Existing Guidelines and Certificates for Culturally Sensitive Tourism in Canada

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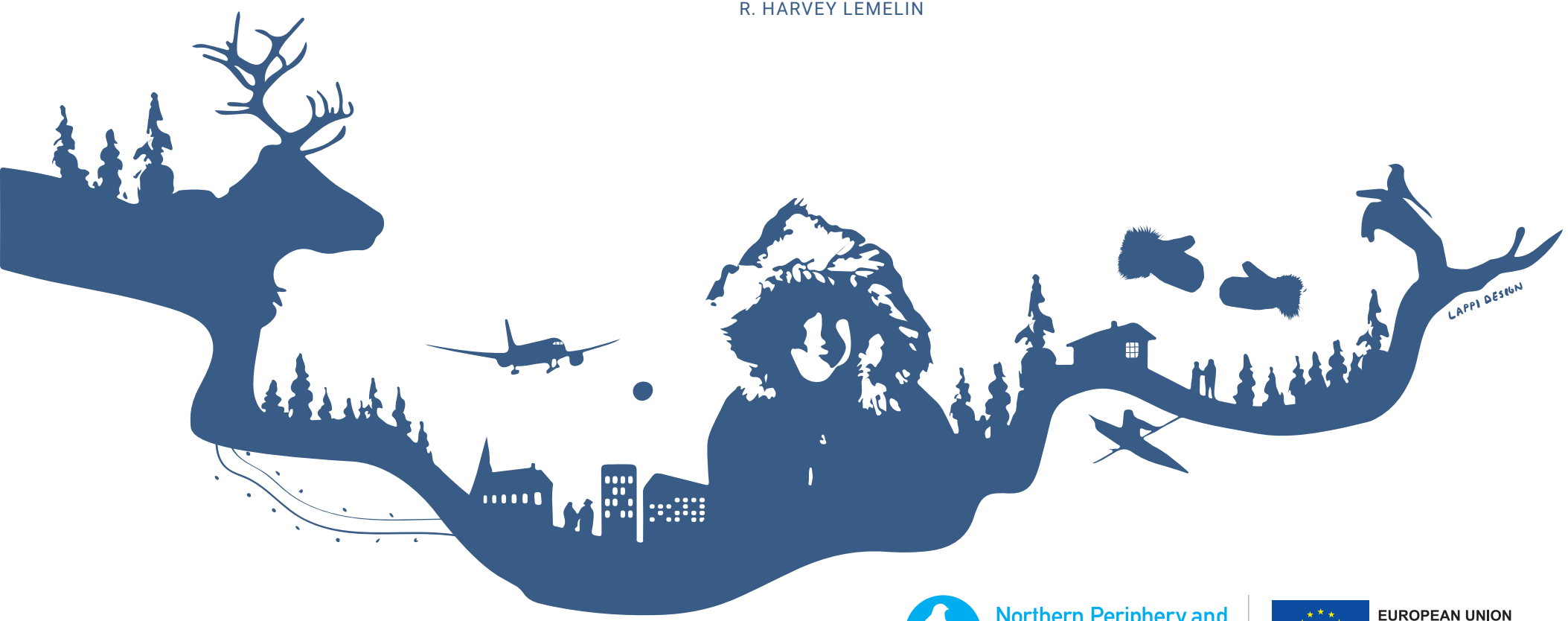

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Lapland University Consortium
LUC
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Rovaniemi 2020

ARCTISEN

Promoting culturally sensitive tourism across the Arctic

Main result: Improved entrepreneurial business environment for culturally sensitive tourism that will be achieved by improving and increasing transnational contacts, networks and cooperation among different businesses and organizations. Improvement of business environment will also result in concrete products and services, locally and transnationally designed, that support the capacities of start-ups and SMEs to develop sustainable, competitive and attractive tourism businesses drawing on place-based opportunities.

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Introduction

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to examine existing guidelines or certificates for culturally sensitive tourism, and the extent to which the guidelines or certificates are used in the Canadian context. Additionally, this report identifies potential challenges and opportunities for tourism development within legal treaties and Comprehensive Land Claim Agreements between several Indigenous nations and different levels of government in Canada (federal, provincial, and territorial). The objective is to assess how existing guidelines are used (or not) by tourism businesses offering Indigenous cultural experiences (specifically in the Canadian Arctic), recognizing that reconciliation efforts, Treaties, and modern land claim agreements serve as the context and frame for much contemporary tourism business development. The questions guiding this report are:

1. What key factors influence culturally sensitive tourism business development in the Canada Arctic? What are the challenges/opportunities, and who are the key players?
2. What guidelines or certificates currently exist for culturally sensitive tourism and to what extent are they used?

The report discusses four modern land claim agreements in the arctic region of Canada to contextualize various provisions contained within agreements and highlight potential implications for tourism. The report further explores existing national level guidelines for culturally sensitive (authentic) tourism and their application within one territory, the Northwest Territories, in the Canadian arctic. The Northwest Territories (NWT) was as a focus because it has:

- the largest population among the three territories in the Canadian arctic, with over 50% of residents identifying as Indigenous[1];
- the largest amount annual tourism spending by visitors among the territories[2];
- the greatest number of Indigenous tourism businesses among the territories, the majority of which operate out of the capital city, Yellowknife[3]; and,
- the authors have established networks and ongoing research relationships in the territory, which will be useful for implementing benchmarking trips later in the ARCTISEN project.

