HISTORICAL HERITAGE

of the
North-east Tobago UNESCO
Man and the Biosphere Reserve
Management Plan

SUMMARY SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

The NETMABR is a full of historical architectural heritage, of a regionally outstanding variety.

As of mid-2023, the majority of these 20 key cultural heritage assets are in the "At Risk" category, which means they are deteriorating as a result of neglect, inappropriate development, and under-resourced management. Additional issues are dispersed or difficult to access archival material, unclear ownership, difficult access, erosion, theft, lack of restoration knowledge and almost complete lack of adequate interpretation. Unfortunately, most of the heritage assets in the NETMABR are not currently listed as a "Property of Interest" and none is designated as a National Heritage Site under the National Trust Act of Trinidad and Tobago and as such do not have legal statutory protection.

There are many good examples from the Caribbean region on how to use heritage assets for lucrative green economic and regenerative tourism activities. Roxborough, Kendall, Betsy Hope, and Argyle are recommended as first demonstration sites; the Speyside Waterwheel requires immediate attention.

HIGH LEVEL GOAL

NE Tobago's historical heritage assets are protected under national law, conserved according to international best practise, and sensibly made available for research, education, and income generating opportunities.

PRIORITY NEEDS

- A complete inventory of terrestrial and marine heritage assets;
- a halt to further loss, destruction, theft, and dilapidation;
- legal protection of cultural heritage assets;
- income generating usage of heritage assets should contribute to their maintenance as well as provide livelihoods for community.

STRATEGIES

- Establishment and facilitation of a NETMABR Heritage Asset Working Group;
- establishment of national, regional, and international partnerships (via MoU) with independent experts, supporting organisations, and universities;
- procurement of grants, voluntary support, and operationalise income generating activities to support heritage conservation;
- outreach regarding the significance of the NETMABR's heritage assets for cultural identity and sustainable economic development to stakeholders, networks and visitors.

KEY PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

- Prepare of a terrestrial and marine Heritage Asset Register and Assessments
- Nominate each site for listing as a "property of interest" under the National Trust Act.
- Over a period of 10 years getting NE Tobago's heritage asset sites in a stable condition
- Establish of international partnerships; several, complimentary partnerships should reduce the risk of severe impacts if one partnership fails.
- Prepare project proposals for restoration, conservation, and purple economic usage.
- Develop an adoption scheme.
- Lobby for an annual budget for heritage projects from the THA.
- Establish a Heritage Craft Centre
- Identify unique archaeological tourism products
- Assist with the development of an archaeological voluntourism programme.
- Develop at least two key "demonstration sites"
- Create a paperback booklet and coffee table book celebrating and interpretating NETMABR's heritage assets.
- Facilitate a regional archaeological workshop / conference.