



■ SBDCBelize provides customized needs-based services to Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises, in order to facilitate competitiveness and export readiness.

■ BTEC develops a cadre of well trained, marketable, and self-sufficient individuals to be able to confidently compete in the marketplace by providing effective, demand-driven, user-friendly, and value-based programs that develop, deliver, and sustain a quality workforce.

According to Taegar-Panton, her Ministry focuses on six priority investment industries:

■ Tourism & Leisure – Tourism contributes approximately 40 percent of the country's yearly GDP (USD \$655 million), with approximately

three fourths of its tourists coming from the U.S. and Canada. According to the National Tourism Master Plan, by 2030, the country expects approximately 556,000 overnight arrivals per year with an average length of stay of over 8 days. Opportunities for investment include ecotourism, cruise tourism, nautical tourism, and medical tourism. Thus, the country is looking to expand its cruise and commercial sea ports and its airports.

■ Agri-Business & Agro-Processing – Belize continues to ramp up and diversify its export basket. Belize continues to export a greater share of its agricultural commodities, such as sugar, citrus, bananas, grains, cacao, cotton, co-



conut oil, and vegetable extracts, among other value-added products. Currently, agribusiness contributes approximately 10.4 percent of GDP with a continued growth trajectory.

■ Fisheries & Aquaculture – Contributing 3.0 percent of GDP, Belize capture species include: spiny lobster, queen conch, sea cucumber, and finfish. Its culture species include: Pacific white shrimp, Nile tilapia, and cobia all of which are currently consumed locally and exported to various regional markets. Additional areas of investment opportunity also include: snapper, grouper, red drum, and octopus. Belize's main

markets include the U.S, Canada, Asia, Europe, Mexico, Guatemala, and the CARICOM countries.

■ Offshore Outsourcing - These include: Business Process Outsourcing (BPO), Information Technology Outsourcing (ITO), and Knowledge Process Outsourcing (KPO). Today, Belize has over 20 outsourcing operations, employing over 2,500 people. Its strengths include: a modern telecom infrastructure; a young, bilingual workforce; competitive salaries; strong government support; incentive programs; and international connectivity with direct flights to multiple destinations in the U.S., Canada as well as Central