

## **Advancing the National Development Plan**

### *A Primer for Committee Members*

The pre-planning processes for the preparation of a long-term sustainable development plan are far advanced in the Turks and Caicos Islands. The steps taken so far include:

- Land use/zoning plan for the family of islands, some more complete than others, which is the basic template from which physical planning proceeds.
- A fairly up to date demographic survey, completed in 2001, which recorded the population at 20, 400 persons and from which reasonable projections have being made for the population to increase to 35,000 in 10 years, and possibly, to over 60,000 in 20 years;
- Thirdly, a very comprehensive situational and needs assessment was carried out by the Kairi Consultants in 1999 which examined economic and social conditions in the islands and made a number of pertinent recommendations;
- Fourthly, over the past twenty years, a number of sectoral development plans have being completed, and some are even being implemented, for education, tourism, housing, solid waste management, and immigration and citizenship law reform.
- Fifthly, a number of profiles of the particular islands, some schematic, others more comprehensive, reviewing the economic and social conditions on each island, the needs, projects and prospects have being prepared and are available.
- Sixthly, over the years, several thoughtful persons ranging from the current Chief Minister, The Honourable Michael Misick; Chief Economist – Mr. Delton Jones; Economic Consultant Peter Poulson; and the current Director of Planning – Mr. Clyde Robinson have all outlined views in varying degrees of detail, on a ‘vision’ for the Turks and Caicos Islands, and the methods that are to be pursued in planning and moving the Turks and Caicos Islands towards becoming a first world society.

#### **Operational Structures and Procedures for the Planning Exercise**

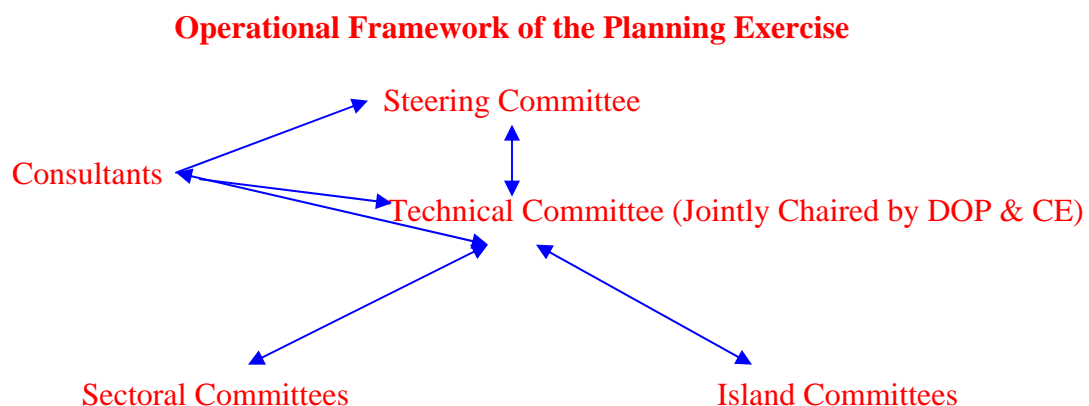
The expected time frame for the planning exercise will be approximately nine months – beginning in the first week of October 2005 and running until June 2006. Consistent with modern planning precepts and the Chief Minister directive, that the planning be “consultative”, the process contemplated will be highly participatory and aimed at tapping into and obtaining the input from the people of all the family islands and from the various economic and social sectors. In terms of the management of the process, the proposal is for the planning to be directed by a Steering Committee chaired by the Chief Minister or his Appointee, with the bulk of the research and analytical work being done by a team of consultant experts and specialists. The work of the consultants would be monitored by a Technical Committee jointly chaired by the Director of Planning and the

Chief Economist with other members of staff of Department of Planning (DOP) and the Department of Economic Planning and Statistics (DEPS) providing logistical support.

To ensure that the opinions and views of the people in the several islands and in the various economic and social sectors are taken into account, approximately 27 Island and Sectoral sub-committees will be established. In addition to monitoring the work of the consultants, another important function of the Technical Committee will be the naming of persons to the Island and sectoral sub-committees and monitoring the work of these groups. These sub-committees would include DEPS and DOP staffers who would lead in organizing and scheduling their meetings and serve as resource persons and rapporteurs providing technical advise and statistics and recording the discussions and reporting back to the Technical Committee. Useful ideas and other pertinent information obtained from these groups would be channeled by the Technical Committee to the Consultants for possible incorporation into the plan.

Two major coordinating workshops are to be held involving all the members of the Steering Committee and the members from the Island and Sectoral sub-committees. The first workshop will be held about one month after the consultants have commenced their diagnostic review to obtain and begin coordinating the views of the various sectoral interests. The second workshop will be held after the consultants have completed the first draft of the Plan in order to obtain the views and recommendations of the people about the draft. In between the workshops, and even after the presentation of the first draft of the Plan, the major work of the consultants will be coordinating the ideas, projects and programmes coming out of the various Island and sectoral groups and prioritizing, scheduling or phasing them in line with existing and projected resource availability.

The diagram below shows the operational flow and inter-relation of the planning structures with further clarifying comment on the role and functioning of these groups or entities.



### **Steering Committee**

Executive Council recently approved a Steering Committee (SC) of twenty-one persons, consisting of leading representatives from business and the public sector and representatives from the family islands. It is to be noted, that members of the Steering Committee were selected not only because they are leaders in their own fields but because they are thoughtful persons who have profound and far-reaching reflections on high quality ‘designs for social living’ that go beyond their sectoral interests. The Steering Committee will be responsible for defining visions and possibilities for the TCI and particular islands. The Steering Committee should meet at least five times during the planning exercise – twice before the first workshop to exchange ideas about the best directions for the TCI and particular Islands; at least twice during the drafting of the Plan to monitor the progress of the work and review the first draft; and at least once after the second workshop to sign off on the final draft.

