
The Future of Nova Scotia's Natural Resources A Tourism Perspective

July 31, 2008

Prepared for:

Voluntary Planning
Suite 600, 1690 Hollis Street
Halifax, NS B3J 3J9
Phone: 902-424-8644
Fax: 902-424-0580
E-mail: volplan@gov.ns.ca

Prepared by:

Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia
Suite 201, 1099 Marginal Road
Halifax, NS B3H 4P7
Phone: 902-423-4480
Fax: 902-422-0184



TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| Background | 3 |
| Executive Summary | 5 |
| Biodiversity | 6 |
| Forests | 7 |
| Minerals..... | 8 |
| Parks | 10 |
| Conclusion..... | 13 |
| Appendix 1: Canada’s Code of Ethics & Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism | 14 |

VALUING OUR NATURAL RESOURCES

A TOURISM PERSPECTIVE

Background

Millions of Canadians take part in outdoor activities, such as canoeing, sea kayaking, sailing, hiking and camping. A study of Adventure Tourism & Recreation in Nova Scotia estimates the sector generates gross revenues of up to \$19 million dollars, or 35% of total tourism spending on recreation and entertainment.

Nova Scotia's past and future is linked to our natural environment. The long-term viability of our Tourism Industry is dependent upon the health of our natural, cultural and historical attractions. Maintaining responsibility for the conservation and protection of our natural resources and cultural heritage is the best means to ensuring sustainability of our nature based and adventure tourism products.

Founded in 1977, the Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia is a private sector, not-for-profit organization that is the provincial advocate for the Business of Tourism. Guided by over eleven hundred members, TIANS' mission is "to lead, support, represent, and enhance Nova Scotia's Tourism Industry."

Various initiatives have been undertaken by TIANS in relation to Sustainable Tourism since the early 1990's, including:

- Developing and publishing a self-audit manual for industry entitled "A Question of Balance". The manual identifies best business environmental practices for all sectors of Tourism,
- Member of Green Globe
- Supporting federal and provincial initiatives to promote and encourage the development of sustainable tourism. The Tourism Industry Association of Canada and the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy jointly produced the Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism. At the provincial level, the Nova Scotia Round Table on Environment and Economy developed the Sustainable Development Strategy for Nova Scotia. TIANS contributed to both initiatives by lending industry insight and feedback.
- Filing an affidavit in the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia supporting the protection of Kingsburg Beach, and all of Nova Scotia's 95 protected beaches, from development. The protection of 95 provincial beaches under the Beaches Act is a means to ensure Nova Scotia's beaches, wetlands and wildlife are sustained and their environmental sensitivity and fragility protected

- Acting as Secretariat and environmental advocate for the Nova Scotia Adventure Tourism Association,
- Drafting of the Nova Scotia State of the Environment Report (SOER) as a member of the SOER Steering Committee/Advisory Committee
- Developing partnerships with community groups including Coastal Communities Network and supporting grass-roots initiatives like the First Annual Lighthouse Conference
- Participating in Marine Protected Area open forum and presenting a Tourism Industry perspective on the impact of MPA's on Tourism and the ocean environment
- Evaluating an RFP for the identification of ecologically and commercially important areas in the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence as a member of the Environmental Advisory Committee of the Canada – Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board
- Working towards developing an integrated coastal zone management strategy for Nova Scotia and partnering with the Marine Affairs Program at Dalhousie University
- Providing Tourism Industry input and feedback during the first Roundtable on Coastal Access
- Development of the Nova Scotia Strategy for Sustainable Coastal Tourism Development
- Founding Member of Public Lands Coalition
- Ongoing submissions to government regarding environmental issues including Protected Areas Network

The consequences of a Natural Resources strategy without tourism consideration would have a significant impact on Nova Scotia largest industry. Past research from The Nova Scotia Economic Development and Tourism Departments documented that, "Nova Scotia's most outstanding single tourism asset is its relationship to the sea." It was recommended the province "aggressively promote Nova Scotia as North America's premiere seacoast destination." The Department of Tourism and Culture's exit surveys have consistently concluded that nearly 50% of visitors stated the seacoast was critically important to their decision. These statistics prove the seacoast is one of Nova Scotia's biggest draws for Tourism and deserves significant protection.

