

Economic Update September 24



Tourism And Sustainability Seminar Held in Cuba

From September 21st until today, scholars from a number of nations met in Havana for the *4th International Seminar on Tourism, Development and Sustainability*, with the aim of promoting good practice in a key sector for emerging economies.

The *Aula Magna* of the University of Havana (UH) hosted the opening of the event, which remarks with Lourdes Cisneros' lecture, dean of the Faculty of Tourism, and Monica Velarde, president of the *International Network of Researchers in Tourism, Development and Sustainability*.

One of the main lines to achieve sustainable development is the formation of professionals linked to tourism, central theme of the lecture delivered by Ramon Martin, professor at UH, to open the scientific sessions of the meeting.

On the opening day, participants also knew about the *Master Plan for the Historic Center of Havana*, through which this city, selected as one of the 7 wonder cities of the world, has regained much of its heritage values.

Eros Salinas, professor at the Faculty of Tourism and member of the organizing committee of the seminar, told local ACN news agency the sessions were moved to *San Geronimo de La Habana University College* on Tuesday 22nd, to continue discussions on how to propel, from the Academy, responsible tourism in an environmental harmony.

The organizers also foresaw trips to Viñales and the community of Las Terrazas in Sierra del Rosario mountains, in the western province of Pinar del Rio, to demonstrate the potential of Cuba to promote sustainable tourism while helping welfare and local progress.

The seminar was the result of work done since 2012 by the International Network of Researchers in Tourism, Development and Sustainability, composed of scholars from universities in Costa Rica, Guadalajara (Mexico), the Autonomous University of Nayarit (Mexico), the one in Lodz, in Poland, and the Higher Institute of Tourism in the Cuban capital.

In the 3rd edition, held in Costa Rica in October 2014, Cuba highlighted among the countries putting more efforts in terms of development of a tourism of peace, health and safety; hence, its selection as host of the upcoming edition.

The event also coincided with the opening of the current *10th International Meeting of Nature Tourism, Turnat 2015*, running until September 27th that tries to place Cuba as an attractive destination for this kind of activity, with the presentation of new products related to trekking, diving and fishing.

FAO Launches Aquaculture Project in Cuba

The *United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)*, will launch in Cuba a program for breeding freshwater fish, according to an official of that agency.

Such a project recently approved includes training and introduction of fish family, told to local Prensa Latina news agency Carlos Pulgarín, a FAO officer in Panama, serving the Caribbean and Central America.

Pulgarín participated in the *5th International Symposium on Aquaculture (Acuacuba 2015)*, which took a week in Cuba attended by both regional and local scholars at the Mampostón and El Dique fish stations, in the provinces of Mayabeque and Havana, respectively.

The project is expected to begin this year at the El Dique *Base Business Unit (UEB, in Spanish)*, a part of the *Company for the Development of Aquaculture Techniques*, located in Loma de Tierra, municipality of Cotorro, in Havana.

This is a program that seeks to achieve more efficient fish by breeding, which has a component of training and consulting services embracing around 20 and 50 researchers, technicians and farmers working in Cuba specialized in the breeding and fattening of tilapia fish, said the director of that UEB, Zenaida Arbolea.

In this *2015 Acuacuba* participated well-known experts from Guatemala, Panama, Costa Rica, Colombia, Mexico, El Salvador, Uruguay, Cuba and Puerto Rico, who debated 35 conferences and scientific works related to the various fields of aquaculture, considered one of the fastest and safest ways in supplying fish for human consumption worldwide nowadays.

Russia Sells Railroad Cars to Cuba

A major business contract to supply Cuba with means of rail transportation devices was recently signed at the Cuban Embassy in Russia, reported Cubaminrex digital site.

There will be 363 railroad cars in total, including 163 hopper wagons for the better development of the sugar harvest.

The contract was signed by Jose Antonio Arias Garcia, director of TRADEX, Cuban Import Company belonging to MITRANS, and Andrey Vodopyanov, director of business development for the RM-Rail Russian Co., supplier of such equipment.

Emilio Lozada Garcia, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Cuba to Russia, was present in the signing ceremony of the supply contract in addition to other embassy officials and executives of the *International Foreign Trade Bank SA*.

Cuba and Vietnam Agree to Cooperation on Agriculture

Santiago Perez, head of the food department of the Communist Party of Cuba Central Committee, spoke with Vietnamese authorities in Ho Chi Minh City on aspects of updating the economic model in the agricultural sector, reported Cuban Prensa Latina from Vietnam.

During the meeting with Nguyen Thanh Pong, local Deputy Secretary of Party Committee, the Cuban official mentioned some measures to increase production at home and the delivery of land and loans to companies and farmers while expressing interest in learning from the experience of Ho Chi Minh City in this field to promote agricultural development in the Caribbean nation.

As part of the program, the Cuban delegation also visited a high-tech farm and other entities qualified as *efficient*, according to reports.

The agricultural sector is included in bilateral cooperation programs with a view to increase food production in Cuba.

Cuba and Panama Sign Accords on Agriculture

Another agreement for scientific and technical cooperation in agriculture was signed between the governments of Cuba and Panama, two weeks after Panamanian President Juan Carlos Varela paid an official visit to Cuba, where he met with Cuban President Raul Castro.

The agreement, which is between two countries "with similar climatic and cultural conditions", was signed by the Cuban ambassador in Panama, Antonio Miguel Pardo Sanchez, and Panamanian Minister of Agriculture Jorge Arango, EFE news agency reported.

Production of biopesticides, urban and suburban agriculture, organic farming, integrated pest management, and renewable energy were the areas of cooperation covered by the memorandum of understanding, according to the report.

"Cuba is investigating much in the production of sugarcane, rice and beans, something that interests and benefits Panama," said Mr. Arango in an official statement.

Meanwhile, the Cuban ambassador in Panama said the two countries "are working hard" to resolve problems and "the challenge is to guarantee food, something that is difficult because of the climate change and El Niño phenomenon".



Radio Habana Cuba