### **The Consultants**

The consultants will provide intellectual leadership and advice during the planning exercise and will be responsible for doing the bulk of the research and analytical work and for writing the plan(s). While they will provide and receive information and advice to and from the Steering Committee and the Island and sectoral sub-committees, they will not be responsible for organizing and scheduling the meetings of these entities -that will be the job of the Technical Committee and DEPS and DOP staffers. Nonetheless, the consultants will be free to attend any of these sectoral meetings or request that particular meetings be held if particular local input or information is desired.

### **Technical Committee**

The Technical Committee – a small tight group, jointly chaired by the Chief Economist and the Director of Planning, with designated senior staffers as their executive arms, and the Lead Consultant as an ex-officio member, will oversee the entire planning exercise on behalf of the Government of Turks and Caicos Island. They will review and monitor the work-plan of the consultants to ensure that agreed outputs are delivered on schedule and they will assign and monitor the work of DEPS and DOP staffers, especially as it relates to the scheduling of meetings of the sectoral groups and other activities related to the planning exercise. The Chief Economist and the Director of Planning would meet at least once a month or bi-monthly with the Consultants and since the CE and Dir. of Planning will both sit on the Steering Committee they could serve as a natural conduit from the one to the other if the former are unable to attend a Steering Committee meeting.

### **Sectoral and Island Sub-committees**

As noted, the Steering Committee will be supported by twenty-seven policy-making sectoral and Island sub-committees. Based on the existing challenges and issues in the society, and the features of the future society we may want to create, the following policy developing sectoral committees are proposed:

- 1) Taxation, revenue, and budgeting (the macro-economy).
- 2) Investment promotion and procurement – incl. Small business development.
- 3) Tourism – sun/beach, ecological, convention, health, and retiree segments.
- 4) Financial and business services – not simply off-shore banking.

- 5) Agriculture and food processing.
- 6) Entertainment, gaming and craft.
- 7) Physical planning, infrastructure, parks, and environmental protection.
- 8) Housing.
- 9) Education, skills training, and human resource development.
- 10) Labour market regulations and full employment.
- 11) Health and AIDS.
- 12) Transportation and communication.
- 13) Public utilities and energy.
- 14) Poverty alleviation and welfare.
- 15) Gender, youth and sport.
- 16) Legal administration and justice.(ie police, courts, prisons, human & civil rights)
- 17) Governance –local and central, and institutional structures for development.
- 18) Population, migration and citizenship.
- 19) Science and technology.
- 20) Culture, values and attitudes, and national identity.

The sectoral synergies suggested here are not intended to be final and they may be reshuffled as deemed necessary. Other committees may also be added, but care should be taken that too many are not established so as to cause the planning process to become unwieldy. The sectoral sub-committees should consist of 6 to 10 persons knowledgeable about their sector. They would meet once or twice before the first workshop to exchange ideas and thoughts about their sector. They would review existing conditions in the sector - including current policies; make projections of the likely needs or demands for physical or financial resources in the sector ten years hence; and put forward policy and programme suggestions to meet those needs in a timely manner drawing upon their knowledge of 'best practices' in the TCI and the rest of the world. The TCIG staffer on the sectoral sub-committee would record the discussions of the Sector sub-committees, especially the consensus recommendations reiterated at the end of each meeting which would be presented at the first workshop. After the draft 10-Year Plan is written the Sector sub-Committees would meet again to review the document- especially the proposals related to their sectors, and present their views at the final workshop.

The Island sub-Committees would likewise consist of ten persons normally resident on the island, or having a continuing attachment to it, including the District Commissioner. They too would meet once or twice before the first workshop, and would have representatives on sectoral sub-committees of particular interest to them. Ex. South Caicos Island Committee might have representatives on the Tourism and Agriculture and Fisheries sub-committees since fishing and tourism are important in that Island. Providenciales might have representatives on the Tourism and Entertainment, Gaming and Craft sub-committees since those are activities important on that Island – and so on. The Island sub-committees would have their deliberations recorded also, and the final draft of the National, but especially the Island plan presented to them for review and approval. The challenge for the Consultants will be to integrate the proposals of the Island and Sectoral Plans into one cohesive national plan with an affordable mix of

projects and programmes, properly prioritized, and appropriately phased to be implemented in three year intervals.

### **Output and Deliverables**

The main outputs of the planning exercise will be the following:

- A National Development Plan with a ten-year vision to be implemented in rolling three-year stages;
- A first stage Medium-term Economic and Social Policy Framework containing specific projects and programmes to be implemented within the following three years;
- Specific Island Plans named after the particular Islands to be implemented in rolling three year stages;
- Various Sector Plans; and a,
- National Physical Plan.

### **Conclusion**

The preparation of the Ten-Year National Development Plan and particular Island Plans and other planning instruments are among the most important needs of the TCI at the present time. These planning instruments will provide a framework and a strategic focus for Government and private sector activities. This is especially necessary because while the past twenty years have witnessed burgeoning economic growth in the TCI, the benefits of this growth have not been evenly spread geographically, sectorally or throughout the population. These planning instruments should help in correcting some of these disparities through improved prioritization and mobilization of resources and focusing State and private sector activities on what needs to be done towards creating a first world society in the Turks and Caicos Islands.