Always measuring by present economic value is short-sighted and is short-term gain with the potential of drastic consequences. If our natural environment was assessed in economic terms for the "free" goods and services such as clean air, water and healthy soils, climate regulations and wildlife habitat, their value would be well in excess of any existing Industry sector.

The Genuine Progress Index states clearly that nature is far more valuable to us untouched. We are only beginning to understand the full impact of supposed progress on nature in Nova Scotia. Nova Scotia markets itself to the world as Canada's Ocean Playground and a seaside destination. We rely on the pristine reputation for which Nova Scotia is renowned.

The availability of fresh air, clean water and green space influences a traveler's choice on where to stay, eat, relax, and play. Our environment, how we use our collective resources, and how we care for our province's land and seascapes is a major factor influencing our visitor's perceptions, decisions to travel and lasting impressions.

Executive Summary

The Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia (TIANS) is the provincial advocate for Tourism in Nova Scotia. TIANS has a membership of 1,100 individuals and businesses from all areas of the province. These members are comprised of the five industry sectors, including Accommodation, Food and Beverage Services, Recreation and Entertainment, Transportation and Travel Services. TIANS is a non-profit organization with a mandate to lead, support, represent and enhance Nova Scotia's Tourism Industry.

Tourism is one of the world's fastest growing sectors. The tourism industry in Nova Scotia is worth \$1.33 billion in revenues in 2007. It provides almost 40,000 jobs, contributes \$519 million in direct and indirect wages and salaries and \$123.3 million in federal, provincial and municipal taxes.¹

The success of tourism depends on a healthy and attractive natural environment. Given the significance of tourism to Nova Scotia's economy and the mandate of the Department of Natural Resources to "have one of the cleanest and most sustainable environments in the world by 2020", it is critical that the tourism industry is engaged in shaping the new natural resources strategy to govern Nova Scotia's future direction.

TIANS believes that a strong and healthy tourism climate is directly linked to a vibrant, well-protected natural environment. Our natural resources must be protected for the benefit and use of all residents of Nova Scotia and visitors to the province. Unspoiled natural areas can provide tourism icons that increase the profile of both the protected areas and the surrounding district. Many tourism related recreational activities utilize the natural environment with minimum impact, such as walking, hiking, canoeing, kayaking and bird watching.

In July 2007, TIANS, the Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage, and the Tourism Partnership Council (TPC) finalized the Nova Scotia Strategy for Sustainable Coastal Tourism Development. This document provides the foundation for long-term sustainable tourism in Nova Scotia. Conservation and stewardship is one of the four key cornerstones of the strategy which speaks to protection of tourism's natural resources. To view the Nova Scotia Strategy for Sustainable Coastal Tourism Development visit <http://www.nstourismvision.com/vision/coastalstrategy.php>. Protection of our coastal assets is one important piece of the larger picture of long term sustainability of natural resources in Nova Scotia.

¹ Source: Nova Scotia Tourism, Culture and Heritage (NSTCH), 2007 Tourism Industry Facts Brochure.

TIANS believes that the Voluntary Planning process to develop a long term strategy is commendable; however such a plan must include tourism as a critical partner when making policy decisions.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity is a vital asset to the tourism industry. The interconnection of our natural areas with flora, fauna and human interaction provides a unique and appealing backdrop for recreational and tourism activities. Nature and adventure travel is an important segment of Nova Scotia's tourism industry. TIANS supports this segment of the industry and is Secretariat for The Nova Scotia Adventure Tourism Association (NSATA) which is comprised of over 60 adventure operators across Nova Scotia. Nature and adventure travel is growing, and often takes place in areas harbouring many species unique to the region.