Key findings of the report indicate that provisions within modern land claim agreements offer opportunities as well as possible risks or challenges for culturally sensitive Indigenous tourism development in the Arctic region. The report further highlights the challenges associated with determining the extent to which existing guidelines are used in the Canadian context. The Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada's (ITAC) National Guidelines (the main guidelines identified in this report) are a practical "how-to guide" for business development, rather than a form of accreditation, and are not explicitly endorsed by territorial or municipal governments, or Indigenous governments and communities, in the Northwest Territories.

"...provisions within modern land claim agreements offer opportunities as well as possible risks or challenges for culturally sensitive Indigenous tourism development in the Arctic region."

Background

Background

One of the greatest challenges with respect to any guidance, certification or policies pertaining to cultural sensitivity in tourism in the Canadian context is its connection with reconciliation activities and the adoption of the United Nations Declaration for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Declaration, along with Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission's report[4], recognize the right of Indigenous Peoples to exercise control over services, education, economies, and lands, as well as right to self-government[5]. While Canada's current federal government supports the implementation of Declaration provisions and reconciliation calls to action[6], various complex legislative and/or administrative processes are impeding progress and concrete action.

The overarching goals of contemporary federal and territorial initiatives such as the devolution of the territories, negotiating modern treaties and agreements, and amending legislation include addressing reconciliation aims and recognizing the rights of Indigenous nations. These initiatives have significant impacts on the lands, governance, and economies of Indigenous nations. Indeed, they fundamentally impact Indigenous livelihoods and wellbeing. Treaties and land claim agreements serve as one of the keystones for the recognition of unique nation-to-nation relationships between different Indigenous peoples and Canadian governments (at the territorial, provincial, and federal levels) – both historically and today.

Treaties and Land Claim Agreements

In 1701, more than 150 years before Canada became a country, representatives of the British Crown signed the first treaties with Indigenous peoples in the British colonies of North America[7]. In the 200 years that followed, several other treaties and agreements would be signed, for a total of 70 treaties, between the British Crown (Dominion of Canada following Confederation in 1867) and Indigenous peoples[8]. Historic treaties and agreements, while intended to recognize land rights and promote peaceful relations, were inherently complicated by their entanglement with broader political issues and objectives (e.g., national sovereignty, resource management, economic growth) and characterized by a relatively unbroken succession of activities associated with colonialism, assimilation (i.e., residential schools), and population concentration (i.e., the reserve system) or displacement (i.e., removal from/denying access to traditional territory). The last of these historic treaties was signed in 1923[9].

It was not until 1975, following the landmark Supreme Court of Canada decision recognizing Aboriginal rights (in Calder

et. al vs. Attorney-General of British Columbia), that a Comprehensive Land Claims Policy was developed and the first modern day treaty, the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, was signed[10]. In the period following the negotiation of the first modern day treaty, the Government of Canada has signed an additional 25 modern treaties or comprehensive land claim agreements with Indigenous communities; most of which concern lands north of the 50th parallel of latitude (i.e., the Canadian arctic). Of these, 20% concern communities and lands exclusively in the Northwest Territories, with an additional 16% involving communities whose lands traverse territorial borders. The current treaties concern over 40% of the Canadian landmass; and this figure is anticipated to grow in the future as more treaties and agreements are negotiated[11]. Currently, there are more than 70 Indigenous groups in negotiation of treaties or land claim agreements with the Government of Canada[12]. Three of these negotiations concern lands in the territories, an area that is generally considered the arctic region of Canada, all of which concern Indigenous nations in the Northwest Territories (rather than Nunavut or Yukon territories)[13].

Modern treaties and comprehensive land claim agreements include a variety of provisions unique to the communities involved, but typically include provisions aimed at guaranteeing the duty to consult (and/or participation in land use management decisions); traditional territory and harvesting rights; self-government and political recognition; capital transfers; and access to resource development opportunities[14]. Modern treaties and agreements also include provisions that may have tourism implications, ranging from tourism specific clauses to sections on the representation of peoples/culture, exclusive land governance, economic inclusivity, and social development. To illustrate how some of the sections or provisions of Agreements can impact on tourism, key sections of four Agreements are highlighted below: the Carcross/Tagish First Nation Agreement, the Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement, the Inuvialuit Final Agreement, and the Inuit of Labrador Land Claim Agreement.

The Carcross/Tagish First Nation Final Agreement

The Carcross/Tagish First Nation Final Agreement between the Carcross/Tagish First Nations, the Government of Canada and the Government of Yukon refers to tourism specifically in the text of the agreement; however, the sections/provisions related to lands and representation have perhaps more far reaching implication. These sections of the Agreement protect rights to self-governance and exclusive land management, as well as the management and preservation of cultural heritage. Provisions in these sections recognize the authority of the Carcross/Tagish peoples to enact local laws and regulations; manage lands; enter into contracts with persons or governments; form corporations or other legal entities; and promote/preserve an understanding of culture, heritage, and traditional knowledge[15]. Taken together, these provisions support the Carcross/Tagish peoples to manage tourism activities on their lands; developing their own tourism products and working with outside operators to ensure that tourism activities are sustainable, respectful and appropriate to their cultural values and heritage. An example of this is the unique partnership between the Carcross/Tagish peoples and the Parks Canada Agency to support tourism products that recognize both the heritage of Carcross Village as the hometown of the Tagish and Tlinglit First Nation people, and as an important place for the Klondike Goldrush[16].

The Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement

The Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement between the Gwich'in peoples (represented by the Gwich'in Trib-

al Council), the Government of Canada, and the Government of Northwest Territories, recognizes the Gwich'in people as the rightful owners and governing body of Gwich'in land and resources. While the agreement contains a variety of sections that may have implications for tourism, the sections pertaining to economic inclusiveness and business development highlight both the opportunities and potential risks/challenges of tourism businesses operating on Gwich'in lands. Section 10 of the Agreement stresses the importance of creating local and regional business and employment opportunities to support the community's economy[17]. Businesses oriented towards tourism products such as cultural heritage tourism, ecotourism, adventure tourism, hunting, resorts and sport tourism[18], owned and operated by Gwich'in peoples, could provide a significant boost to Indigenous community economies in the otherwise sparsely populated northern region of Canada. The challenge is to ensure that tourism businesses offer services and products that meet tourist demands while also resisting the commodification of cultural heritage resources that disconnect art and activities from Gwich'in traditions and identities[19].

The Inuvialuit Final Agreement

In the Inuvialiut Final Agreement between the Inuvialuit of the Inuvialuit Settlement Region and the Government of Canada* criteria are outlined for the selection of Inuvialuit lands including lands that may be important for future tourism, as well as economic and social gain[20]. The Agreement largely centres on land considerations as Inuvialuit lands include several protected areas (migratory bird sanctuaries) and national parks operated by federal departments, namely Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Parks Canada Agency. It also contains provision to establish an Inuvialuit social development program to support the socio-economic growth of Inuvialuit communities[21]. The social development program has the potential to create partnerships with other development programs and leverage tourism opportunities to improve the economic stability and standard of living of Inuvialuit peoples. Further, the reinvestment of tourism funds into communities may be an opportunity to support capacity building activities and service provision in the remote northern communities of the Inuvialuit peoples.

*Representing lands in the Yukon and Northwest Territories.

The Inuit of Labrador Land Claim Agreement.

The last example for this discussion, the Inuit of Labrador Land Claim Agreement between the Inuit of Labrador, the Government of Canada and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, includes several sections that have tourism implications – including the requirement to consult with the Nunatsiavut Government for the establishment or enlargement national parks or protected areas. This provision allowed for the Nunatsiavut Government to enter into a further agreement with the Parks Canada Agency to co-manage Torngats National Park with other key stakeholders (e.g., wildlife and plant co-management boards, joint fisheries board). The Cooperative Management Board oversees decisions related to the management of the park and ensures the hiring of qualified individuals from surrounding Inuit communities to help manage day-to-day operations, act as guides or licensed outfitters for single or multi-day excursions, provide cultural tourism experiences (in line with cultural contents developed and approved for sharing) and support ecological integrity aims[22]. Provisions related to national parks and protected areas may provide opportunities to preserve and promote cultural and environmental

interests, as well as the economic stability of individuals working within the parks. The challenge, however, is that while the co-management board serves to guide/make decisions relating to the park, the Parks Canada Agency remains ultimately responsible to the Government of Canada on all things park related. If new legislation and/or regulations are enacted by other federal departments with impacts on lands and waters under the administration of the Agency, the Agency is required to comply. For instance, protection obligations associated with changes to the designation of flora and fauna (at risk/threatened/endangered/special concern/extirpated) under the *Species At Risk Act* (SARA) may impact on subsistence or ceremonial harvesting and access to culturally significant sites within the park. Other examples of statutes and regulations under the jurisdiction of other departments with potential impacts include but are not limited to: *Canadian Navigable Waters Act, the Firearms Act, Aeronautics Act, Canada Shipping Act, Oceans Act, Marine Mammals Regulations*. There may be tensions between the Agency and co-managers on how to balance compliance obligations under the co-management Agreement and those associated with other Acts, which are not easily resolved.

Modern treaties and land claim agreements

Modern treaties and land claim agreements are an integral part of Canada's recognition of nation-to-nation relationships between different Indigenous nations and the territorial, provincial, and federal governments. The provisions contained therein represent protections and rights unique to the interests of the peoples or nation negotiating the treaty or agreement. While provisions relating to self-government, land use management, social development, economic inclusion/development and cultural heritage are common, their breadth and contents vary significantly across treaties/agreements with differential implications (both positive and negative) for tourism.

Indigenous Tourism in Canada

Tourism is a significant and growing contributor to Canada's economy, and since 2014 has increased the Canadian gross domestic product (GDP) by approximately 4.6% annually[23]. In the Canadian territories, where Indigenous populations are amongst the highest in Canada, tourism expenditures continue to rise and are becoming an ever-increasing portion of Territorial economies. In 2014, tourism spending was more than $71.2 M in Nunavut and $181.8 M in Yukon Territory[24]. In the same period, tourism spending in the Northwest Territories was $230 M; 25% higher than that of the Yukon[25]. While it is unclear the amount of tourism spending specifically on Indigenous tourism experiences within these reporting mechanisms, it is widely acknowledged that Indigenous tourism is an important and growing tourism sector within the industry[26].

