



INTRODUCTION

The Indigenous Tourism Collaborative of the Americas (ITCA) has collected information in response to the Call For Input for the Report to the 78th Session of the UN General Assembly - Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. ITCA is an advisory network of Indigenous leaders and non-Indigenous tourism leaders working together to recover from COVID-19, build capacity and resilience in Indigenous tourism and gain respect and inclusion for Indigenous tourism leadership in governments and the tourism industry (see Question 6 for greater detail).

QUESTION 5

Question 5: What has been the role of corporations in the context of tourism? Please, provide examples, if any, of the private sector consulting with Indigenous Peoples and encouraging their participation in the creation, implementation and management of tourism projects. Do sustainable tourism certifications incorporate the rights of Indigenous Peoples?

Indigenous People and the Travel Industry: Global Good Practice Guidelines was created by G Adventures, Planeterra, and the GW International Institute of Tourism Studies (GW IITS). Travel companies that interact with Indigenous communities have a special responsibility to help them safeguard their resources and can play a key role in helping to do so. The practical guidelines are intended to encourage responsible conduct and guide good business practices that serve and protect the interests of Indigenous communities and travel companies as well as produce visitor experiences that are authentic, respectful and rewarding.

To develop these guidelines, intensive research was completed by G Adventures, Planeterra, and GW IITS. Over the course of a year these organizations:

1. Reviewed literature and existing declarations and codes established by Indigenous communities, associations, and NGOs
2. Conducted primary research with Indigenous tourism suppliers and travelers
3. Developed guiding principles for respectful business practices
4. Established a set of guidelines with corresponding concrete actions
5. Engaged an expert review panel of Indigenous tourism experts and tour operations professionals to provide feedback on draft guidelines
6. Incorporated feedback to produce final guidelines

The guidelines cover three main elements of Indigenous tourism experience planning– travel companies developing new relationships with Indigenous communities and suppliers and in assessing existing relationships, business owners and travel companies operating Indigenous tourism experiences with consideration of accurate information, employment and growth, and visitor education, and marketing professionals promoting experiences with Indigenous communities. This report also includes a list of guiding principles that are to be used as the basis for developing new tourism products and experiences.

G Adventures offers nearly 100 experiences in Indigenous communities around the world. These released guidelines were used to create their Indigenous Tourism policy that is implemented throughout their business structure and their tours.

Read the Indigenous People and the Travel Industry: Global Good Practice Guidelines here: <http://planeterra.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/indigenous-2017-11-29-2.pdf>

QUESTION 6

Question 6. Please identify specific examples of good practices by States or International organizations to promote, protect, and fulfill the rights of Indigenous Peoples in the sustainable development of tourism, including management or co-management of tourism projects, incorporation of indigenous scientific knowledge, benefit sharing, funding of Indigenous projects etc.

The Indigenous Tourism Collaborative of the Americas (ITCA)

In October 2020, the Organization of American States and the George Washington University International Institute of Tourism Studies in partnership with the Office of Indian Economic Development, U.S. Department of the Interior, hosted the first-ever Indigenous Tourism Forum of the Americas. The forum brought together nearly 300 Indigenous tourism organizations, travel companies, and representatives of governments, nonprofits, and academia from Canada, the Caribbean, Central America, South American and the United States to discuss the development challenges that Indigenous Peoples face and the role of tourism in driving sustainable economic development. To learn more about the forum, visit www.indigenoustourismforum.com.

That virtual event inspired a network of nearly 100 Indigenous leaders and leading organizations and public and private industry champions to join forces to create a hemispheric **Indigenous Tourism Collaborative of the Americas (ITCA)**. Members of the ITCA are working together to support sustainable Indigenous tourism development across the American continents.

The ITCA was unveiled officially by Kathryn Isom-Clause, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs for the U.S. Department of the Interior. In her remarks given virtually at the XXV Inter-American Congress of Ministers & High-Level Authorities of Tourism meeting organized by the Organization of American States and hosted by the nation of Paraguay in October 2021, the deputy assistant secretary of Indian Affairs said, “Join us on the ground floor of this evolution in travel, supporting your Indigenous communities and tourism industry leaders to create a new tourism network of strength, knowledge, and vision. As Indigenous tourism continues to face one of its greatest challenges with the COVID-19 pandemic, let us work together to reconstruct and rebuild a prosperous and resilient Indigenous tourism economy.”