Tourism operators have an inherent long-term interest in the conservation and sustainable use of our natural resources given that they are Nova Scotia's strongest tourism assets.

Development must be carefully planned and managed for future impacts on the environment.

TIANS was instrumental in the development and adoption of Canada's Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism (Appendix A) in partnership with the Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC). Integrating sustainability into tourism policies will help reduce environmental impacts, strengthen Nova Scotia's brand value and reputation in the global tourism industry.

TIANS supports the Government of Nova Scotia in its commitment to develop a coordinated and strategic approach to coastal and ocean management with a *Coastal Management Framework*.

Nova Scotia's coastal regions are a critical component of our tourism product, which includes activities such as recreational fishing, kayaking, and whale watching. For years, TIANS in partnership with the Public Lands Coalition has been advocating the protection of our coastal access. With less than 5% of the province's coastal lands in the government's hands – this issue is urgent. TIANS strongly supports immediate action with the Coastal framework that will address access and development issues. Advancing legislation aimed at enhancing coastal protection and environmental quality is essential for future tourism success.

Many uncontrollable factors contribute to the loss of biodiversity in Nova Scotia and around the globe. Extremely warm temperatures, severe fire seasons, and heavy precipitation events have an impact on different aspects of the nature-based tourism industry. For example, "Hurricane Juan" caused significant environmental and structural damage in at least 11 of Nova Scotia's provincial parks, resulting in some temporary park closures. At least two provincial parks damaged by Hurricane Juan remained closed

eight months after the storm.² Climate is important to nature-based tourism in Canada and it is predicted that projected climatic changes over the 21st century will create new opportunities and challenges for park management at federal and provincial levels. Nova Scotia should have a long term plan that ensures our natural product is protected and preserved as much as possible in the face of climate change and natural disaster.

In October, the province announced it would invest up to 20-million dollars over five years to purchase parcels of industrial forest land from viable forestry companies. This is a positive first step, however, given that almost 70% of all land in Nova Scotia is privately owned, and only 5% of the province's coast is in government's hands, TIANS believes that the province should commit to a significant annual budget for land acquisitions. Nova Scotia is identified as "Canada's Ocean Playground" and immediate actions need to be taken to assure that there are accessible coastal and inland assets for residents and tourists of Nova Scotia.

TIANS priorities for the future of biodiversity:

- To see the completion of the Coastal Management Framework for Nova Scotia as announced in June 2008
- To ensure the Government's commitment to protecting 12% of its land mass by the year 2015 is met
- To advocate for a significant increase in annual land acquisitions by the appropriate departments
- To advocate that in the designation of protected areas the surrounding areas are considered for protection as corridors ensuring and enhancing the connectivity through systems of protected areas,
- To advocate that tourism be considered in the development of policies relate to Nova Scotia natural resources;

Forests

Nova Scotia's forests are diverse and support a variety of hardwood and softwood species of trees. Unfortunately, the province's hardwoods have suffered greatly over the past two centuries due to inadequate forestry practices- in particular clear cutting. TIANS believes that clear cutting has had a major negative impact on tourism in Nova Scotia. It changes the natural environment, forces shifts in wildlife habitats and migration pathways and decimates view planes. Aerial views of Nova Scotia demonstrate the significant destruction that has taken place. There needs to be better decisions made

² Scott, D. and Jones, B. 2006. Climate Change & Nature-Based Tourism. Implications for Park Visitation in Canada. Waterloo, ON: University of Waterloo, Department of Geography. Report available online (PDF) at www.fes.uwaterloo.ca/u/dj2scott).

based on the long term impacts related to this practice. The economics of tourism are clearly not understood in relation to the destruction of the natural environment.

Global tourism research tells us that today's travellers are highly sensitive to the environmental integrity of a destination and make decisions linked to sustainable practices and overall natural appeal.

