



Indigenous Tourism BC Reveals New Strategic Direction for Indigenous Tourism

May 31, 2018 – Coast Salish Territory – Vancouver, British Columbia

Today, Brenda Baptiste, Chair of the Indigenous Tourism BC (ITBC) Board of Directors announced the launch of ITBC's 2018/2019 Action Plan.

The robust Action Plan has been developed under ITBC's new CEO Tracy Eyssens and is founded on four pillars used by ITBC to drive growth and success for Indigenous tourism in British Columbia. ITBC is focused on activating this Action Plan and will continue to work closely with its provincial and federal partners and Stakeholders to work towards 2018/19 becoming a record year for Indigenous tourism in the province.

1. **Cultivating Relationships** through greater connection and engagement with Indigenous communities, entrepreneurs and industry partners
2. **Inspiring Visitors** to experience the richness and value that authentic Indigenous tourism experiences have to offer
3. **Activating Experience Development** through training and other experience development programs
4. **Advocating** for our Stakeholders and sector to support the growth of strong and resilient Indigenous economies

The industry continues to grow as a leading force in BC, with approximately 21 million overnight visitors contributing \$17 billion in revenue annually to the provincial economy.

In 2016, an estimated 401 Indigenous tourism related businesses operating in BC. These ventures generated \$705 million in direct gross domestic output and created 7,400 direct full-time jobs for aboriginals and other BC residents through tourism activities and the ITBC Action Plan reflects the growing demand for Indigenous-focused travel, with 1 in 4 visitors to BC actively seeking authentic Indigenous experiences.

"Our Board has worked together to develop goals that will set the strategic direction for the next year, supporting a prosperous and respectful Indigenous cultural tourism industry," says **Brenda Baptiste, Director-at-Large/Chair** of Indigenous Tourism BC. "We are confident in the roadmap developed by our CEO, Tracy Eyssens, and in the dynamic team she has been building to activate our plan."

Tracy Eyssens, CEO of Indigenous Tourism BC says, "Our team is passionate and focused on delivering impactful results that will have tangible results for Indigenous communities and entrepreneurs. We will do so by remaining authentic and true to ourselves, our communities and the values and traditions which empower us to showcase our culture."

About Indigenous Tourism BC

Indigenous Tourism BC is a non-profit, Stakeholder-based organization that is committed to growing and promoting a sustainable, culturally rich Indigenous tourism industry. Through training, information resources, networking opportunities and co-operative marketing programs, Indigenous Tourism BC is a one-stop resource for Indigenous entrepreneurs and communities in British Columbia who are operating or looking to start a tourism business. Indigenous Tourism BC works closely with tourism, business, education and government organizations to help BC's Indigenous tourism businesses offer quality experiences and actively promotes these experiences to visitors and local residents.

www.IndigenousBC.com.

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Media Contacts:

Tiffany Soper

Avenue PR

T: 604.783.0013

E: Tiffany@avenuepr.ca

W: Avenuepr.ca

Rebecca Peters

Avenue PR

T: 778.751.7029

E: Rebecca@avenuepr.ca

W: Avenuepr.ca