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**CARIBBEAN HOTEL & TOURISM ASSOCIATION SIGNS MOU WITH
FOUNDATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION**

CHTA Recognizes, Supports Blue Flag and Green Key Initiatives

THE CARIBBEAN (Jan. 29, 2015) – The Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association (CHTA) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) recognising FEE’s Green Key and Blue Flag programs in the Caribbean as well as CHTA’s sustainability initiatives.

The Memorandum of Understanding between CHTA and FEE has been entered to recognize the hospitality and tourism sustainability initiatives in the Caribbean brought forward by FEE through the Green Key and Blue Flag programs and by CHTA through the Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism (CAST) and programs such as the Caribbean Hotel Energy Efficiency Action (CHENACT) initiative.

The agreement will be used to identify future cooperation between the two organizations promoting sustainable tourism projects and raising environmental awareness.

“By signing this cooperative agreement with FEE, CHTA reaffirms its commitment to sustainable development,” said Emil Lee, president of CHTA.

“Certainly protecting our environment and being a responsible industry are important reasons to support sustainable development,” he said, adding: “However, there are even more profound reasons to integrate green policies into everything we do. The Caribbean is our home. We want to live in beautiful places with clean water and healthy environment. We want our children to be able to swim in our oceans, eat the fish from the sea and fruits from our trees without fear.

“Additionally, being efficient is good for our environment but being efficient is also good for profitability which translates into stronger economies, better infrastructure and more jobs. And the partnership gives CHTA members an excellent road map for our members to follow.”

Jan Eriksen, President of FEE, adds: “We already have a history of successful cooperation with CHTA/CAST in connection with the implementation of the Blue Flag programme in the Caribbean starting 15 years ago and we are happy now to formalise it and extend it so it also includes our fast growing Green Key programme.”

“We welcome cooperation with an organisation like FEE with its programs, and it is our hope to seek additional partnerships of this kind to further strengthen the sustainability agenda in the tourism and hospitality business sector in the Caribbean region,” added Lee.

The MOU provides a framework of cooperation with a view to contributing more effective attainment of common objectives of both CHTA and FEE. Both organizations have agreed to a long-term cooperative relationship for the purpose of indentifying and developing programs and activities such as the Blue Flag and Green Key programs as well as initiatives developed by CHTA and CAST to attain common objectives on sustainable tourism and enviornmental education.

This will include joint projects and activities on a Regional level as well as local destination levels across the Caribbean..

The MOU will recognize CAST as the main resource for Caribbean enterprises to obtain training, education and implementation guidance of sustainable tourism best practises specific to the Caribbean region with the following three strategic focus areas: advocacy, environmental management and sustainable tourism support.

CHTA will recognize FEE and its programs for inclusion in its sustainable tourism initiatives. Fee, established in 1981 is a not-for-profit, non-governmental organisation comprised of national member organisations which are likewise not-for-profit and non-governmental, and is active in promoting, developing and managing environmental education programmes for sustainable development within the areas of certification schemes, eco-tourism programs, formal education, training of staff, awareness raising and management practices.

CHTA will recognize that FEE’s Blue Flag program is an exclusive eco-label and a voluntary program working with tourism in coastal areas, and that Blue Flag works towards sustainable development at beaches and marinas through strict criteria dealing with

environmental education and information, water quality, environmental management, safety and other services.

CHTA will also recognize that the FEE's Green Key programme is a tourism-related environmental education program with an exclusive eco-label for accommodations as well as attractions and restaurants with strict criteria within the categories of environmental management (water, waste and energy, green areas, administration) as well as involvement and communication (for staff and guests).

Foundation for Environmental Education

FEE is an international charity with member organisations in more than 70 countries around the world and a strong presence in the Caribbean region. FEE is working with sustainable development through its five environmental programmes: Green Key (eco-label for hotels and other tourism facilities awarded to 2300 establishments), Blue Flag (eco-label for beaches and marinas awarded to 4000 sites), Eco-Schools, Young Reporters for the Environment and Learning about Forests (environmental education programmes in schools).

Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association

The Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association (CHTA) facilitates the full potential of the Caribbean hotel and tourism industry by serving members' needs and building partnerships in a socially responsible and sustainable manner. CHTA is the voice of the Caribbean hospitality industry for the development of the region in the highly competitive and sophisticated environment of international tourism. Today, tourism is widely recognized as a pivotal industry in the economy of the region – and CHTA functions as the common denominator for this industry in a region of diverse nationalities, languages and styles, identifying mutual problems and marshaling the resources of the active and allied members to devise solutions. CHTA represents all facets of the hospitality industry with more than 600 member hotels and over 300 allied members.

CHTA, including the events staged by the association, is supported by Strategic Partners MasterCard, Interval International, OBM International, HVS, Tambourine and TravelZoo.

For more information, visit <http://www.caribbeanhotelandtourism.com>. Follow CHTA on Facebook [Facebook.com/CaribbeanHotelandTourismAssociation](https://www.facebook.com/CaribbeanHotelandTourismAssociation) and Twitter [Twitter.com/CHTAFeeds](https://twitter.com/CHTAFeeds).

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