



FIRST ITB BERLIN FORUM ON INDIGENOUS TOURISM HIGHLIGHTS KEY CHALLENGES AHEAD

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Introduction

The first Indigenous Tourism Day on March 14, 2009, was a landmark event for the travel & tourism industry. It was the first time that the ITB Berlin Convention had expanded the range of topics to include this subject. The main theme of the session was the “Wisdom of Old Ways”. Speakers from Canada, the United States, Bali, the South Pacific discussed at length the challenges they face in keeping alive their respective culture, heritage and languages in the face of globalisation and rapidly-changing societies.

Indigenous peoples are just as important to tourism as the environment. They are the last remnants of an era when nature, not money, was the real treasure. Time was measured by seasons, not seconds. For hundreds of years, they lived off the land, free of modern-day gadgets and gizmos. However, just as the world begins to realise the value of the ancient traditions in health and wellness, so too is it learning to value the original creators of those traditions. There is growing realisation that losing species of wildlife, flora or fauna can be equally as damaging as losing traditions, languages, customs and rituals. These are the industry’s real assets, and just as the “asset value” is a critical component of the real estate industry, so too does a similar “asset value” need to be established to quantify, measure and value the culture, heritage and the traditions of indigenous peoples.

Indigenous Peoples can be found all around the world. They are mainly tribespeople, rich with artists, musicians, writers, storytellers, and many more. According to the United Nations, there are more than 370 million indigenous peoples in some 90 countries worldwide. Reports presented at the UN 7th Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous issues in April 2008 indicate they hail from diverse geographical and cultural backgrounds, but also share challenges such as: lack of basic healthcare; limited access to education; loss of control over land; abject poverty; displacement; human rights violations; discrimination and economic and social marginalization.

Travel & tourism offers an opportunity to address some of these challenges. Indeed, promoting indigenous tourism offers a one-stop-shop opportunity to uphold a national culture and also address broader issues such as extinction of languages, preservation of ancient wisdoms as well as poverty alleviation, climate change and migration.

In recent decades, the promotion of indigenous tourism has gained higher prominence in the product development and marketing policies of just about every country. However, indigenous tourism operators have a long way to go. Often divided amongst themselves and badly organised, many admit to having a hard time retaining their culture and transmitting it on to today’s glitz-and-glamour younger generation.

Indigenous peoples and tribes stretch from Latin America to the native Americans of the North, the aborigines of Australia and Maoris of New Zealand and the numerous bedouins and tribes of Africa and the Arabian deserts. The website

http://www.nativeweb.org/resources/native_travel_eco-tourism/ lists a large number of superb travel and eco-tourism opportunities developed by or for indigenous peoples. For example:

- ◇ A Bedouin experience in the high mountain region of Sinai, Egypt.
- ◇ Indigenous Tribes & Aboriginal Groups tours & eco tours in Panama.
- ◇ Native-owned and -operated tours in South Central Alaska, offering VIP tours on Alaska & Native history.
- ◇ Native-owned tour companies that teach visitors about Northern New Mexico and the history of the Pueblo people.
- ◇ Tours to Amazon Lodges run in conjunction with or wholly by indigenous people in Ecuador, Bolivia and Peru.
- ◇ Maori tours in New Zealand, where guests stay and trek with New Zealand's indigenous peoples.
- ◇ Inuit-owned and -operated Arctic sea kayaking adventure tours in Canada's high Arctic country of Nunavut.
- ◇ Customised tours to all Sioux Reservations in South Dakota, USA.
- ◇ Locally-owned and -operated ecotours specializing in homestays in remote (and not so remote) tribal villages in the Chittagong hilltracts of Bangladesh.
- ◇ Navajo-owned tours to over 2,700 archaeological sites in Arizona.
- ◇ At the Chief Bald Eagle Ranch in South Dakota, guests stay in tepees, learn Indian traditions and tour historic areas.
- ◇ In the Ecuadorian Andes, guests visit four indigenous communities, share in their ancient traditions, taste traditional foods, delve into their knowledge of medicinal plants and meet the shamans.
- ◇ Village Homestay accommodation in local indigenous Fijian communities.
- ◇ Fairtrade tours in Peru with the Quechua community (horse-supported treks to Machu Picchu).