While the federal government recognizes the growing demand for tourism and Indigenous tourism in Canada's Arctic regions**, even promoting certain tourism products/services/packages on its Innovation, Science, and Economic Development website, the focus is on projections in the numbers of visitors; and potential Canada-wide economic benefits rather than Indigenous-specific considerations[27]. This may, in part, be because many of the aforementioned reconciliation initiatives at the federal level are still in progress (e.g., devo-

**In June 2019, the Special Senate Committee on the Arctic released its report entitled, "Northern Lights: A wake-up call for the future of Canada". The report recognizes the growing economic opportunities associated with Arctic tourism; however, its concerns are in relation to "tourism infrastructure" and "preparing Arctic residents" for tourism opportunities in their communities (citing the increased interest of cruise ships to travel the northwest passage). It is unclear what these "preparations" entail, and tourism was not a topic directly addressed in the 30 recommendations contained within the report.

lution and legislative amendments) and under negotiation (i.e., treaties and land claim agreements). This leaves a bit of a gap which, to date, has been filled (directly or indirectly) by federal departments such as *the Parks Canada Agency* (responsible for heritage places – i.e., national historic sites, national marine conservation areas and national parks / national park reserves); *Environment and Climate Change Canada* (responsible for national wildlife areas and migratory bird sanctuaries); and t*he Department of Fisheries and Oceans* (responsible for marine protected areas); as well as provincial and territorial organizations/ ministries with similar authorities. More substantially, this gap has been filled in by regional and national Indigenous tourism associations. Regional Indigenous tourism associations tend to be exclusive to particular nations or geographical regions. For example, the Cree Outfitting and Tourism Association (COTA)*** located in Eeyou Istchee Baie-James, or Nunavik Tourism in northern Quebec[28]. Nationally, the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC), a business association dedicated to the development, promotion and marketing of Indigenous tourism experiences, serves as a central resource for Indigenous tourism development for all nations across the country****.

Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC)

ITAC is a non-profit business association whose mission is to "provide leadership in the development and marketing of authentic Indigenous tourism experiences through innovative partnerships"[29]. In 2015, ITAC published the 'National Aboriginal Tourism Research Project', which was intended to benchmark key statistics, indicators, and examples of Indigenous tourism in the Canadian market. Findings of the report indicated over 1,500 Indigenous owned businesses across Canada; over 33,000 people employed; gross domestic product contributions of over $1.4 B by Indigenous tourism businesses; and a growing market for Indigenous tourism experiences[30].

Today, ITAC has approximately 200 member organizations (including majority and non- majority owned Indigenous tourism businesses; third-party operators, governments and other organizations interested in advancing the Indigenous tourism industry) across Canada[31]. Members have access to training workshops; business support and development tools; marketing opportunities/networks; and advertising through ITAC[32]. Additionally, majority owned Indigenous tourism businesses may elect to be featured in ITAC's annual "Guide to Indigenous Tourism in Canada" publication, and on ITAC's tourism website increasing market visibility and taking advantage of ITAC's centralized web platform for Indigenous tourism experiences*****.

***COTA is a non-profit corporation devoted to developing the tourism industry in the Eeyou Istchee Baie-James region. Members include, "Any Cree individual, partnership, organization or communitiy controlled by a majority of Cree beneficiaries engaged in outfitting or tourism activities within the traditional territory of Eeyou Istchee" in Quebec.

****At the time of reporting, an assessment of existing guidelines for culturally-sensitive/authentic tourism in the Northwest Territories (NWT) was limited to an examination of national and territorial resources, as well as a tourism strategy by a local first nation. Given the focus of this paper on the Northwest Territories, resources from regional Indigenous tourism associations dedicated to specific geographical locations or communities outside of NWT were not included.

*****At the time of writing, a Google search of "Indigenous + Tourism + Canada" yielded the ITAC "Guide to Indigenous Tourism in Canada" publication and tourism website as all of the top five results.

Existing Guides and Certificates

Existing Guides and Certificates

In the Canadian context, two main guides were identified as having been developed with implications for culturally sensitive tourism across the country. The first is an internal resource guide for the Parks Canada Agency, which is primarily focused on

- outlining the Agency's position/policy on reconciliation and relationships with Indigenous stakeholders on lands and waters under its administration; and
- providing frontline staff with a tangible checklist for activities to fulfill said policy requirements.

The second, is the ITAC National Guidelines which is a publicly available business guide intended to help Indigenous tourism operators in the development and marketing of "authentic" Indigenous experiences.

Parks Canada Agency (PCA) Promising Pathways Resource Guide

The federal department responsible for heritage places, including historic sites, national parks, national marine conservation areas and several locations designated as world heritage sites by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Parks Canada Agency (PCA), has published a resource guide entitled, *Promising Pathways: Strengthening engagement and relationships with Aboriginal peoples in Parks Canada heritage places*, a document aimed at supporting a consistent approach to relationships with Indigenous peoples and partners across its many heritage places[33]. The guide is intended to also be used as an informational toolkit for operational employees that are engaging with Indigenous partners with a view of strengthening relationships and building capacity[34]. The report is centred around three stages of relationship building: initiating, growing, and stewarding; and calls upon central concepts related to cultural sensitivity such as long-term commitment, trust, and mutual respect as guiding these instructions[35]. Further the report recognizes that strengthening relationships with Indigenous partners includes fostering connections with traditional lands and takes the form of facilitating access, encouraging traditional activities, and encouraging the use and transfer of traditional knowledge in Parks Canada Places[36]. As the report is intended for frontline staff usage, it is referred to on the Agency's public website; however, a copy of the full-text version is only available upon request*.

