



Indigenous Communities, Tourism and Biodiversity Workshop Series: New Information and Web-based Technologies

The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is holding a series of regional and sub-regional workshops aimed at capacity building for indigenous and local communities in support of the enhanced implementation of the CBD Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development.

The workshops are being held in 5 biogeographical regions of the globe (the Arctic, islands, dry lands and deserts, forest-basins and mountains), areas whose significant biodiversity and indigenous communities attract large numbers of eco and cultural tourists.

The first 3-day workshop of the workshop series considered the distinct challenges of remote rural Arctic destinations and was hosted on 19-22 November 2007 in Canada. The second workshop, on islands, took place in November 2008 in Apia, Samoa. The reports are available at: <http://tourism.cbd.int/events.shtml>

CBD guidance and decisions

- ❑ Decision IX/13 E para. 7 on Article 8(j) and related provisions, requests the Executive Secretary to convene, subject to the availability of financial resources, further regional and sub-regional workshops on community-friendly communication tools on traditional knowledge related to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.
- ❑ Decision VIII/5, on Article 8(j) and related provisions, asks for the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with Parties, to convene subject to the availability of financial resources, regional and sub-regional workshops to assist indigenous and local communities in capacity-building, education and training, with particular emphasis on the participation of women from indigenous and local communities, and regional and sub-regional workshops on new information and web-based technologies to assist indigenous and local communities in their use and to facilitate the establishment of communication networks.
- ❑ Decision VII/14 on Biological Diversity and Tourism, invited, *inter alia*, relevant organizations to provide indigenous and local communities with capacity-building and financial resources to support their active participation in tourism policy-making, development planning, product development and management indicated by the Guidelines.

Background

Sustainable tourism presents an important opportunity to protect and conserve not only biodiversity, but also cultural diversity and traditional knowledge. In light of this, the Conference of the Parties of the CBD adopted the Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development and the Secretariat developed a User's Manual based on these Guidelines. These Guidelines and User's Manual are particularly useful to indigenous peoples as a blueprint and hands on guide to protect and conserve biological and cultural diversity and traditional knowledge.

Indigenous people and traditional communities around the world, particularly those managing areas with significant biodiversity for livelihood and cultural reasons, have long realized that tourists are interested in visiting their surrounding areas and experiencing their ways of life and cultural roots. This has led to the development of various tourism products (tours, accommodation services, transportation and interpretation offers) designed, managed and operated by indigenous communities and leaders.

CBD tools

- ❑ The Secretariat of the CBD has developed with the World Tourism Forum on Peace and Sustainable Development (www.destinations.net), the Biodiversity and Tourism Network (<http://tourism.biodiv.org>) to facilitate the implementation of the Guidelines through an online exchange platform.
- ❑ This network of tourism practitioners works hand in hand with the Traditional Knowledge Information Portal on Article 8(j) (<http://www.biodiv.org/tk/default.shtml>), dedicated to promoting awareness and enhancing access by indigenous and local communities to information on traditional knowledge, innovations and practices relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and in providing enhanced electronic networking tools.

Geographical distribution

The Secretariat has carried out informal research on the locations of indigenous tourism products and found clustering of these tourism operations in 5 bio-geographical regions of the

globe: the Arctic, islands, dry lands and deserts, forest-basins and mountains. In order to reach as many indigenous tourism operators as possible, the SCBD has structured this workshop series around these 5 bio-geographical areas and proposes to hold new information and web-based technology workshops in each of these regions.



Indigenous Tourism and New Information Technology

One of the characteristics of indigenous tourism products is that their managers must rely heavily on Internet-based marketing and information tools, due to the specific niche markets they reach out to, to the relative isolation of their destinations, and to the difficulty of counting on more mainstream tourism distribution channels (trade fairs and events, contacts with tour operators and agents, traditional travel media and direct marketing).

In light of this, and in response to the CBD decisions, the Secretariat is organizing this series of training workshops to support capacity-building and exchanges between indigenous people on managing biodiversity and tourism products applying the CBD Guidelines. The workshops will primarily focus on new information and web-based technologies and will test and assess participative planning tools. The Secretariat works in partnership with academic institutions to technically assist in researching and developing policy planning as well as needs assessment tools specifically aimed at indigenous tourism product managers.

For detailed information about the workshop series, visit:

www.cbd.int/tourism/wstour-01.shtml



Indigenous Tourism and Biodiversity Website Award

As a complementary project to the workshop series, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), in partnership with the Planeta.com, and the generous support of the government of Spain, created the first Indigenous Tourism and Biodiversity Website Award. The award is presented to an indigenous tourism operation for having a website that promotes sustainable practices and educates visitors on cultural protocols and biodiversity conservation.

Planeta.com hosts a number of awards aimed at improving the quality of communication about responsible travel and ecotourism. Coverage of indigenous people and tourism are highlighted in the regional guides.



The Indigenous Tourism Website Award can be used as a catalyst to improve collaboration among operations around the world. Applicants should consider adding links to one another. Here's a message we received from one of the nominees: "It will be interesting for us to see who just sees us as competition for this award and who has the vision to recognize it as a great opportunity to further grow a business community and contacts. For us it certainly is more than just an award but when looking at other applicants websites, it makes us want to experience what other indigenous tourism have to offer."