The Issues They Face

Over the past few decades, the linkage between indigenous peoples and tourism has been intensely discussed. One recent publication is “Tourism and Indigenous Peoples” [Edited by Richard Butler, Professor of Tourism, Deputy Head of School (Research), University of Surrey, U.K., and Tom Hinch, Associate Professor, Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation, University of Alberta, Canada]. The publication defines Indigenous Tourism as “tourism activities in which indigenous peoples are directly involved through control and/or by having their culture serve as the essence of the attraction. Tourism attractions which are both controlled by indigenous peoples and which feature an indigenous-themed attraction clearly fall

within the scope of it.” The definition excludes other activities such as casinos owned and controlled by indigenous peoples.

The book uses case-studies to compare tours such as “campfire” programmes in east Africa, and the employment of indigenous peoples as guides, amongst other cases. It discusses host-guest relationships, conflicts within communities and contrasting strategies and results of tourism in indigenous villages in South Africa. It focuses on issues such as authenticity, religious beliefs and managing indigenous tourism in a fragile environment. Also covered are tourism education, tourism and cultural survival and examples of the policy and practice of indigenous tourism.

Professors Butler and Hinch argue: “Given the complexities of globalisation, indigenous cultures and tourism, the range of debate that surrounds indigenous tourism is not surprising. The reality is that there are a range of both opportunities and threats that indigenous peoples may encounter if they choose to become involved in tourism. The exact blend of these opportunities and threats tend to be unique in time and space, although some common patterns and themes exist. They are influenced by both external factors over which indigenous peoples have little control and by internal factors which indigenous peoples have at least some opportunity to influence.”

According to the professors, “Western-based economic rationale remains the primary motivation for engaging in the businesses of indigenous tourism. The essence of this argument is that income generated through tourism will help eradicate the shackles of poverty and social welfare and lead to more cultural pride and economic self-determination.” It is better for the indigenous peoples to develop tourism than, say, cut down timber in rainforests, the editors argue.

They stress: “A symbiotic relationship is possible to the extent that cultural survival contributes to economic success and economic success contributes to cultural survival.” At the same time, indigenous tourism “also helps promote relationships between indigenous peoples and non-indigenous peoples and increases the mainstream populations’ understanding of the plight of indigenous peoples, and hence creates a more just and equitable relationship.”

However, the professors are realistic enough to note: “The travel trade is dominated by an increasingly global culture that operates at a worldwide scale and responds to shareholder interests. (Indigenous) operators who specialise in it present a very small segment of this group and must normally work within the parameters of the tourism industry as a whole if they hope to remain solvent.”

The good news for indigenous peoples is that their fate and future has now become a global issue. August 9 is marked annually as the UN International Day of the World’s Indigenous People, usually observed with panel discussions, art exhibits and cultural performances. This is also the Second International Decade of the World’s Indigenous People, which runs from 2005 to 2015.

UN Declaration On The Rights Of Indigenous Peoples

On 13 September 2007, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted by a UN General Assembly Resolution. Drafted and debated for more than 20 years, the landmark declaration emphasises “the rights of indigenous peoples to live in dignity, to maintain and strengthen their own institutions, cultures and traditions and to pursue their self-determined development, in keeping with their own needs and aspirations.” A majority of 144 states voted in favour, with 4 votes against (Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States) and 11 abstentions (Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burundi, Colombia, Georgia, Kenya, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Samoa and Ukraine).

The Declaration affirms their contribution to the diversity and richness of civilizations and cultures, and expresses concern that "indigenous peoples have suffered from historic injustices as a result of, inter alia, their colonization and dispossession of their lands, territories and resources." Among some of its key points, the Declaration gives indigenous peoples the right to:

◊ self-determination in terms of their political status and free pursuit of their economic, social and cultural development.

