

## **The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (PFII) 2025**

### **Questionnaire to the UN system agencies, funds and programmes and intergovernmental organizations**

**UN Tourism input, Madrid, 6 November 2024**

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#### ***Executive Summary***

Since 2012, UN Tourism has led with the World Indigenous Tourism Alliance (WINTA) international advocacy efforts within the United Nations system to feature indigenous leadership in tourism; a leadership that benefits Indigenous Peoples and tourism destinations alike. In 2012, the Executive Council of UN Tourism recognized the Larrakia Declaration principles<sup>1</sup>, crafted by prominent indigenous leaders. In 2019, the UN Tourism General Assembly adopted a set of Recommendations on the Sustainable Development of Indigenous Tourism<sup>2</sup>, co-created with indigenous tourism associations leaders and companies, as a global reference document. In 2021, the pandemic has put UN Tourism and WINTA together again to develop UNWTO Inclusive Recovery Guide – Sociocultural Impacts of Covid-19: Indigenous Communities<sup>3</sup>, with relevant OECD inputs. In 2023, UN Tourism and WINTA published a joint Compendium of Good Practices in Indigenous Tourism – Regional Focus on the Americas<sup>4</sup>, featuring success stories from 10 countries from both North and South America, celebrating the visibility of Indigenous Peoples, including that of elders, women and youth, in tourism development. UN Tourism and WINTA keep working together towards a new Compendium, this time focused on Asia and the Pacific Region, the area with the biggest indigenous population, to be issued in early 2025. The report will promote tourism as a tool for Indigenous Peoples to ensure respect for their rights, their cultural capital and heritage, and their immense knowledge of biodiversity, which can bring solutions to many of the pressing issues our planet is currently facing in Asia and the Pacific and beyond. Many of the case studies illustrated in UN Tourism reports feature the potential of indigenous knowledge and indigenous tourism to cultural safeguarding, biodiversity and ecosystem restoration, and some of them to the healthy state of the global marine resources. A special focus on women leadership has been presented in many cases. Special care is taken when talking about “Indigenous Peoples” and “Indigenous Tourism” to avoid

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<sup>1</sup> <https://winta.org/wp-content/uploads/2012-Larrakia-Declaration-ENG.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> World Tourism Organization (2019), Recommendations on Sustainable Development of Indigenous Tourism, UNWTO, Madrid, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284421299>

<sup>3</sup> World Tourism Organization (2021), UNWTO Inclusive Recovery Guide – Sociocultural Impacts of Covid-19, Issue 4: Indigenous Communities, UNWTO, Madrid, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284422852>

<sup>4</sup> World Tourism Organization and World Indigenous Tourism Alliance (2023), Compendium of Good Practices in Indigenous Tourism – Regional Focus on the Americas, UNWTO, Madrid, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284424184>

confusion with “Local Communities” which the tourism sector traditionally refers to by talking about “Community-based tourism”.

#### **Q A. Recommendations of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and input to the 2025 session**

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#### **Q B. System-Wide Action Plan to achieve the ends of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**

UN Tourism has not undertaken yet a systematic implementation process of SWAP, However, UN Tourism research, reports and recommendations raise awareness of the UNDRIP and promote tourism as a key tool for Indigenous Peoples in improving the respect for socio-economic and cultural rights of the indigenous peoples. The reports map the existing global, regional and national references on indigenous tourism.

### **Q C. 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

The forthcoming publication *Compendium of Good Practices in Indigenous Tourism: Focus on Asia and the Pacific*, expected to be published in early 2025, as a joint report with the World Indigenous Tourism Alliance (WINTA) will make explicit references between the case studies (examples featured from India, Nepal, China, Japan, Malaysia, Vietnam, Indonesia, The Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, Palau, Fiji, and Vanuatu) and specific SDGs. This report will also make clear that indigenous tourism can have positive impacts on the six mandated areas dealt with by the Permanent Forum, namely economic and social development, culture, environment, education, health and human rights.

### **Tourism, Nature, and Indigenous Peoples: A Vital Partnership for Biodiversity**

Tourism is not only connected to nature; it is deeply reliant on it. The resilience and future of our sector are inextricably linked to the health of ecosystems. The Nature Positive Tourism Partnership (NPTP), launched at the United Nations Biodiversity Conference COP15 in 2022, underscores our commitment to halting and reversing biodiversity loss by 2030. Together with the World Travel & Tourism Council and the World Sustainable Hospitality Alliance, UN Tourism unites public and private stakeholders to make tourism a driving force for conservation and ecological restoration. Aligned with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), this partnership supports a strategic vision for biodiversity<sup>5</sup>. Tourism has a unique role in advancing the GBF through biodiversity-focused policies, ecosystem conservation, and sustainable resource management. Achieving the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity, “Living in Harmony with Nature,” requires transformative changes across various sectors—a shift tourism can help lead. Indigenous Peoples and local communities are essential to these efforts. Around half of the global population depends directly on natural resources, with vulnerable groups—such as Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, and local communities—relying on biodiversity for daily subsistence and well-being. In 2024, COP16 in Cali, Colombia, reinforced their crucial roles by establishing a Programme of Work under Article 8(j) of the Convention on Biological Diversity. This decision includes a global mechanism for equitable sharing of benefits from digital genetic information and introduces a permanent Subsidiary Body to support the meaningful inclusion of Indigenous knowledge and rights in biodiversity preservation. At COP16, Member States also recognized the role of people of African descent and other groups embodying traditional lifestyles in achieving the Convention’s goals. Integrating the knowledge, rights, and contributions of Indigenous Peoples and local communities into the global biodiversity framework is critical for delivering sustainable

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.unwto.org/news/nature-positive-tourism-partnership-heads-to-cop16-in-colombia>

livelihoods, biodiversity preservation, and climate resilience. The tourism sector is a key partner in this mission. Through collaborative, biodiversity-driven action, tourism can generate shared value for people, communities, and the planet. By respecting and amplifying Indigenous knowledge and cultural heritage, tourism not only supports the goals of the GBF but also brings us closer to a future where we live in true harmony with nature.