Tourism, when managed properly, is an industry that supports and enhances the longevity of our natural forest product, while still contributing significant to the economic health of the province. The role of forests is important for nature based ecotourism and experiential travel in Nova Scotia. Visitors experience an array of nature tourism activities when visiting Nova Scotia: 70% of visitors do leisure walking/hiking; 39% visit national and provincial historic sites; 44% observe nature; 33% visit beaches exploring and beachcombing.³

One example where Nova Scotia's tourism product relies directly on our forests is with working maple sugar farms. Visitors can experience a working sugar maple farm and woodlot that produces quality food in a manner that supports local agriculture and community, and respects land and water. Agritourism is also one of the fastest growing sub sectors of tourism

Another tourism activity linked directly to the forests is birding which was identified in Nova Scotia's 2005 Tourism Plan as a key strategic priority with excellent potential to attract visitors on a year-round basis. In March 2005, the province invested \$100,000 to further develop and enhance a birding site at The Hawk, Cape Sable Island, a coastal community and rest stop for thousands of migrating birds each year. Nova Scotia's forests are home to many species of birds. Natural areas of old growth forests house habitats for many bird species that feed and nest. As well, forests are home to wildlife and play a crucial role in regulating climate and providing a buffer against wind.

The greatest threat to wildlife is the loss of habitat to live, and in Nova Scotia, we are losing natural habitat far too quickly from converting natural landscapes into human dominated ones. Clearcuts, parking lots and gravel pits simply do not support life in the same way as a mature forest does. We have also seen the by-products of changing landscapes in Nova Scotia with less wildlife, and even the loss of some individual species. This province-wide landscape change is not likely to stop any time soon, as we will continue to need space to live, and space to grow and harvest resources. Knowing that we are facing severe impacts on many landscapes should be one of the strongest reasons to ensure that we have completed the Protected Areas Network which is large and diverse enough to guarantee that Nova Scotia's plant and animal populations will be able to survive in the future.⁴

³ Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage, Visitor Exit Survey, 2004

⁴ Nova Scotia Public Lands Coalition, Halifax, NS <http://www.publicland.ca>.

Forests account for a significant proportion of the proposed protected areas. The main purposes of protected areas are to promote the conservation of biodiversity, together with the protection of land and endangered species. TIANS will continue to aggressively work with the Public Lands Coalition to see the completion and possible expansion of the Protected Areas Network.

TIANS priorities for the future of forestry:

- Advocate that Government recognize the relationship of tourism to policy related to forest and land management and include stakeholders in policy development
- Advocate for a dramatic reduction to clear cutting in Nova Scotia and promote more responsible harvesting practices
- Advocate that policies and regulations exist to support designated protected areas

Minerals

Nova Scotia has a history rich in minerals such as gold, iron, gypsum, salt, iron, stone, marble, limestone and copper. Not surprisingly, mining is one of the province's foundation industries and Nova Scotia's mines, quarries and offshore resources continue to be an important part of the province's economic development and prosperity.

The tourism industry is concerned about development and the consequence of mining and development on the resources on which tourism relies, and effect that the image of Nova Scotia as a premier nature tourism destination will have in the eyes of visitors.

The industry voiced concerns in 2005 to the Whites Point Quarry and Marine Terminal Environment Assessment about development to the coast that could negatively impact the coastal area and tourism industry. The quarry was expected to adversely affect the landscape, aesthetics, view planes, bird and whale watching and marine activity in the area of Digby Neck and the Bay of Fundy. The tourism industry felt that this could have a significant effect on visitor satisfaction and perception of the value Nova Scotia places on its natural resources, which would have resulted in a negative impact on visitation to the province.

Mining development can impact many tourism activities. The effects of mining from blasting and silt from quarry activities may have an effect on the local area's resources used for tourism activities. TIANS is in favour of appropriate development in keeping with the values and vision of how Nova Scotians want the coastal area and natural landscape to look generations from now. TIANS supports the continuation of Nova Scotia's established moratorium on uranium mining and exploration, established in 1984, because of serious health and environmental concerns.