Eligibility

Tourism services owned and operated by indigenous people and communities are eligible for the Indigenous

Tourism and Biodiversity Website Award. We prefer to receive applications from operations that have been in business for at least three full years.

The Award

Two awards are attributed- one from a popular count and one from a jury and runners up are also recognized. All of the nominees receive the proper kudos and acknowledgement. In 2009, the winning website was showcased during a press conference at the [Reisepavillion - International Fair for Alternative Travel](#), in Munich, Germany. The winning websites are featured on the Planeta.com and the CBD websites.

Sponsor

The Indigenous Tourism and Biodiversity Website Award is sponsored by the Spanish Government for the [Traditional Knowledge and Article 8\(j\)](#) programme of the SCBD.

Criteria

The Indigenous Tourism and Biodiversity Website Award represents an opportunity for indigenous people and communities to improve their websites. Among the criteria for selection, the website had to consider the following: .

- be regularly updated
- link to other relevant sites
- reflect indigenous ownership, authenticity and heritage
- encourage sustainable livelihoods, respect of life on earth
- be user-friendly
- be trustworthy
- provide clear contextual information
- have text in English
- add the award [logo](#)



LIST OF NOMINEES FOR THE 2009 AWARD



[Bookabee Tours](#) is a family-owned business specializing in authentic Aboriginal experiences in Adelaide, South Australia and through the outback.



[Chalalán Ecolodge](#) is located in tropical Bolivia. An Andean hotspot, the site hosts 45,000 different plant species and more than 1,000 tropical bird species.



[Great Spirit Circle Trail](#) encompasses eight First Nation communities on Manitoulin Island and the Sagamok region in Northeastern Ontario, Canada.



[Guurrbi Tours](#) is run by Nugal-warra story-keeper Willie Gordon who keeps his ancestral rock art alive by sharing its stories with guests near Cooktown, Queensland, Australia.



[Huit Huit Tours](#) offers a variety of eco-culture trips in Canada's Cape Dorset and the south Baffin region. Inuit art and culture are a focus of town tours.



[Indigenous Trails](#), based in New Zealand's Bay of Plenty, holds strategic alliances with other Maori tourism operators, providing cultural travel experiences that are out of reach for most visitors to Aotearoa.



[It's Wild! Bush Camps](#) is owned by the Mwanya and Chifunda communities in Zambia's Luangwa Valley through a program called Community Markets for Conservation (COMACO).



[Kapawi Amazon Ecolodge](#) is located in one of the most remote and well protected parts of the Ecuadorian Amazon deep in the nearly two million acres of the Achuar people's territory



[Magic Mara Safaris](#) is named for the Maasai tribespeople and the Mara River which divides it in the Masai Mara, a large park reserve in south-western Kenya.



[Nguna - Pele Marine Protected Area](#) is an indigenous, organization made up of sixteen communities on two islands dedicated to the sustainable use and long-term existence of marine and terrestrial resources.



[Ricancie](#) is an organization of nine Quichua-Communities in the Sumaco Biosphere Reserve on the Upper Río Napo offering an eco-tourism program and possibilities for cultural exchange.



[Sani Lodge](#) is owned and operated by Sani Isla Kichwa community in Ecuador's Amazon.



[Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre](#) shares the cultural practices of coastal and interior salish peoples. The center offers personalized guided cultural tours, indigenous performance arts and language programming, ethnobotanical walks and indigenous culinary tastings.



[TIME Unlimited NZ Tours and Travel](#) provides unique and high quality Auckland and Maori Cultural Tours.



[Tjapukai Aboriginal Culture Park](#) is located in Queensland, Australia.

The winners of the 2009 Indigenous Tourism and Biodiversity Website Award

JURY SELECTION

Guurrbi Tours

<http://www.guurrbitours.com>

Guurrbi Tours is run by Nugal-warra story-keeper Willie Gordon who keeps his ancestral rock art alive by sharing its stories with guests near Cooktown, Queensland, Australia.



The popular 2009 ITBW Award

Indigenous Trails

<http://www.itrails.co.nz>

Indigenous Trails, based in New Zealand's Bay of Plenty, holds strategic alliances with other Maori tourism operators, providing cultural travel experiences that are out of reach for most visitors to Aotearoa.



Runners up in the juried award



1. Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre:
<http://www.slcc.ca>

Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre shares the cultural practices of coastal and interior salish peoples. The center offers personalized guided cultural tours, indigenous performance arts and language programming, ethnobotanical walks and indigenous culinary tastings.



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2. Nguna - Pele Marine Protected Area:
<http://www.marineprotectedarea.com.vu>

Nguna - Pele Marine Protected Area is an indigenous, organization made up of sixteen communities on two islands dedicated to the sustainable use and long-term existence of marine and terrestrial resources.



Runners-up of the popular ITBW Award

1. TIME unlimited:
<http://www.newzealandtours.travel>

TIME Unlimited NZ Tours and Travel provides unique and high quality Auckland and Maori Cultural Tours.

2. Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre:
<http://www.slcc.ca>

3. Nguna - Pele Marine Protected Area:
<http://www.marineprotectedarea.com.vu>