The Collaborative meets regularly to exchange ideas and experiences and engage in dialogue to drive collaborative actions. The ITCA's current priorities are:

- Covid-19 Recovery and Resilience
- Building Capacity, Sustainability and Technology
- Respect, Representation and Inclusion in Government and Tourism Industry Planning and Development

The ITCA is made up of 55 Indigenous regional, national and sub-national tourism association leaders and 45 tourism industry organizations that include travel companies, ministries of tourism, state tourism offices, tourism nonprofits and Tribal colleges and academia. It is steered by the George Washington University International Institute of Tourism Studies, the Organization of American States and Office of Indian Economic Development at the U.S. Department of the Interior. It is supported by the National Congress of the American Indians and the White House Council on Native American Affairs.

ITCA members meet quarterly, hold webinars, and have organized into action teams to address priorities outlined above. Currently, the ITCA is building a digital repository—the Indigenous Tourism Resource Portal—that will serve as an easily accessible, comprehensive inventory of tools and resources to help Indigenous Peoples and their stakeholders and partners develop and better manage tourism. The Portal will be leveraged to achieve sustainable tourism throughout the Americas to rebuild the sector following the COVID-19 pandemic 2020-2022. To learn more about the digital repository, visit: <https://indigenoustourism.net/>

The ITCA is providing a platform for Indigenous community leaders, policymakers, and business owners to share their experiences, to learn from one another, to take collective action, and to better understand how to promote change through tourism without compromising their own cultural values.

QUESTION 7

Question 7. Please identify specific examples of good practices by Indigenous Peoples who are developing and managing tourism projects on their lands. What factors have furthered these initiatives?

The South Dakota Native Tourism Alliance (SDNTA) is an ad hoc network of representatives from the nine federally recognized Tribal Nations in South Dakota, tourism industry leaders, and local, state, and federal partners, working together to develop Indigenous tourism as a catalyst for economic growth. Through the SDNTA, organizations and individuals who are passionate about Indigenous tourism leaders in South Dakota come together to learn, plan, and collaborate on projects that create opportunities for economic development through Indigenous tourism in Tribal Nations.

How the SDNTA Began

The Alliance originated in a series of community meetings starting in August 2019. From March 2020 to July 2021, more than 65 participants met monthly online to assess the potential for Indigenous tourism in South Dakota and work together to develop a five-year strategic plan—the Native American Tourism Development and Management Plan, South Dakota 2020–2025 (NATDMP). The participatory planning process was facilitated by the George Washington University International Institute of Tourism Studies (GW IITS), a global leader in tourism education and research.

The NATDMP presents 43 priority initiatives that include a wide range of infrastructural projects, tourism attractions, and product development investment projects along with community and entrepreneurship preparedness initiatives. Visit sdnativetourismalliance.org to download a copy of the NATDMP.

The SDNTA formally launched as an ad hoc regional tourism network in August of 2021 and has begun implementing the NATDMP. The network's first efforts are focused on priority initiatives to develop tourism experiences and strengthen regional tourism management, education, and tourism advocacy programs for Tribal Leaders and Native American communities.

A Long-Term Vision for Indigenous Tourism

By 2025, the SDNTA envisions South Dakota Tribal Nations in ongoing projects with industry and state and federal partners to develop Native American tourism experiences that attract visitors and encourage them to stay and experience more in Tribal Nations, ultimately bolstering local economies and the well-being of Native American communities.

To realize this ambitious vision, the SDNTA is implementing the NATDMP with support from Tribal Nation Leaders, GW IITS, the South Dakota Department of Tourism, and industry and

state partners. SDNTA participants hope this initiative can be a vehicle for the Oceti Sakowin Oyate (the People of the Seven Council Fires) to enhance economic development through responsible tourism that promotes and maintains Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota values.

How The Work Is Funded

From its inception in 2019 until September 2022, the SDNTA was financially supported by the Office of Indian Economic Development (OIED), Department of the Interior through the Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience (NATIVE) Act, bipartisan legislation introduced by U.S. Senators Brian Schatz (D-Hawaii) and John Thune (R-SD) to enhance and integrate Native tourism, empower Native communities, and expand unique cultural tourism opportunities in the United States.

This initial support expanded on a 2016 partnership with GW IITS and Tribal Nations in North Dakota to establish the North Dakota Native Tourism Alliance, a regional alliance-building demonstration project, through which OIED provided capacity-building and technical assistance.

Now that the SDNTA has been formally established, GW IITS is actively supporting the network's implementation of the NADMP. In the fall of 2022, GW IITS secured a two-year grant from the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) with counterpart funding from the South Dakota Department of Tourism. The EDA grant will help ensure the continued growth and strengthening of the network, development of new tourism products, and the establishment of a formal governance structure.