*The version cited in this report was made available by the George Wright Society on its public website. A request for the guide from the Parks Canada Agency on June 1st, 2019 remains unanswered as of the writing of this report.

In the period following the publication of the 2014 report, the Parks Canada Agency entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and a four-year contribution agreement with the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) to enhance and grow authentic Indigenous tourism experiences in its heritage places[37]. This agreement also serves to recognize ITAC's position as a non-profit national centre of excellence for Indigenous tourism – '*creating partnerships between associations, organizations, government departments, and industry leaders*'[38], as well as supporting the development and advertisement of authentic Indigenous tourism experiences in the Canadian market.

ITAC members have access to programs aimed at improving or developing their business, and businesses that are majority owned and operated by Indigenous peoples have the opportunity to be included in ITAC's annual Indigenous Experiences Guide (a marketing tool for Indigenous tourism in Canada)[39]. ITAC has also developed a set of national guidelines, updated in 2018, to act as a '*path finder for all within the Indigenous tourism industry*'[40].

ITAC's National Guidelines

ITAC's National Guidelines: Developing Authentic Indigenous Experiences in Canada serve as a practical guide to help business owners build and develop their Indigenous tourism products, and set principles and expectations surrounding what constitutes Indigenous tourism experiences. The first few pages set out how to use the guide depending upon the goals of the particular business: planning/starting an Indigenous tourism business; improving and/or expanding on an existing business; and expansion into bigger tourism markets and partnerships. It also distinguishes between "Indigenous Tourism" businesses that are majority owned, operated and/or controlled by Indigenous peoples demonstrating a connection and responsibility to the local community and traditional territory; and "Indigenous Cultural Tourism" business which, in addition to those features, also incorporates a significant cultural component that is appropriate and respectful.

Following these differentiations, there are several pages that are designed to bring awareness of the principle of authenticity as a centrally defining concept of Indigenous tourism experiences. The themes associated with authenticity are largely the same as those discussed in literatures concerning cultural sensitivity in Canada, including: respecting (nature, traditions, culture and Elders as '*Keepers of the culture*'[41]); preserving traditional knowledge; avoiding cultural appropriation/commoditization; using traditional languages where appropriate; communicating what is or is not appropriate behaviour by tourists (and/or what cultural components will or will not be shared with outsiders and why); protecting cultural identity; and protecting sacred/spiritual/ceremonial sites[42]. Unlike cultural sensitivity, which is largely described as something that Settlers, tourists, researchers, governments, etc. are responsible for in their interactions with Indigenous peoples, authenticity shifts the onus of responsibility onto the tourism business. To provide authentic tourism experiences, tourism operators/businesses must work closely with their respective communities in the development and delivery of their tourism products.

Authentic tourism experiences are described in the guidelines as those that recognize that a culture belongs to the community and tourism products sharing this culture should be '*developed and delivered in a way that supports the community it represents*'[43]. It also recognizes that a community is best placed to determine what is appropriate

to be shared with outsiders, what cultural elements cannot be shared and that these determinations need to take place and with the support of the '*Keepers of the Culture*' (i.e. Elders and other community members)[44]. Authentic tourism experiences must also navigate the challenge of offering an experience with wide tourism appeal, while still being true to traditional and contemporary culture within host-communities. It requires that the experiences offered to be meaningful and beneficial to the community in which the business is based; community control of cultural program contents and community involvement in program delivery. The guidelines also specify that authentic Indigenous cultural tourism experiences are *'by Indigenous peoples, not about Indigenous peoples*.'[45].

In recognition and support of each community having different cultural boundaries and protocols, while also acknowledging ITAC's role in promoting authentic Indigenous experiences, the guidelines offer five recommended protocols which must be met in order to be considered an '*authentic Indigenous experience*'[46]. These include (see the box):

Five recommended protocols in ITAC's "National Guidelines: Developing Authentic Indigenous Experiences in Canada"[47]:

1) At least 51% owned by Indigenous individuals OR majority owned Indigenous companies OR Indigenous controlled organizations such as Bands and Tribal Councils.

2) Use cultural content approved by Keepers of the Culture and developed under the direction of the Indigenous peoples who are from the culture being interpreted.

3) Offer cultural activities for guests led by Indigenous people (an exception may be when foreign languages are required when the interpreter should still have access to an Indigenous host for questions related to the culture and community).

4) Provide opportunities for visitors to interact face-to-face with Indigenous people such as artisans, craftspeople, Elders, storytellers, hosts or entertainers who originate from the culture being shared.

5) Ensure that heritage interpreters and presenters have suitable experience, knowledge or formal training related to the Indigenous culture that they are sharing .