◊ practise and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs. This includes the right to maintain, protect and develop the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures, such as archaeological and historical sites, artefacts, designs, ceremonies, technologies and visual and performing arts and literature.

◊ revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.

◊ maintain their traditional medicines and their health practices, including the conservation of their vital medicinal plants, animals and minerals.

◊ maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources.

◊ redress, by means that can include restitution or, when this is not possible, just, fair and equitable compensation, for the lands, territories and resources which they have traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used, and which have been confiscated, taken, occupied, used or damaged without their free, prior and informed consent.

◊ maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts. They also have

the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions.

Seventh Session Of The Permanent Forum On Indigenous Issues

Not long after the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted, more than 2,500 indigenous participants from all over the world, including Bolivia's President Evo Morales Ayma, met at the UN HQ in New York from 21 April to 2 May 2008 for the 7th Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. The session ended by issuing clear recommendations in a range of areas considered critical for the physical, cultural and spiritual survival, identity and well-being of indigenous peoples. Forum members heard from delegates on the multiple ways in which their countries could take measures to implement the Declaration.

The session's main theme was "Climate change, bio-cultural diversity and livelihoods: the stewardship role of indigenous peoples and new challenges". This is a subject of great relevance to the travel & tourism industry at large.

Effects of climate change on indigenous peoples

Papers and presentations at the 7th forum stressed that indigenous peoples are vital to, and active in, the many ecosystems that inhabit their lands and territories, and may therefore help enhance the resilience of these ecosystems. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Chairperson of the Permanent Forum, said that both the problem of climate change and its solution were concerns for indigenous peoples who -- according to a World Bank report -- contributed the "smallest ecological footprints" on Earth, but suffered the worst impacts from climate change and mitigation measures, such as the loss of land to biofuel production. Indigenous peoples are among the first to face the direct consequences of climate change, owing to their dependence upon, and close relationship with the environment and its resources. Examples include:

◇ In the high altitude regions of the Himalayas, glacial melts affecting hundreds of millions of rural dwellers who depend on the seasonal flow of water is resulting in more water in the short term, but less in the long run as glaciers and snow cover shrink.

◇ In the Amazon, the effects of climate change include deforestation and forest fragmentation, and consequently, more carbon released into the atmosphere exacerbating and creating further changes. Droughts in 2005 resulted in fires in the western Amazon region. This is likely to occur again as rainforest is replaced by savannas.

◇ Indigenous peoples in the Arctic region depend on hunting for polar bears, walrus, seals and caribou, herding reindeer, fishing and gathering, not only for food to support the local economy, but also as the basis for their cultural and social identity.

◇ In Finland, Norway and Sweden, rain and mild weather during the winter season often prevents reindeer from accessing lichen, which is a vital food source.

This has caused massive loss of reindeer, which are vital to the culture, subsistence and economy of Saami communities.

◇> Rising temperatures, dune expansion, increased wind speeds, and loss of vegetation are negatively impacting traditional cattle and goat farming practices of indigenous peoples in Africa's Kalahari Basin, who must now live around government-drilled bores in order to access water.

◇> As sea levels rise, Kiribati and a number of other small Pacific island nations could disappear during this century. High tides and stormy seas have also caused problems recently in the Marshall Islands, Cook Island, Tuvalu and low-lying islands of Papua New Guinea.

Responding to climate change

Fortunately, UN reports indicate, indigenous peoples interpret and react to the impacts of climate change in creative ways, drawing on traditional knowledge and other technologies to find solutions. For example:

◇> In Bangladesh, villagers are creating floating vegetable gardens to protect their livelihoods from flooding. In Vietnam, communities are helping to plant dense mangroves along the coast to diffuse tropical-storm waves.

◇> Indigenous peoples in the Central, South American and Caribbean regions are shifting their agricultural activities and settlements to new locations which are less susceptible to adverse climate conditions. For example, indigenous peoples in Guyana are moving from their savannah homes to forest areas during droughts and have started planting cassava, their main staple crop, on moist floodplains which are normally too wet for other crops.

