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Introduction & Background

Barbados has become a leader in the Caribbean in recycling and other environmentally responsible habits and now is the time for us to become leaders in Green Business. The National Strategic Plan for Barbados makes reference to investing in the new green economy and building a sustainable marketplace. This programme provides the perfect opportunity to do so.

Business Barbados and its owners, along with other businesses, have approached The Future Centre Trust (FCT) to be the leader of this initiative. In addition, at the Future Centre Trust's visioning retreat in May of 2009, members identified green business as an important focus for the FCT, for Barbados and the region. To create such a programme, the FCT brought together members of the professional community in the development of local green business standards.

Through the initiation of this programme, companies will be given the opportunity to be part of a revolution, a truly green revolution, one which will ensure incorporating green business practices will become the rule, rather than the exception. Green Business Barbados provides the country with a realistic and true contribution to the reduction of the country's ecological footprint. It will promote and create a change in generational thinking which will be of direct benefit to business, and in turn the population of this country. This change of attitudes is needed now to ensure the sustainable use of resources, both local and imported.

Barbados has the opportunity, with this project, to show the world we are taking serious interest in reducing our carbon and ecological footprint. Not just taking an interest, but taking action as we, through this same process, implement adaptation measures to the impacts climate change on the region. By creating a truly green economy, we become the forerunners and the examples of how we can choose to ensure the sustainability of our country.

Rating Components

The five components of the project have been developed based on existing Green Business programme standards from all over the world. These standards have been localized based on affordable and attainable options for large and small businesses alike in the local business community. The five components of the project are:

Waste Reduction & Recycling

Waste reduction is probably one of the most advanced of these categories in Barbados. Children in school are taught the concepts of reduce, reuse and recycle and the option to do so in Barbados is available through many private recycling companies. There are also many available options to reduce consumption through educational programmes.

Energy Conservation & Renewable Energy Development

Currently in Barbados close to 100% of our energy is created through the Barbados Light & Power Company importing and burning fossil fuels. The small percentage that is not created through the BL & P Co is created from those individuals or companies who have invested in alternative energy systems.

The practice of burning fossil fuels is unsustainable and will become more expensive over time based on the availability of fossil fuels and world fuel markets. The need to reduce our reliance on unsustainable energy sources is evident in addition to creating new habits to reduce consumption.

Pollution Control & Management

In the 1960's Rachel Carson wrote the book called 'Silent Spring' that revealed to the world the toxic chemicals that are present in our environment and our food. She was the mother of the modern environmental movement and brought to light how many simple products that we use on a daily basis are not just unhealthy for our use but also for ecosystems as a whole. This component addresses the need for our businesses and organizations to consider their emissions and their direct impact on the physical environment.

Water Conservation

Many parts of the world are experiencing droughts and/or long periods of strange weather patterns. One of the major effects of climate change on the environment is the increased desertification of inland continents and reduction of rainfall all over the world. In a world with a population of 6.4 billion that only has access to 1% of the fresh water available on earth, humans and ecosystems are heading toward a catastrophe due to water depletion and contamination. This section addresses these issues by urging businesses/organizations to assess their water use practices and reduce consumption in any way possible.

Education and Outreach

The implementation of the above four components would not be possible without human behavioural change. Our current system is not set up to allow for informed sustainable decisions to be made thus changing behaviour and awareness on environmental, social and economic issues, can help to create an environment where businesses, organizations and individuals alike feel a sense of social and environmental responsibility.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

These component areas have been developed and localised through the consultation with members of the Technical Advisory Committee. The individuals bring much experience and knowledge to assist in the development of the programme. The following make up the locally based TAC membership, with international consultation also being sought:

Green Business Barbados

Implemented by Future Centre Trust

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Project Goal

To become the leading green business programme for Barbados and the wider Caribbean region.

Project Framework

1. Companies will contact the FCT to be enlisted in the programme.
2. Initial consultation with the organisation would highlight the benefits and costs associated with the programme and assess parts of the programme already implemented within the business/organization.
4. Creation of a Sustainability Plan with business owner/director and green team/representative.
5. Assessment conducted based on the five component areas. Areas will be identified where improvements can be made to meet the programme requirements. There will be a period allowed for implementation of requirements not yet attained based on the goals and objectives outlined in the Sustainability Plan.
6. Report issued with further recommendations on improvement and results of assessment revealed to show what level of 'greenness' the business/organization has attained.
7. Follow up with the business/organization annually for reapproval under the programme.

Green Business Benefits

- Green business directory listing on BusinessBarbados.com - supporter for creating a green business certification body and marketing link for businesses who are approved, or applying for approval in Barbados
- Gain a marketing edge for your business and reach out to more potential customers who support socially and environmentally responsible business/organizations.
- Going green not only makes good business sense, but considerable savings can be achieved through a reduction in water and energy bills as well as a reduction in overall consumption.
- Once the business/organization reaches compliance with the green business standards the company will receive our marketing logo and electronic logo for their website, where global exposure as a green business is complimentary to the overall organisation's corporate responsibility image.
- Website presence also listed on the FCT website, www.futurecentretrust.org
- Business will be making a difference to the environment while making a positive impact to their bottom line. It's not just eco-friendly it's eco-efficient.
- Satisfaction that business is doing its part for the environment.

Green Business Barbados welcomes your enquiry to become part of this standards programme.