The next section of the guidelines provide tips and best practices for protecting cultural authenticity while also supporting the community, and practical tips for introducing visitors to a community's culture. Best practices related to protecting cultural authenticity while supporting the community centre around including the community to the greatest extent possible in the development, production and delivery of tourism products and experiences within that community, with particular attention paid to ensuring that cultural experiences that are deemed inappropriate for visitors are clear and any required barriers put in place to ensure that visitors do not enter sites that they are not permitted to enter. The guidelines offer eight practical tips for introducing visitors to a community's focusing on both expectation management activities (i.e. access to information materials, verbal introductions that include information on what to expect as well as the expectations of the host, and any additional explanations required); and infrastructure/organizational considerations (i.e. traditional architecture/décor; traditional foods; traditional language; displays/signs/exhibits; and composition of frontline staff/hosts).

The rest of the guide is organized around the needs of tourism businesses at various stages of development. These sections do not have any Indigenous-specific contents, except in so far as including a checklist which refers to the defining features and protocols related to culturally authentic experiences. The checklist (pages 37 – 41 of the Guidelines), is intended to be used in tandem with the business-oriented checklists that conclude the guidelines.

Application of the Guidelines

Application of the Guidelines

First and foremost, it is important to note that the National Guidelines are just that, optional guidelines. While the National Guidelines may be upheld as a model for tourism development in territorial/provincial tourism strategies; particularly the concept of authenticity, it does not form a policy for, nor is it a requirement of, Indigenous tourism operators or non-Indigenous tourism operators offering Indigenous tourism related experiences. Further, ITAC is fundamentally a non-profit business association and not an accreditation body. In order to gather information on the extent to which the National Guidelines are used (or not) in the Canadian context, the authors had to consider several related indicators*, as well as limited the scope of the work to one Territory in the arctic rather than the entirety of Canada. The Northwest Territories was chosen for this work on the basis that it accounts for the highest population in the Canadian arctic, it has the most Indigenous tourism businesses[48], and because the authors have established networks and relationships in the region.

*I.e. ITAC membership and Governmental level activities/ programs.

ITAC Membership

The National Guidelines are intended to provide a practical guide for Indigenous tourism operators and businesses (i.e., those majority owned and operated by Indigenous peoples) aiming to develop and grow their client base, with additional information on how to protect authenticity when developing tourism products. To gain the benefits of additional marketing networks, business development tools, and advertising with ITAC, businesses must opt-in and pay annual membership fees in the amounts of $99 – $199.00 plus tax (depending upon the size of the business).

While ITAC reports that there are over 1,500 Indigenous owned tourism businesses across Canada[49], it only has approximately 200 members; several of which include non-majority owned industry partners or provincial and territorial governments[50]. While there are any number of reasons why an Indigenous owned business may not be a member of ITAC (i.e. fees; does not meet the criteria of majority-owned and operated; does not follow ITAC's business model; or general disinterest – to name but a few), the rate of membership compared to the number of tourism businesses is less than 13% across Canada.

Additionally, in the most recent annual Guide to Indigenous Tourism in Canada (a marketing tool by ITAC), it is also clear that membership varies considerably across the country. Less than 10% of Indigenous owned and operated businesses included in the 2018-2019 Guide operate within the ter-

ritories**; and 65% of these businesses operate out of the capital of each territory[51]. In Northwest Territories (NWT) specifically, there were 88 Indigenous tourism businesses identified in ITAC's 2015 report, but only eight of which are voting members (and therefore included in the 2018 tourism guide). Six of eight of these member businesses operate out of Yellowknife, NWT. Again, without further qualification as to why there is such a large difference between the total number of Indigenous owned tourism businesses, and the number of ITAC members, it is difficult to assess the extent to which the National Guidelines have been adopted (in whole, part, or not at all) by member and non-member businesses. That said, the wide gap in numbers may be an indicator that the National Guidelines are not used by tourism businesses across Canada, and specifically in the Northwest Territories.

Territorial Government

The Government of Northwest Territories has been a member of the ITAC (and partner to its previous iteration Aboriginal Tourism Marketing Canada) since at least 2012 (based on the earliest meeting minutes available on the ITAC website)[52]. While the NWT Government is a member of ITAC, it does not mention the National Guidelines on any of its websites or publications pertaining to Indigenous tourism. Instead, the Government has conducted independent studies, engaged in consultation and developed NWT specific strategies to promote and support authentic Indigenous tourism experiences in NWT. Many of the resulting publications or programs have been highlighted in ITAC reports – including the National Guidelines.

The government's first report, the 2010 consultant report entitled, 'Building the Aboriginal Tourism Product: Development of a Northwest Territories Aboriginal Tourism Sector'[53], provided several considerations for the development of an Indigenous tourism strategy, at the heart of which was authentic or authenticity of experiences. The publication did not provide any clarification on what was meant by authenticity; rather, it deferred to the development of a definition by the Indigenous peoples themselves. A second report in 2010, the 'Aboriginal Tourism Engagement Strategy Final Report'[54], provided the following definition of authentic or authenticity:

> *…means that goods, services or activities have some cultural and/or historical reference to traditional northern Aboriginal experiences and lifestyles. It also means that the development and/or manufacture of goods, services or activities must have some direct ties to northern Aboriginal peoples*[55].

