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15 September 2009

## NOTIFICATION

### **Workshop for Indigenous and Local Communities in Latin America and the Caribbean on Information Technologies, Tourism and Biodiversity in Forest Ecosystems**

#### **Workshop III: Forest Ecosystems, Latin America and the Caribbean Region Ecuador, 9-11 December 2009**

Dear Madam/Sir,

In decision IX/13, E7 on Article 8(j) and related provisions, the Conference of Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) requested 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. Decisions VIII/5, B13 and D6(a) on Article 8(j), similarly requested the Executive Secretary to convene regional and sub-regional workshops to assist indigenous and local communities in capacity-building, education and training, as well as in using new information and web-based technologies and in establishing communication networks.

In response to these decisions, the Secretariat of the CBD is continuing a series of training workshops to support indigenous and local community management of biodiversity and tourism products. These workshops aim to reinforce the sustainable use of biodiversity in tourism through bolstering the web-based capacities of indigenous and local community tourism operators. The workshops are being planned for five bio-geographical regions of the globe – the Arctic, islands, dry lands and deserts, forest basins and mountains. The first workshop of the series took place in 2007 in Canada and focused on the Arctic region. In 2008, the second workshop was hosted in Samoa for the Pacific Islands region.

The Secretariat of the CBD, in collaboration with the Government of Ecuador and thanks to the continued financial support of the Government of Spain, is now planning the third workshop of the series, focusing on forest ecosystems, to be held in Ecuador on 9-11 December 2009. It is my pleasure to invite you to nominate possible participants for this upcoming workshop. Please select one or two nominees based upon the following criteria:

- The participants must come from a country of the Latin America and Caribbean region;
- Participants are indigenous or local community leaders in tourism from the region as entrepreneurs, policymakers or advisors, and active in existing and functioning tourism operations. The tourism products they manage include areas with significant biodiversity (parks, community or private protected areas in forest ecosystems);

To CBD National Focal Points of Latin America and the Caribbean region  
Indigenous and Local Community Organizations



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- Participants, and their constituents or representatives, should have access to Internet and use the Web for information, marketing, and networking; and
- Participants can disseminate the methodology and results of the workshop within existing networks and their region of origin, after the workshop.

Available resources will allow the Secretariat to offer financial travel support to cover the costs of participation for approximately eleven participants. Therefore, in order to allow for a greater attendance at the workshop, please disseminate information on this event to networks of indigenous and local community tourism operators in your country, so that those interested can seek independent funding for their participation. Among those nominees requiring financial support, the final sponsored participants will be selected based on the abovementioned selection criteria as well as geographical and gender balance, capacity for replication and dissemination of workshop outcomes and significance of indigenous tourism within the participant's country. For more information, see attached brochure.

I would appreciate receiving updated curriculum vitae for the nominated participants at your earliest convenience, but no later than 9 October 2009, by fax to +1 (514) 288-6588, or scanned and attached to an email addressed to [secretariat@cbd.int](mailto:secretariat@cbd.int).

I look forward to your suggestions and response.

Please accept, Madam/Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Ahmed Djoghlaif  
Executive Secretary

**Attachment**

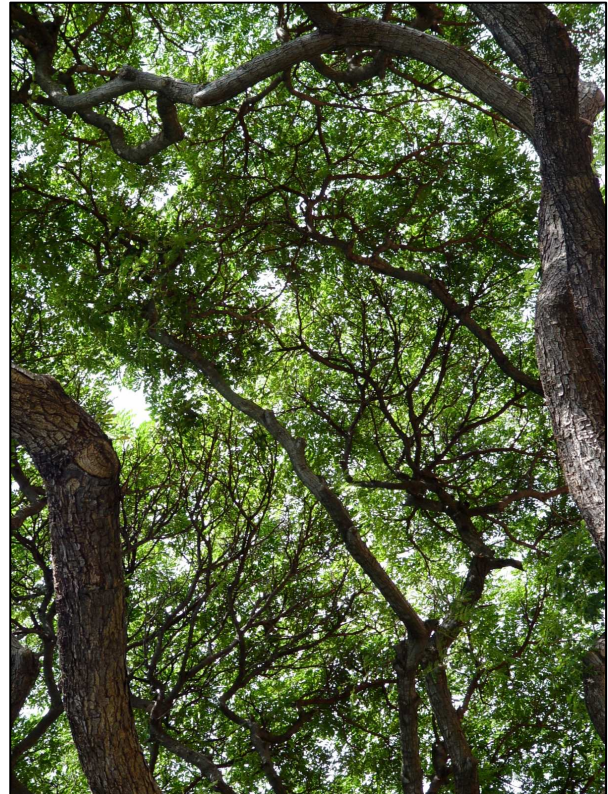


## Indigenous Communities, Tourism and Biodiversity Workshop Series on New Information and Web-based Technologies

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 and local communities attract large numbers of eco- and cultural tourists.