◇> In North America, some indigenous groups are striving to cope with climate change by focusing on the economic opportunities that it may create. The increased demand for renewable energy using wind and solar power could make tribal lands, such as in the Great Plains, an important resource for such energy, replacing fossil fuel-derived energy and limiting greenhouse gas emissions.

Other papers presented at the 7th Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues highlighted more challenges facing the indigenous peoples.

Indigenous Languages: Linguistic diversity is being threatened around the world, and this threat is acutely felt by indigenous peoples. According to UNESCO, approximately 600 languages have disappeared in the last century and up to 90 percent of the world's languages are likely to disappear before the end of this century if current trends continue. Moreover, fewer and fewer children are learning indigenous languages in the traditional way, from their parents and elders. Hence, much of the encyclopedia of traditional indigenous knowledge that is usually passed down orally from generation to generation is in danger of being lost.

Migration: Deforestation, particularly in developing countries, is pushing indigenous families to migrate to cities for economic reasons, often ending up in urban slums. They often face double discrimination as both migrants and as indigenous peoples. For example, 84 percent of New Zealand's Maori peoples live in urban areas. Most are in the main metropolitan centres: a quarter live in the region, of Auckland, New Zealand's largest city. The urban migration of Maori has been described as one of the most rapid movements of any population. This also puts further pressure on the cities and urban areas with negative environmental consequences, including a demand on local resources.

Tourism Impact And Solutions

There is unanimous consensus that travel & tourism focussing on indigenous peoples can be a part of the solution. Considerable work is being done in Australia where organisations such as Aboriginal Tourism Australia and the Indigenous Tourism Leadership group engage with public sector agencies, training organisations, and the tourism industries to develop and deliver programs which encourage participation while recognising the need to address barriers and manage culture and community.

One recent development in 2008 was a new, improved web portal which offered Australian indigenous tourism companies the following: News stories, events and case studies; An 'easier to search' database of latest training, assistance and funding available to tourism operators; A comprehensive 'how to guide' to visitor feedback; Specific information for artists & art organisations, tour operators & tour guides, Accommodation operators and tourism restaurants. It also offered a how-to guide on effective business management; a how-to guide on record keeping & administration tips, and; Tools and tips on understanding tourism and industry associations.

At the ITB 2008, one of the ToDo! awards was conferred on the Perth-based Western Australian Indigenous Tourism Operators Committee (WAITOC). In his rationale, Studienkreis jurist Christian Adler noted that the Aborigines' contemporary history has been a long ordeal which is only gradually coming to an end. In 1967, the indigenous population of Western Australia was finally granted Australian citizenship, and legal equality was established. "Earlier, white Australians had been allowed to take children of Aborigine background from their parents, to take them to unknown places and have them grow up in missions and children's homes in order to subject them to forced assimilation.

"This practice, however, was stopped only in the early 1970s, and recently Prime Minister Kevin Rudd officially apologised to the Australian Aborigines for the many years of unworthy treatment. This helps forces in Australia who are intensively working to heal the wounds of the past and to build bridges to a common future, similar to the situation in South Africa," Mr. Adler wrote.

As the indigenous population of the Australian continent, Aborigines today constitute a minority of two percent of the Australian population. Of the roughly 400,000 Aborigines left, 70,000 are in Western Australia. Only five percent of Australia's tourism enterprises are managed by indigenous entrepreneurs, according to WAITOC. However, for 45 percent of the visitors to Australia surveyed, encounters with Aborigines constitute the main motive for their stay. 150,000 visitors per year book cultural programmes with indigenous communities, WAITOC reports.

WAITOC's goal is to improve the profile of small indigenous enterprises and to help Aborigines to get more employment in the tourism sector. It provides consultancy services for governmental institutions and organisations on all aspects related to indigenous tourism. In order to increase the share of indigenous entrepreneurs in the tourism sector, the state tourism authority Tourism WA also runs its own programme to promote indigenous tourism and supports the projects of WAITOC.

