

# OUR LAND IS OUR FUTURE

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UNION OF B.C. INDIAN CHIEFS  
CHIEFS COUNCIL

JUNE 10<sup>TH</sup> & 11<sup>TH</sup>, 2024

SHXWHÁ:Y VILLAGE COMMUNITY CULTURAL CENTRE (STÓ:LŌ TERRITORY)

**Resolution no. 2024-27**

## **RE: Support for Indigenous Tourism British Columbia to Develop a B.C. First Nations-Led Tourism Destination Fund**

**WHEREAS** Indigenous Tourism British Columbia (ITBC) is a provincial Indigenous cultural tourism sector organization established in 1996-1997 (as Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia [AtBC]) that supports training, product development, and marketing of culturally rich Indigenous tourism products and services on behalf of Indigenous communities and entrepreneurs in what is now known as British Columbia (B.C.) and is recognized as an international leader in supporting the development of authentic Indigenous cultural tourism experiences;

**WHEREAS** First Nations in B.C. are the proper title and rights holders within our respective territories, with inherent, constitutional, and human rights, and with inherent laws, legal systems, systems of governance, and jurisdictions which First Nations have applied and exercised throughout the entirety of our territories prior to contact, and which continue to exist and be applied and exercised throughout the entirety of our territories today;

**WHEREAS** a pan-Indigenous Indigenous Tourism Destination Fund (ITDF) has been established by the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) to enable businesses and individuals to contribute to reconciliation efforts in Canada by supporting the development of the Indigenous tourism industry;

**WHEREAS** as currently administered by ITAC, the ITDF is utilized to invest in infrastructure, human resources, and development and marketing projects that benefit communities across the country, thereby contributing to support ITAC's core funding;

**WHEREAS** ITAC has not adequately engaged nor consulted with First Nations in B.C. or ITBC in developing and implementing the ITDF, and the transparency of ITAC's utilization of funds from the ITDF is

a concern for both First Nations in B.C. and ITBC who are uncertain about how these funds are allocated for Indigenous tourism initiatives in B.C.;

**WHEREAS** First Nations in B.C. and ITBC are concerned the ITDF may lead local businesses and their clients to believe that they are fulfilling their responsibility to participate in reconciliation with local First Nations in their respective areas when First Nations in B.C. may not be involved in the ITDF at all;

**WHEREAS** the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UN Declaration), which the government of Canada has adopted without qualification, and has, alongside the government of BC, passed legislation committing to implement, affirms:

**Article 3:** Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

**Article 4:** Indigenous peoples, in exercising their right to self-determination, have the right to autonomy of self-government in matters relating to their internal and local affairs, as well as ways and means for financing their autonomous function;

**Article 23:** Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development. In particular, indigenous peoples have the right to be actively involved in developing and determining health, housing and other economic and social programmes affecting them and, as far as possible, to administer such programmes through their own institutions.

**Article 32:** Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for the development or use of their lands or territories and other resources;

**WHEREAS** not all rights are uniform or the same among or between Indigenous peoples and the extent to which they can be validly exercised depends on the context. A proper distinctions-based approach requires that Crown governments' relationship and engagement with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit individuals and organizations in B.C. must include different approaches or actions and result in different outcomes; and

**WHEREAS** in 2008, AtBC (now ITBC) and the First Nations Leadership Council entered a Declaration & Protocol of Recognition, Support, Cooperation and Coordination to ensure that First Nations in B.C. are active participants in the development of any tourism-related fee programs within their jurisdictions.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** the UBCIC Chiefs Council fully supports Indigenous Tourism British Columbia's efforts to develop a distinctions based, local First Nations and provincial approach for a B.C.-based and First Nations-led, "B.C. First Nations Tourism Destination Fund" in place of the Indigenous Tourism Association Canada's inappropriate and pan-Indigenous Indigenous Tourism Destination Fund; and

**THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** the UBCIC Chiefs Council directs the UBCIC Executive and staff to work with Indigenous Tourism British Columbia to support the development of the B.C. First Nations-led "B.C. First Nations Tourism Destination Fund" to ensure its development, analysis, and implementation are fully aligned with the UN Declaration and support the advancement of First Nations title and rights in B.C.

**Moved:** Kukpi Lee Spahan, Coldwater Indian Band  
**Seconded:** Chief Jerry Jack, Mowachaht-Muchalaht First Nation  
**Disposition:** Carried  
**Date:** June 11, 2024