Following the recommendations of the two reports in 2010, the *Aboriginal Tourism Champions Advisory Council* (ATCAC) was established, issuing a report, 'Aboriginal Tourism: Recommendations for a strategic action plan' in 2013. The report lists the then, Aboriginal Tourism Marketing Circle (now ITAC) as one of its partners in planning, development, and/or funding[56]. The report also issued a new definition of authenticity, one that is consistent with the definition contained in the ITAC National Guidelines. The ATCAC report defined authentic Indigenous tourism experiences as:

> *An experience offered to a visitor in a manner that is appropriate, respectful and true to the culture of the Aboriginal people of the Northwest Territories. This experience and the people who deliver it have been endorsed by the Aboriginal organization whose culture is being represented. Authenticity is ensured through the active involvement of Aboriginal people in the development and delivery of the experience*[57].

**The territories are all located north of 50° latitude (the permafrost line), which is generally accepted to be the boundary of the arctic region in Canada. The northernmost regions of several of the provinces also exceed this boundary; however, these comprise a very small portion of the province.

In sections outlining the guiding principles of Aboriginal tourism, the ATCAC report includes contents enshrining sustainable practices and stewardship of lands, animals and the environment in addition to cultural heritage considerations (authenticity/respect) and business/economic goals. These principles (re: sustainability and stewardship) are valued as a critical component of developing an Indigenous tourism industry in the NWT; however, are only described in the ITAC National Guidelines in terms of adopting environmentally practices such as recycling, using biodegradable products and using reusable packaging for products[58]. The contents of the ATCAC report and associated recommendations informed the development of the NWT's five-year tourism strategy 'Tourism 2020: Opening our spectacular home to the world'[59], and also led to the development of the Indigenous Tourism Champions Program, which was designed as a mentorship program with guidance and financial support for Indigenous owned businesses[60]. The Champions program, which was established in 2016/2017, has since been retired due to a lack of participation[61]. With the exception of additional priorities around sustainable industry practices and stewardship, and applying the contents to NWT lands, the ATCAC report, NWT tourism strategy, and Champions program do not offer any significant differences between the values and approaches suggested in the ITAC National Guidelines.

Though the NWT has been working in partnership with ITAC in the development of its Tourism strategies and reports over the last several years, it does not specifically refer to, or endorse the ITAC National Guidelines on any of its websites, nor within any publications. While the definitions employed in NWT publications and marketing plans/guides reflect similar values and contents associated with the development of authentic Indigenous tourism experiences as that of the National Guidelines, these plans and guides are only intended to serve as a NWT-specific reference tool, are largely duplicative of ITAC documents, and are not a part of any certification or accreditation program. Nor is there a way to be recognized as an authentic Indigenous tourism experience provider. The challenge with this is that on one hand, the government advocates for the promotion and development of authentic Indigenous tourism experiences in both its strategic plan and 2018/2019 marketing plan[62], while on the other, it has retired its only program specifically aimed at working with and developing Indigenous owned tourism businesses in NWT.

In September 2018, the Government of Northwest Territories entered into an MOU with ITAC and Northwest Territories Tourism to provide funding in the amount of $257,000 to be '*invested annually in Indigenous tourism businesses in the Northwest Territories (NWT)*'[63]. In a press release by ITAC announcing the MOU, the 2018/2019 funding will be used towards the following initiatives:

- Support for the community of LutselK'e to test and finalize visitor day packages.
- Assistance for the Yellowknives Dene First Nation to train staff and develop demonstrations and promotional materials as they complete their craft store and visitor centre.
- Provide business, market and trade-ready standards workshops in the NWT.
- Photo and video shoots to be used to market Indigenous tourism operators, products and authentic experiences in the NWT; and
- Indigenous tourism development workshops in the NWT[64].

The signing of the MOU in September of 2018 may indicate that the National Guidelines could be adopted and used by NWT at the territorial government level in the near future, if not already, even if this information is not yet reflected on the government's websites.

City-Level: Yellowknife

The City of Yellowknife's website does not include any information on Indigenous tourism. The Indigenous Relations page has no cross-referenced materials pertaining to tourism; and the latest Yellowknife tourism strategy (2015-2019) includes only one action item related to engaging local First Nations in tourism. This action item includes the following actionable items:

- Invite representatives of the Dettah and N'dilo First Nations to attend the Yellowknife- focused tourism sessions (see Action 4) and participate in customer service training sessions (see Action 14); and,
- Approach the Dettah and N'dilo First Nations to determine if there is interest in incorporating an aspect of their culture as part of the NFVA space at the airport terminal building (e.g., temporary/rotating photo, music or art displays, etc.)[65].

Based on the above, there are not any indicators to suggest that at the City level, the ITAC National Guidelines are being used as a resource.

Local First Nations: Tłı̨chǫ First Nations

The Tłı̨chǫ Nation's Land Claim Settlement and Self Government Agreement (Tłı̨chǫ Agreement) was signed in July 2005 and included 39,000 km2 of surface and subsurface land rights[66]. The Tłı̨chǫ Nation's lands include kilometers of lakes, rivers, boreal forests and abundant wildlife; an ideal setting for tourism experiences[67]. In recognition of the growing tourism economic opportunities and interest in authentic Indigenous tourism experiences in NWT, the Tłı̨chǫ Government established a working group to create a tourism strategy for the region: the Tłı̨chǫ Region Economic Development Working Group (TREDWG). The 2018 strategy identifies key tourism assets/strengths and opportunities in each of its four established communities, and outlines possible next steps to continue to develop these options[68]. The strategy identifies ITAC as a potential partner for support and guidance as it moves forward with implementing the strategy[69]. This is an indicator that, at least at the local level, the National Guidelines and the services/supports available through ITAC may be sought and used.