Another global group, Indigenous Tourism Rights International (ITRI), organized the International Forum on Indigenous Tourism in Oaxaca, Mexico in March 2002 as an alternative and necessary space for indigenous peoples to conduct a critical review of their experiences with ecotourism. Nearly 200 indigenous representatives and leaders from 19 countries attended and produced "The Oaxaca Declaration," which calls on indigenous peoples to "strengthen strategies of coordination and information sharing both regionally and internationally, in order to assert participation in initiatives like the IYE".

Highlights Of The ITB Berlin Session

All these issues came together at the ITB Berlin on March 14, 2009. On the panel were Dominique Bearune, an artist, performer and writer from New Caledonia; Luc Collin, Quebec Aboriginal Tourism Corporation (STAQ); Kevin Eshkawkogan, Manager, Great Spirit Circle Trail, Ontario, Canada; Prof. Dr. Igde Pitana, Secretary General, Clan Warga Pasek, Bali; and Brian Zepeda, Seminole Tribe of Florida, AIANTA Board Member. The moderator was Imtiaz Muqbil, Executive Editor, Travel Impact Newswire.

The first speaker, Dominique Bearune, showed a video about New Caledonia and the way of life there. According to him, some key elements of the culture are the tribal lifestyle, the language, morality and respect for the earth, the high value of family kinship as well as respect for each other. Women rank very high in society.

He then discussed the major problems they face to preserve the culture, as more young people, influenced by the Western Culture, are moving to the city. As a result, fewer people live according to the old traditional ways, it slowly becomes extinct. Their tribe is not experienced in how to maintain a culture. They lack information about tourism projects and that is why consultation and help is needed in New Caledonia to keep the culture alive and share it with the world.

The next speaker, Luc Collins, said he is a member of the Inuit nation. Since completing his studies in Administration and Human Resources Management, he has been involved in the tourism industry for 14 years. He said that Quebec is facing economic problems, and has a high unemployment rate. More than 50% of the population lives close to Montreal and the percentage keeps going up. Thus the tourism sector is very important for low-developed areas that are further away. Mr. Collins' tribe already has a well-developed tourism concept that brings people to the area and allows them to see the culture without commercializing it. However, the tribes in Quebec are still encountering problems such as preservation of nature, lack of funding, and preservation of language and traditions.

The third speaker, Mr Kevin Eshkawkogan, described himself as an avid grass dancer from the Pow Wow Section in Canada. He is involved in developing the European Markets on behalf of Great Spirit Circle Trail in Ontario. He shared a story of how his people operate the tourism industry in their area, Manitoulin Island, the largest island in a freshwater lake in the world, and use it as a tool to educate the visitors. They are trying to get their youth involved and revitalize the culture.

After showing a video about how they live and share their culture with tourists via different activities, he explained how his people got there. In 1998, after seeing non-native tour guides bringing tourists into their community, some community elders decided that it was time to get involved in the tourism business. Rather than leave the interpretation of their culture to outsiders, they decided that they themselves should pass on this knowledge. After a long planning period they set up 2 companies: one to market the region and one to sell and promote our experiences and activities.

The first activity was developing cultural integrity guidelines, which is in accordance with their own teachings on how business is conducted. Everything the tribe offers is educational and interactive, so that guests really learn about their lifestyles and heritage. However, there are certain things they won't share with the public, such as sacred ceremonies like pipe- or naming-ceremonies, because the tribe believes that they would not be doing it for the right reasons if people pay money for it. Tour operators and visitors are informed about these guidelines. They also took an inventory of what they had in the area.

Today, students from their own first nation communities are working with them to learn about the culture of the tribe. They can do research about the history and then pass on their knowledge. Over time they developed a market-ready product that provides guests with an educational experience.

