

## BC Partnership for Sustainable Tourism

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The BC Partnership for Sustainable Tourism is a not-for-profit society that works to ensure the environmental, economic, social and cultural sustainability of one of the province's largest sectors. It includes government, industry and non-governmental partners interested in tourism's long-term viability.

The partnership will:

- Contribute to a comprehensive, province-wide green tourism strategy for sustainability;
- Develop and track key indicators;
- Implement tourism actions to address climate change;
- Develop incentives programs;
- Explore the feasibility of a B.C.-focused certification program;
- Educate and inform industry and other partners; and,
- Answer outstanding questions through research.

With a shared vision and by combining resources of its partner organizations, the BC Partnership for Sustainable Tourism will provide businesses with the tools they need to incorporate sustainable practices. Individual operators will be able to make progress toward enhancing the industry's overall sustainability, including measurable and practical action on climate change.

To accomplish this mission, the BC Partnership for Sustainable Tourism has established the following goals:

- Identify tourism sector sustainability indicators and develop or select a process for tracking these indicators;
- Support efforts by tourism operators to evaluate and reduce their carbon footprint;
- Share best practice information on resource stewardship and sustainable tourism practices with tourism operators;
- Acknowledge and reward successful sustainable tourism practices;
- Serve as a clearinghouse for tourism sustainability information;

- Identify and prioritize research needs related to tourism sustainability and work with research organizations to coordinate associated research activities; and,
- Secure revenue streams that will support the ongoing operation of the organization and the delivery of programs beneficial to B.C.'s tourism industry.

## Founding Partners

The BC Partnership for Sustainable Tourism was announced in October 2008 with an initial \$560,000 combined contribution from the Province and the industry. Its partners include:

Government: [BC Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts](#); [Tourism British Columbia](#); [BC Climate Action Secretariat](#).

Industry: [Council of Tourism Associations of BC](#); [BC Sustainable Tourism Collective](#); [BC Hotel Association](#); [Aboriginal Tourism Association of BC](#); [BC Lodging and Campgrounds Association](#) and [Tourism Vancouver](#).

## Governance Structure

The BC Partnership for Sustainable Tourism will be a not-for-profit society incorporated under the terms of the BC *Society Act*. Oversight and fundraising functions are filled by a volunteer Board of Directors and the day-to-day work of the organization will be done by employees of the organization.

The BCPST will be up and running as a funded legal entity with a focused team of professionals by January 2009. Its initial structure will consist of a nine member volunteer Board and a staff team lead by a Managing Director.

## For More Information...

To learn more about the BC Partnership for Sustainable Tourism, please go to <http://www.cotabc.com/sustainability/>, or email:

info@cotabc.com for general inquiries, or  
david.greer@gov.bc.ca for media inquiries.

## History:

The partnership is a culmination of 15 months of effort of a number of diverse organizations. In February 2008, the Throne Speech committed the provincial government to "act now to make a real difference, and to encourage sustainable growth." The BC Partnership for Sustainable Tourism followed a number of subsequent strategic planning initiatives:

- Completion of the COTA *Foresight* project and the BC Government's *Tourism Action Plan*, which established a vision for a sustainable tourism sector;
- Hosting of two Green Tourism Forums with tourism leaders from industry, government, academia and NGOs who identified strategic opportunities for a more sustainable tourism industry;
- Formation of a Sustainable Tourism Working Group (out of the Green Tourism Forum) which identified the key actions needed to achieve the vision;
- Recognition of the need to establish an organization with the mandate and resources needed to achieve a sustainable tourism sector in BC.