Conclusion

Conclusion

Indigenous tourism is a growing part of the Canadian tourism landscape and is underpinned by modern Agreements containing provisions with implications for tourism business development. ITAC, recognizing the growing demand for authentic Indigenous tourism experiences in Canada, developed National Guidelines to help tourism businesses develop and market culturally authentic products that reflect the values, decisions, and the support of their respective communities. It is difficult to get an overall picture of the extent to which the ITAC national guidelines are being used in the Canadian context; specifically, in NWT. It could be because the guidelines are intended as a practical guide to individual businesses wishing to develop authentic Indigenous tourism experiences but are not intended for any form of certification or accreditation. Similarly, to be recognized as a business offering authentic Indigenous tourism experiences and enjoy the added benefits of networking and advertisement that ITAC has to offer, is contingent on being a member of ITAC. What is obvious is that the number of Indigenous owned tourism businesses far exceeds the number of ITAC members nationally; and while officials at the federal (Parks Canada), territorial (Government of NWT) and local level (Tłı̨chǫ Nation) have recognized ITAC's role as a centre of excellence for developing Indigenous tourism (as seen in the signing of MOUs, newly formed partnerships, or in the seeking of services/supports) it is not clear what role the National Guidelines have in these activities (if any).

Notes and references

Notes

1. Statistics Canada, 2019.
2. Statistics Canada, 2018.
3. Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada, 2015; 2018c.
4. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015.
5. Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNA), 2017; UN, 2016
6. As seen in the Mandate letters issued Ministers appointed in 2015; Government of Canada, 2017.
7. CIRNA, 2019.
8. CIRNA, 2019.
9. CIRNA, 2019.
10. CIRNA, 2019.
11. CIRNA, 2019.
12. Land Claims Coalition, 2019.
13. CIRNA, 2019.
14. CIRNA, 2019.
15. Carcross/Tagish First Nation Final Agreement, 2005.
16. Destination Carcross, 2019.
17. Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement, 1992.
18. Bunton, 2010.
19. Ruhanen & Whitford, 2019; Ryan, 2005.
20. Inuvialuit Final Agreement, 1984.
21. Inuvialuit Final Agreement, 1984.
22. Inuit of Labrador Land Claim Agreement, 2005; Parks Canada Agency, 2018.
23. Newswire, 2019.
24. Statistics Canada, 2019.
25. Statistics Canada, 2019.
26. Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC), 2015.
27. Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISEDC), 2019.
28. Nunavik Tourism, 2019.
29. Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC), 2019a.
30. ITAC, 2015.
31. ITAC, 2019a.
32. ITAC, 2019a.
33. Parks Canada Agency (PCA), 2014.
34. PCA, 2014.
35. PCA), 2014.
36. PCA, 2014.
37. Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC), 2018a.
38. ITAC, 2019a.
39. ITAC, 2019a.
40. ITAC, 2018b, p. 4.
41. ITAC, 2018b, p. 7.
42. Hurst, Grimwood & Lemelin, 2019.
43. ITAC, 2018b, p. 7.
44. ITAC, 2018b, p.7.
45. ITAC, 2018b, p. 8.
46. ITAC, 2018b.
47. ITAC, 2018b, p. 12.
48. ITAC, 2015.
49. ITAC, 2015; 2018c.
50. ITAC, 2019b.
51. ITAC, 2018c.
52. ITAC, 2019a.
53. Northwest Territories Government, 2010a.
54. Northwest Territories Government, 2010b.
55. Northwest Territories Government, 2010b, p. 37.
56. Aboriginal Tourism Champions Advisory Council (ATCAC), 2013.
57. ATCAC, 2013.
58. ITAC, 2018b
59. Northwest Territories Government, 2016.
60. Industry, Tourism and Investment NWT, 2019.
61. D. Bagnall, Personal Communication, July 9, 2019.
62. Northwest Territories Government, 2016; 2018.
63. ITAC, 2019c, para 1.
64. ITAC, 2019c.
65. City of Yellowknife, 2015, p. 10.
66. Tłı̨chǫ Government, 2019.
67. Tłı̨chǫ Region Economic Development Working Group, 2018.
68. Tłı̨chǫ Region Economic Development Working Group, 2018.
69. Tłı̨chǫ Region Economic Development Working Group, 2018.

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Existing Guidelines and Certificates for Culturally Sensitive Tourism in Canada

This report examines existing guidelines or certificates for culturally sensitive tourism and attempts to assess guideline use by tourism businesses with cultural experience offerings in the Canadian Arctic. Additionally, the report highlights potential challenges and opportunities for tourism development within the constellation of legal treaties and Comprehensive Land Claim Agreements that formally define relationships between various levels of Canadian government and individual Indigenous nations. Based on a review of formal agreements, guidelines, and business websites, the report found potential opportunities for tourism development within formal agreements with Indigenous nations, and a lack of conclusive evidence for the application of existing guidelines by tourism businesses in the Canadian Arctic, and specifically within Yellowknife, Northwest Territories.