TIANS is also very concerned the Nova Scotia Environment Department's recent decision to allow open pit gold mining to begin in Moose River area. Despite the findings

of the recent provincial environmental assessment, TIANS has concerns about the potential pollution to rivers and to the Ship Harbour Long Lake Wilderness Area.

Historically, many communities relied heavily on the mining industry, and following the closure of mines, many cultural and tourism related activities have developed in former mining towns such as mining museums, miners' choirs, plays, and interpretive sites. For many rural areas this is a viable way to strengthen their economies through a renewable resource.

Nova Scotia's minerals contribute to tourism leisure activities and attractions. In July of 2008, UNESCO recognized Joggins' Fossil cliffs as a world heritage site and natural treasure. The designation recognizes that the cliffs are the best place in the world to study the Coal Age, and will help to spur tourism and economic activity in the region and province.

Some other mineral related tourism attractions in the province include exhibits on how gold used to be mined with pictures, tools and memorabilia from the 1861 Gold Rush, on display at Sherbrooke Village and the Ovens Natural Park. The Nova Scotia Gem and Mineral Show, through the Fundy Geological Museum is the only show in the Maritimes celebrating our rich mineral and fossil heritage. The Cape Breton Miners' Museum focuses on the geological development of Cape Breton's coal field and pays tribute to the region's long and rich history of coal mining.

TIANS priorities related to mining activities in Nova Scotia:

- Advocate that any mining exploration should not take place without appropriate environmental impact that includes the tourism perspective
- Advocate that any Government legislation or policies include strict guidelines on mining that would address the containment of tailings that should not be released into the rivers, lakes and streams. This will ensure that the provinces' air, water, soil and food can be protected from activities associated with mining operations;

Parks

Provincial parks are a major resource for nature-based tourism in Nova Scotia, providing a wealth of outdoor recreation opportunities for visitors to pursue. Nova Scotia's provincial park system provides access to some of the best opportunities to enjoy the rich natural and cultural heritage our province has to offer. Nova Scotia has more than 120 operating parks, many which offer camping, and 1,500 kilometres of trail corridors. Provincial Parks are a crucial component of Nova Scotia's tourism product. An estimated 2.5 million visitors enjoy Nova Scotia's provincial parks each year, many of them out of province tourists.⁵ The Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage annually measures

⁵ Voluntary Planning, "The Future of Nova Scotia's Natural Resources, Voluntary Planning submission request

campground activity, which from May through September 2007 was 675,000 total site nights sold.

Besides camping, visitors and residents of Nova Scotia enjoy hiking, cycling, bird watching, rock hounding, geo-caching, kayaking and canoeing and other non-motorized activities in the provinces provincial parks. National Parks in Nova Scotia account for 8.2% of the total area of public lands in Nova Scotia or 2.5% of the total land. Prohibited activities include resource extraction, most development, hunting and trapping, and allowable activities include non-motorized wilderness recreation, and fishing.⁶

Nova Scotia's provincial and national parks are significantly profiled in our tourism marketing campaigns. Recreation and tourism bring visitors and funds into the parks, to sustain their conservation efforts and support the local population through jobs and businesses. The economic impact of visitors to parks extends beyond direct spending at the park to include indirect spending of day users at accommodations, restaurants, gas stations, etc. especially in rural areas. Tourism in the parks promotes an appreciation of wildlife and nature, and can educate consumers regarding responsible tourism and sustainable development, thus creating future ambassadors and supporters.

Provincial and National parks, play a significant role in the economic well-being of their local communities, and the province. In June 2008, Georges Island National Historic Site of Canada was opened for two days to the public for visits. This was made possible through partnerships from the Waterfront Development Corporation, Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage and Halifax Regional Municipality. One of the 11 key Nova Scotia tourism vision recommendations is the "star generator" recommendation that aims to drive the development of three new "star generators" that have the capacity of generating 600,000 to 750,000 visitors per year to the province. The potential of George's Island to become a star generator for Nova Scotia's tourism industry is significant. Nova Scotia's tourism partners have been working in association with Parks Canada for a long term development plan for Georges Island.

