advocacy, human resource development, event planning & execution, and research & information technology.

The CTO's headquarters is located at Baobab Tower, Warrens, St. Michael, Barbados BB 22026.

Tel: +1 246 427-5242; Email: CTObarbados@caribtourism.com

For more information about the Caribbean Tourism Organization, visit www.OneCaribbean.org and follow the CTO on Facebook, X, Instagram and LinkedIn to be part of the conversation.

Heather Gibbs
Marketplace Excellence
+1 201-861-2056
[email us here](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/794788527>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2025 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.