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## LETTER OF COMMITMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DESTINATION

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DESTINATION  
**Kootenay Rockies**



Considering a Sustainable Tourism Destination as one that has adopted integrated planning and management of the entire tourism system, so that the economic, socio-cultural, environmental and institutional needs, present and future, are achieved. This will guarantee the role of tourism to promote sustainable tourism practices and contribute to sustainable development, while enhancing the visitor experience and creating awareness among visitors on sustainability issues.

The Responsible Tourism System is an integrated process that requires collaboration of public authorities, private companies, associations, not for profits, Indigenous communities, local governments, and other entities and service providers, through which tourism development and promotion of the Certified Biosphere Destination is encouraged.

Since tourism sustainability is an end that must be pursued by any destination, the process starts with a commitment to continuous improvement and the fulfilment of clear and quantifiable objectives, through the World Charter for Sustainable Tourism.





Taking into account the general principles contained in the following international conventions and declarations:

- UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001).
- UNESCO Conventions for the Safeguarding of the Cultural, Natural and Tangible (1972) and Intangible Heritage (2003).
- UNWTO Code of Ethics for Tourism (1999).
- The World Charter for Sustainable Tourism (1995).
- Rio Declaration (1992) and Johannesburg Plan of Action (2002).
- The Millennium Development Goals.
- The Declaration of the Universal Forum of Cultures on Tourism.
- The Declaration of the Universal Forum on Tourism, Sustainable Development and Peace.
- World Summit on Sustainable Development (2015)
- The World Charter for Sustainable Tourism +20 (2015).
- Climate Summit (2015)

And, as stated in the World Charter for Sustainable Tourism +20, that;

#### Acknowledging...

... that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by the United Nations in 2015, represent a great opportunity to resolutely steer tourism in the direction of inclusive and sustainable pathways;

#### Remembering...

... the principles of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism approved by the UNWTO and adopted by the United Nations General Assembly; the recommendations and guidelines





provided by various conventions and multilateral agreements relating to the environment and culture, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the World Culture and Nature Heritage Convention, the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism;

#### Concerned...

... about certain negative effects of tourism development, including those manifestations related to corruption and bribery in all its forms, to the destruction of natural and cultural resources, to social imbalances and inequalities, and also to the effects of conflicts and terrorist attacks that occur in many destinations;

#### Taking into account...

... that tourism should be a global engine that contributes effectively to reducing inequality within and between countries, to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, to achieve equality of and to create opportunities for lifelong learning for all;

#### Highlighting...

... that tourism can significantly reduce its ecological footprint and must become a driver of innovation and development of green, inclusive and low-carbon economies; as well as contributing to the safeguarding and regeneration of cultural creativity, diversity, well-being of humans and natural ecosystems;

#### Pointing out...

... that local traditions and knowledge, in all their forms, must be respected and valued in the





of sustainable tourism policies, and underlining the importance of promoting the full participation of local communities and Indigenous peoples in decisions affecting them in tourism development projects;

#### Considering...

... the set of declarations, agreements and international conventions that have inspired the global movement for sustainable tourism and development in the last twenty years;

#### Convinced...

... of the need to strengthen, support and build alliances and relationships for a more sustainable visitor economy and taking into account the positive trends that have been consolidated in recent years;

#### Firmly believing ...

... that tourism based on internationally recognized principles of sustainable development is the only path to follow for tourism development in harmony with the environment and human welfare.

Therefore, we understand that tourism policy and development must be the result of an open, participatory and interactive dialogue between all partners involved in tourism development and in which local communities, industry and our Indigenous partners must play an essential role.

For all these reasons, Kootenay Rockies, Cariboo Chilcotin Coast, Northern British Columbia and Vancouver Island as sustainable destinations will be excellent models providing a platform for respectful dialogue and collaboration that promotes innovative models of a





visitor economy that is committed to regenerative cultural diversity, vibrant communities, healthy natural ecosystems and sustainable development for all.

We therefore acknowledge and express our firm commitment to move towards a new model of tourism based on the principles of sustainability, cultural diversity and social responsibility, sharing a common future and defining a series of strategic actions based on:

- ✔ **Promoting local, regional, provincial, national and international** debate on issues related to cultural diversity, ecological protection and all aspects of sustainability and their link with tourism development in social, professional and scientific forums;
- ✔ **Developing means of awareness and forms of cooperation between all partners** to strive towards a more sustainable destination, including the facilitation of knowledge exchange and best practices;
- ✔ **Promoting case studies and projects that serve as a reference for Sustainable tourism** and enhance the diversity of the destination;
- ✔ **Encouraging the use of new information and digital technologies as an instrument** to enhance the diversity of the destination and to facilitate a better understanding of the destination for visitors;
- ✔ **Incorporating sustainability into research**, training and education programs specialized in tourism, diversity and heritage;
- ✔ **Promote and facilitate the exchange of knowledge and good tourism practices** aimed at fostering tourism that is responsible for cultural diversity and sustainable development;



- ✔ Incorporating policies and strategies for the preservation and enhancement of cultural and natural heritage in the process of tourism planning and development, paying special attention to intangible heritage assets, given the fragility of this resource;
- ✔ Contributing to the creation, development and implementation of new sustainable tourism experiences and activities that facilitate the respectful use of the cultural, heritage and the natural environment within our region

And in witness whereof, they have signed the present commitment in triplicate in **PLACE** and on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2021.

KOOTENAY ROCKIES  
TOURISM  
Kathy Cooper

RESPONSIBLE  
TOURISM INSTITUTE  
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