Many provincial parks include public beaches for picnicking, swimming, fishing and other leisure activities, however there is very little beach infrastructure and interpretation to facilitate beach visitation. Nova Scotia's beaches need to have improved amenities such as boardwalks to prevent people from walking on dunes, change huts, washrooms, garbage cans, parking area barricades, beach clean up programs.

Nova Scotia's provincial park system is an essential tourism product as it provides access to some of the best opportunities to enjoy the rich natural and cultural heritage of the province. Given the importance of provincial parks to the tourism, TIANS believes that the Parks and Recreation Division of the Department Natural Resources should be moved to fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage. Many other Canadian provinces have used this framework such as the New Brunswick Department of Tourism and Parks, and Alberta Parks and Recreation. Alternatively, a

⁶ Nova Scotia Public Lands Coalition, Halifax, NS <http://www.publicland.ca>

more coordinated approach between Parks and Tourism would contribute to ensuring complementary objectives.

There are multiple parcels of land currently awaiting formal assignments as provincial parks. TIANS believes these parcels should be fast tracked to be designated rather than continuing to hold them in limbo.

TIANS priorities for the future of Provincial Parks:

- Advocate that consideration be given by the Department of Natural Resources portfolio to reallocate Parks and Recreation to Tourism
- Advocate that the identified parcels of land set aside for provincial parks that should be reviewed and designated and the Department of Tourism should be part of decision making process
- Advocate that any public park have minimum standards established for infrastructure
- Continue to support the consideration of George's Island as a new tourism star generator

Conclusion

TIANS supports Nova Scotia's environmental goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act that commits the province to protecting 12% of its land mass by the year 2015.

Management of Nova Scotia's natural resources is necessary for all Nova Scotia residents today, as well as future generations and visitors to our province. Nova Scotia's vision for tourism aims to increase tourism revenues in a sustainable manner that is environmental, social and economic. The Nova Scotia Strategy for Sustainable Coastal Tourism Development (www.nstourismvision.com/vision/coastalstrategy.php) provides a foundation for a long-term sustainable future for coastal tourism in Nova Scotia.

The world has changed dramatically over the past 10 years, and issues, such as the environment, that faced the tourism industry in the 1990s are even more prevalent today. Tourism stakeholders, from global organizations such as the World Tourism Organization through to local governments and NGOs, have an increased awareness and call to action to provide quality sustainable tourism more now than ever.

National and provincial awards continue to recognize tourism operators who make contributions to practicing and promoting sustainable tourism in Nova Scotia. TIANS annually presents awards with criteria which reflect the three pillars of sustainable tourism; development-economic viability, environmental sustainability, and cultural appropriateness. Recognition fosters a greater public awareness of the economic, social, cultural and environmental significance of tourism.

Nova Scotia's natural resources of biodiversity, forests, minerals and parks all play a significant role in the tourism product for Nova Scotia. TIANS believes there is a need for municipal, provincial and federal governments to clearly understand the impact of tourism to the economy of Nova Scotia. Tourism stakeholders need to be considered important voices that should influence policies affecting Nova Scotia's future environmental sustainability. TIANS looks forward to being involved in the final strategic plan for the future of Nova Scotia's natural resources.

Appendix 1: Canada's Code of Ethics & Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism

Developed for the Tourism Industry Association of Canada and Parks Canada. March 2005

The Canadian Tourism Industry Vision

Canada will be the premier four-season destination to connect with nature and to experience diverse cultures and communities.

The Canadian Tourism Industry Mission

Canada's tourism industry will deliver world-class cultural and leisure experiences year round, while preserving and sharing Canada's clean, safe and natural environments. The industry will be guided by the values of respect, integrity and empathy.

The Tourism Industry Association of Canada and Parks Canada Definition of Sustainable Tourism

Sustainable tourism actively fosters appreciation and stewardship of the natural, cultural and historic resources and special places by local residents, the tourism industry, governments and visitors. It is tourism which is viable over the long term because it results in a net benefit for the social, economic, natural and cultural environments of the area in which it takes place.