The fourth speaker, Prof. Dr. Igde Pitana is Secretary General of the Clan Warga Paset in Bali and also the Head of the Tourism R&D, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Republic of Indonesia. In talking about the "Local Wisdom of the Balinese in Managing Development", he began with some geographical, economical and demographical background. Bali is a small island with 3.2 million people, 96% of whom are Hindu, and an agrarian-based culture. Being adaptive and flexible, it

always welcomes aspects of foreign cultures, and has been in contact with Chinese, Indian and Western cultures for more than 2,000 years. All these aspects of foreign culture have become integrated into the local culture.

Balinese society is clan-based, not caste-based like Hinduism. It has 29 clans and Prof. Dr. Igde Pitana is chief of the biggest clan, the Warga Pasek. He describes Balinese society as being “a modern society in a traditional environment” with three main guiding values as applied in daily life:

- Living in harmony with God, community and nature
- Belief in Karma (you harvest the fruits of your own deeds)
- Focus on Balance: Balancing different elements of life.

The scheme of the balance of life is encapsulated in a triangular shape, with three sources of happiness which are God, relationships with other humans and nature. Happiness can only be found when these factors are in balance. This concept was translated into a tourism concept:

1) The balance with God is shown by avoidance of sacred and profane things, including ensuring the sanctity of all sacred areas.

2) Maintaining the socio-cultural practices between people and empowering traditional institutions.

3) Preserving the balance with nature, which becomes a prerequisite of Sustainable Tourism Development. This is why buildings in Bali cannot be higher than 15 meters and must follow the 60:40 ratio, which means that only 60% of the land can be covered with buildings.

The fifth and last speaker, Brian Zepada, has been involved in tourism for over 20 years. His photographs, paintworks and woodcarvings can be seen in museums and private collections all over the world. Mr. Zepada reminds the audience that he is being able to share his information and knowledge with them via his voice, which has been given by the Creator, and a language that has evolved from that.

The Seminole tribe in Florida has been dealing with tourism since about 1920. At that time, he said, the U.S. Department of Transportation needed a road from Tampa to Miami and built it through the land of the Seminole tribe. The Seminole tribe knew since then that people would come through on a regular basis. So they wanted to take control over what these people learn about the Seminole culture.

Proactive steps were taken. They built little mock villages next to the main road to keep people away from the sacred areas. An eight-foot fence goes around the reservation. Over time, the Seminoles have learned to share their culture in pieces instead of giving away the whole thing. In these days of concrete jungles, tourists feel the need to connect with aboriginal people of the earth, because they want to see and experience what they don't see and experience on a regular basis. The Seminole

reservation is all based on nature. Tourists want to know what it's like to live like aboriginal people.

However, Mr Zepada admitted that finding the balance between what they share and what they keep to themselves is a daily exercise. They now make enough money off tourism. Income is not an issue; it is now about how to protect their culture, ways of life and teachings from being commercialized. However, in the past 10 years, they have seen more of their children are getting involved in their culture, and attempting to find the balance between traditional life and modern lifestyle. Sometimes tourists get frustrated when they ask questions, because the Seminole tribe members are not allowed to share certain information with the public. Some things are very sacred. Tourists only see dances and hear songs, but the really spirituality is kept inside.

There is also an intercultural exchange with other tribes all over the world. For example, members of the Seminole tribe have been to New Zealand and shared their culture with the Maori tribes. Such exchange helps them to learn from each other about their successes and failures. They are always looking for opportunities to share with other natives.

Mr. Zepada cites the example of the Cherokee in North Carolina who had problems with keeping their language alive. Modern technology came to their assistance -- the Ipod. They loaded their language and English on to the Ipod, so the kids could listen to it wherever they are and that way catch up with the language. The tribes have also held their first annual Southeastern Native American Cultural Preservation Conference, as a first step towards promoting intercultural exchange.

The discussion session that followed was dominated by the question of how the indigenous people are adapting to climate change, and how ancient wisdoms can contribute to the search for solutions. More importantly, how can these wisdoms be exported to the rest of the world?