The first workshop was for the Arctic region, hosted on 19-22 November 2007 in Quebec, Canada. The second workshop of the series was in Apia, Samoa for the Pacific Islands region from 3-5 November 2008. The reports are available at: [www.cbd.int/tourism/Arcticworkshop.shtml](http://www.cbd.int/tourism/Arcticworkshop.shtml) and [www.cbd.int/tourism/IslandWorkshop.shtml](http://www.cbd.int/tourism/IslandWorkshop.shtml)



### ***CBD guidance and decisions***

- Decision IX/13 E paragraph 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, 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 of the CBD developed a User's Manual based on these Guidelines. These Guidelines and User's Manual are particularly useful to indigenous peoples and local communities as a blueprint and hands on guide to protect and conserve the biological and cultural diversity and their 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 and local communities and leaders.

## **Geographical distribution**

The Secretariat has carried out informal research on the locations of indigenous tourism products and found clusters 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 Secretariat of the CBD 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 the tourism products of indigenous and local communities 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 among indigenous and traditional peoples on managing biodiversity and tourism products applying the CBD Guidelines. The workshops primarily focus on new information and web-based technologies and 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.

### **CBD Tools**

- The Secretariat of the CBD has developed with the World Tourism Forum on Peace and Sustainable Development ([www.destinations.net](http://www.destinations.net)), the Biodiversity and Tourism Network ([tourism.biodiv.org](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) ([www.biodiv.org/tk/default.shtml](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.

## ***Third Workshop: Latin America and the Caribbean Region: Forests***

### ***Workshop Summary***

The Government of Ecuador is organizing, in partnership with the Secretariat of the CBD and with the generous financial support from the Government of Spain, a 3-day workshop focusing on forest basins that will be held in Ecuador from December 9 to 11, 2009 entitled:

*Workshop for indigenous and local communities in Latin America and the Caribbean on information technologies, tourism and biodiversity in forest ecosystems*

The workshop will focus on Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), a region where several indigenous and local communities have developed tourism products in and around forest areas. The workshop represents an invaluable opportunity to perform and refine needs assessments, to take part in a participatory planning process and to exchange experiences.

### ***Workshop Objectives***

This workshop will support new information and web-based technologies within indigenous and traditional communities. As was for the previous workshops, the objectives are:

- To support the development, management and Internet marketing of the indigenous and traditional communities' biodiversity-friendly and culturally sustainable tourism products;
- To support the capacity-building of indigenous and traditional tourism operators in new information and web-based technologies and to build on the



- tools developed in previous workshops;
- To network and exchange information and approaches to specific challenges in order to develop best practices.



### ***Workshop Results***

- Participants will improve their web-based technological capacities, thereby increasing their ability to market their sustainable tourism products;
- Participants will be able to more effectively portray their understandings of and unique connections to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity to their target market through their website;
- Participants will be able to use their websites as internal communication and management tools within their local communities.

### ***Tools***

Participants in the workshop will be shown tools for web-design and operation aiming to improve the communication of biodiversity concepts and biodiversity-friendly tourism products to the tourist market.

- Present the web-based tools available through the CBD;
- Critically examine both participants' and example websites using a series of assessment tools;
- Provide hands-on work to improve participants' websites;
- Provide instruction for follow-up activities in participants' home communities.

## **Participants**

The third workshop participants will be chosen based upon the following criteria:

- Participants are from the Latin American and the Caribbean region;
- Participants are indigenous or traditional community leaders in tourism as entrepreneurs, policymakers or advisors, and active in existing and functioning associations of indigenous or local communities and tourism operators;
- The tourism products they manage include areas of significant biodiversity (parks, community or private protected areas);
- Participants, or their constituents or representatives, should have access to internet and worldwide web-based tools for information, marketing, and networking purposes; and
- Participants should have the ability to replicate the methodologies and results of the workshop within existing networks and their home region post-workshop.

## **Venue**

Ecuador has generously offered to host the workshop for the LAC region.

## **Budget**

Financial support for this workshop has been graciously made available by the Government of Spain.



## **Indigenous Tourism and Biodiversity Website (ITWB) Award**

As a complementary project to the workshop series, the second version of the ITBW Award is being organized for 2010, the International Year of Biodiversity. Its objective is to highlight best practices and motivate indigenous tourism operators and associations to improve their online communication. It is awarded to indigenous tourism operators that have a website promoting sustainable practices and educating visitors on cultural protocols and biodiversity conservation.

The award will be presented to two winners, one selected by a jury and the other by online popular vote. The winners will be invited to participate in a major international trade fair on sustainable tourism in Germany in April 2010 where they will receive several prizes, including: meetings with German sustainable tourism networks, invaluable advice on sustainable use of biodiversity and tourism business management, and a training workshop on web-based tourism marketing.

Further information at:

[www.cbd.int/tourism/Award2010.shtml](http://www.cbd.int/tourism/Award2010.shtml)

### ***For more information, please contact:***

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