Ethics

The Canadian tourism industry is guided by the values of *respect, integrity and empathy* in designing, delivering and marketing sustainable tourism products, facilities and services.

Ends

A sustainable tourism industry that:

- Promotes sensitive appreciation and enjoyment of Canada's natural and cultural heritage, contemporary landscapes, cultures and communities.
- Balances economic objectives with safeguarding and enhancing the ecological, cultural and social integrity of Canada's heritage.
- Shares responsibility by being a full participant and contributor to the economic, environmental and cultural sustainability of the destinations and assets it utilizes.

Benefits

The tourism industry recognizes that fostering sustainable tourism practices addresses its *triple bottom line* of economic, environmental and social performance.

Travellers benefit from:

- Access to high-quality products and services that support positive experiences and respect socio-cultural and environmental sustainability;
- Access to opportunities that support a variety of service interests, recreational interests, skill sets and income levels; and
- Opportunities, now and in the future, to experience natural, cultural and social environments that have retained their integrity.

Tourism providers benefit from:

- Lower costs through more efficient use of resources and the reduction of waste;
- Sound planning and management of new and existing tourism opportunities, which leads to increased business certainty over the long term; and
- Canada's improved global competitive position through heightened recognition as a world leader in the implementation of sustainable tourism practices.

Host communities benefit from:

- Positive contributions to their natural, social and cultural environments and economic well-being;
- Respect for their rights and values; and
- Full participation in the decisions which affect the development of their community as a tourism destination.

Guidelines

We regard Sustainable Tourism as a guiding concept for the sound management of Canada's tourism experiences. We will honour the following guidelines in balancing economic objectives with respect for the natural, cultural and social environments in which we work.

To this end, we will:

1. Protect Natural and Cultural Heritage Resources

Support and contribute to the protection, enhancement and restoration of the integrity of natural and cultural heritage resources and places; encourage the establishment of parks, sites and reserves; support legislation to ensure protection of historic places and resources; condemn wilful destruction of heritage resources; and work to enhance public awareness and involvement in the protection of heritage.

2. Promote Appreciation and Enjoyment

Enrich travel experiences, understanding and enjoyment by providing accurate information, engaging presentations and opportunities to connect with Canada's natural and cultural heritage; and foster support for the protection and sensitive use of heritage resources and places.

3. Respect and Involve Host Communities

Respect the rights and values of host and local communities, property owners and Aboriginal peoples; educate communities about the importance of tourism and provide them with a meaningful role in planning and decision-making for the design, development and delivery of tourism programs and services; and optimize the long-term economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits to the community.

4. Influence Expectations and Use

Influence traveller expectations through marketing, trip-planning materials and tourism activities which foster responsible use and enjoyment of our nature, culture and communities; and support leading-edge services and facilities that respect heritage resources and places while achieving economic goals.

5. Minimize Impacts

Limit the negative impacts of tourism on the natural and cultural environment through the responsible use of resources, effective waste management and minimizing of pollution; limit activities, services and facilities to levels that do not threaten the integrity of heritage resources or systems while continuing to support economic goals and traveller access; and seek innovative solutions to mitigate or avoid undesirable environmental, social and cultural impacts.

6. Raise Awareness

Conduct research to expand the knowledge base upon which sound sustainable tourism decisions depend; share the knowledge through education programs, staff training and scholarships; and recognize excellence and best practices through awards and accreditation programs.

7. Work Together

Advance sustainable tourism by working with governments, communities, stakeholders, travellers and other industries to agree upon common goals, contribute to co-ordinated and co-operative actions, exchange information, technologies and solutions, and develop shared plans.

8. Contribute Globally

Show leadership in sustainable tourism by honouring international commitments; participate in international policy development and initiatives; contribute to the building of capability on a world scale; and share best practices and technologies with other countries.