Dr. Igde Pitana said that although the Balinese people are very close to nature and believe that if you cut a tree, plant two other trees, it is very hard to do this in practice, because the land is becoming more and more expensive in Bali due to tourism. Still, he said, 23% of the island is still protected forest. Modern machinery, appliances and vehicles are all contributing to climate change, and the response has to be greater preservation of lakes, mountains and forests. One regulation is designed to ensure no construction around temples, which preserves the surrounding environment and also spares that space from being over-run.

Kevin Eshkawkogan said culture is tied to Mother Earth and our way of life is very connected to nature. "We live our life based on a set of guiding principles called the seven Grandfather Teachings. One of them is respect, not only for the family, friends and other humans, but also for the earth. When we harvest things from the earth, we take what we need and that is it. The other teaching is about humility. The earth can survive without us, but we cannot survive without the earth. That is If the world could abide by that principle, which is actually designed to inculcate humility, it would go a

long way towards staving off the damage to nature, which is the main cause of climate change.

Brian Zepada said the impact of climate change is noticeable in the tribe's Florida homelands. Not only have the temperatures changed and water levels gone up, but there's also change from Man himself. The US Army Corps has been trying to dig canals through Florida to get rid of the water, but in that process, "they are taking all that water from us, too. We have been fighting to re-establish the natural water flow through Florida, but we notice the change; the deer are gone, the fish catch is dropping. It has also brought more heat and this means that the water is evaporating at a higher rate than the clouds are dropping it down. We are impacted by this, as are all people, by global warming."

Prof. Igde Pitana said there is a basic principle which says that we have to acknowledge the local culture in developing tourism. In Bali, maintaining the balance of life is considered in all the local planning. "In 1971, we made our first master plan based on these principles. But we couldn't find a way of including the religious aspect but this is what Balinese values require. That is why we always fail in doing research on carrying capacity. We can learn from our tourism boards in Thailand or Malaysia or other countries (on how to promote Bali), but we don't have a proper criteria of measuring acceptable changes when it comes to the religious aspect. We can easily measure the need of water or power, but the acceptable change of religious aspect is impossible to measure. It is something we all need to probe further."

Kevin Eshkawkogan said his tribes' practices are very similar to the Seminoles in terms of retaining control. "We are not getting involved in mass tourism. This is the reason why we cannot develop our island very much. There is a lot of untouched nature in our area and we like to keep it that way. We are very conscious of the environmental practices on the tours or how many tourists come into the area at a certain time. It is limited. It is more effective and intimate that way. It's a one-on-one type of thing for the most part. Our culture is about spirituality and how you are connected to Mother Earth and to each other." He said he saw a lot of similarities across the panel on the need for maintaining the balance. "And the guidelines really help us to walk that fine line between sharing and giving our culture away."

Dawn Madabi, a female member of the Great Spirit Circle Trail, also offered a comment: "I truly believe that tourism involving indigenous people can be such a great opportunity to uplift the values and wisdom of indigenous people if it is led by them. When I listen to the presentations here, there is a fine line between sharing what we do and the exploitation of our culture. Visitors are becoming more sophisticated and it is really important to understand how tourism can be used for mutual benefit, and also to keep the area authentic."

She added, "Can you imagine a world that doesn't have the gift of all the different colourful cultures and the beauty of the different cultural experiences? This is a microcosm of the world when you see the participation of indigenous people and you

can learn many beautiful things. We are all given gifts on this earth that we can share with each other.” She thanked all the speakers for sharing their culture and heritage.

Conclusion

The first Indigenous Tourism Day at the ITB Berlin was a qualified success. Held on the last day of the ITB Convention, by when most of the senior industry executives had returned home, it nevertheless attracted a small group of very committed individuals who are conscious of the cause. If the ancient healing tradition of yoga is now in vogue, and the world is realising the catastrophic consequences of the ecological-economic imbalance, including the loss of biodiversity, the effort to rectify seek solutions is broadening to include those who realised the value of the old ways.

ITB Berlin’s Indigenous Tourism Day made a small contribution to that effort.

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