

# Quito Indigenous Ecotourism Workshop

September 7-9, 2006, CREST



## About the Workshop

From September 7-9, 2006, CREST (then CESD), helped indigenous representatives from throughout Latin America convene in Quito, Ecuador to discuss the role of ecotourism and certification for their communities. Over three days, participants shared experiences, raised concerns, voiced opinions, and learned from colleagues.

## Results

The final result of the workshop was a declaration that is available in Spanish. The declaration was formally presented by the participants on September 9, 2006 in a public forum that was attended by key stakeholders in the Ecuadorian tourism industry. [Click here](#) to view a copy of the declaration.

## Next Steps

In order to follow through on the exceptional developments from this workshop, the participants, themselves, seek to reconvene in Chiapas, Mexico in 2007 in order to readdress the issue of ecotourism certification and discuss specific certification criteria that might better protect their communities. This upcoming workshop in Mexico represents a crucial step in the systematic incorporation of indigenous voices and leadership in the development of an international ecotourism network and certification system. Furthermore, we hope that these discussions will

subsequently inform the development of an Indigenous Peoples Advisory Council that will bring together indigenous communities and ecotourism enterprise around the globe.

If you are interested in supporting these efforts, please contact CESD West Coast Coordinator Laura Driscoll ([lrd@stanford.edu](mailto:lrd@stanford.edu)).

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**Third conference on Indigenous community-based tourism, Chihuahua, Mexico, 2011**

Click [aqui](#) par leer en español.

Building on our efforts at the first and second meetings of INTIRUNA (Quito, 2006 and Chiapas, 2010), CREST played a major role in a third conference on Indigenous community-based tourism held in April, 2011, in the indigenous community of Bacabureachi in the Southwest of Mexico's Chihuahua state. With the support of the Christensen Fund of San Francisco, this third meeting was designed in response to the needs of a group of Chihuahua's mountain-dwelling Rarámuri (Tarahumara) communities, from which 6 individuals had attended the second meeting of INTIRUNA in 2010 as guests through the support of the Mexican government's Comisión Nacional Para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas (CDI, "Commission for Development of Indigenous Communities"). As articulated by the communities, the conference's purpose was to discuss the formation of a regional indigenous tourism network, which would allow the communities to join together for collective marketing and planning, and help bring greater benefits from tourism.



CREST staff helped in planning and executing the conference together with Gina Uribe and Cliff Mathius of local Chihuahuan NGO Fuerza Ambiental (English: "Environmental Force"), Gloria Gutierrez of CDI and the Programa de Turismo Alternativo en Zonas Indígenas (PTAZI, "Program for Alternative Tourism in Indigenous Regions"), and Jose Luis Montes of WWF. The conference was planned with input and representatives from the communities of Arareko, Ahuichique, Bacabureachi, Bacajípare, Bocoyna, Chomachi, Cusarare, Guacochi, Guitayvo, and Mogótavo, all of whom currently run small-scale low-impact tourism operations on the collective lands of their individual communities. Also present during the meeting were Laura Monti of The Christensen Fund, as well as invited guests Cecilio Solís Librado of Mexico's Red Indígena de Turismo (RITA, English: "Indigenous Tourism Network") and Juan Sánchez Jiménez of the Chiapas-based Lumal Maya tourism network.

During the meeting, the group also heard the following presentations:

Representatives of all communities provided short overviews of their current tourism offerings and hopes for the future.

**William Durham** of CREST introduced CREST and its mission of reshaping travel to provide benefits for communities and the environment.

**David Krantz** of CREST presented the basis for well-managed tourism to bring positive development impacts to communities, as well as the weaknesses and potential pitfalls of tourism.

**Laura Driscoll** of CREST presented on existing examples of tourism networks similar to the Tarahumara case, with examinations of the relevant details of history, challenges and solutions experienced by each network.

**Cecilio Solís Librado** of RITA spoke on the beginnings of the RITA network, its current status and structure, and its growth.

**Juan Sánchez Jiménez** of Lumal Maya presented the roots of the network in Chiapas, its early challenges, and eventual successes.

**Jose Luis Montes** of WWF gave a hands-on lesson in responsible community tourism design, using examples from the facilities of Bacabureachi.



For 2 full days from April 11th to 12th, the group of 30 participants and organizers met in Bacabureachi to discuss the potential for a responsible tourism network to help the communities achieve greater access to the local tourism market, and ensure better impacts from tourism in their communities. In addition to organized presentations by CREST and other contributors, the conference also focused heavily on group work among the community representatives

to effectively summarize and brand their individual and collective products, and to define via roundtable discussion their goals for the new regional network. As a final step, the group outlined a strategy for the coming 2 months, until their next scheduled meeting on May 30th: Representatives will return to their communities and report on the conference, identify 2 delegates to the May 30th meeting, and at the May 30th meeting all the delegates present will elect a president, treasurer and secretary for the network. As a final gesture, CREST provided seed funding for the network to establish a website, and train community members in internet skills for marketing and communication.

English and Spanish conference proceedings will be posted for download in PDF format soon. Check back for updates and additional materials.

**Second INTIRUNA Meeting, Chiapas, Mexico, 2010**

With a grant from The Christensen Fund of Palo Alto, California, INTIRUNA met for the second time in February, 2010 at the Nueva Alianza Ecotourism Center, in Frontera Corozal, Ocosingo, Chiapas, Mexico.

The meeting was organized by CREST with generous organizational help from RITA (the indigenous tourism network of Mexico). At its largest moment, the group included 34 attendees from 10 countries, representing 13 indigenous groups. In attendance were 14 charter members of INTIRUNA, 4 NGO representatives from groups working on indigenous community development issues in Mexico, a group of visitors organized by The Christensen Fund (including 6 visitors from Tarahumara communities of Northern Mexico, and 4 Central Asian visitors), a representative from ACTUAR, a Costa Rican NGO promoting community-based tourism projects on the web, and 4 CREST staff members.



During the meeting, the group heard presentations on a variety of relevant topics:

**Bill Durham** of CREST, **Cecilio Solis** of RITA, and the present members of the Intiruna Steering Committee (**Juan Sanchez Jimenez**, **Angel Canales Gutierrez**, and **Manuel Munoz Millalonco**) opened the meeting, following a brief ceremonial blessing by a Mayan Shaman.

**Alex Vilca** of Bolivia shared the lessons learned in the development of the successful indigenous Chalalan ecolodge and regional association in Bolivia's Amazon region.

**Eva Calderon** of ACTUAR presented her groups work in capacity building and collective marketing of community-run tourism in Costa Rica as a potential model.

**Laura Driscoll** of CREST spoke of the potential benefits and challenges of organizing philanthropy within tourism.

**David Krantz** of CREST spoke about the global Tourism Sustainability Council and explained the goals of certification and accreditation.

**Manuel Munoz Millalonco** of Chile offered a structural analysis of indigenous vs. western culture.

**Miguel Hilario** of Peru (a Stanford PhD student) spoke of the pros and cons of ecotourism as a



development model for indigenous communities.

**Lochin Fayzulloev** of Tajikistan presented on his country's experience with making institutional changes at a municipal level to improve tourism.

Over the course of 4 days, the group charted a course for Intiruna as an NGO dedicated to collective marketing, development, consulting and education in the service of indigenous-controlled sustainable tourism. An important election was held in which Intiruna elected a President, Vice President, Secretary, Speaker, and Treasurer, who will work toward the development of an Intiruna information and marketing web site. A second declaration was signed at this 2010 meeting, and is available here in [Spanish](#) and [English](#).

English Conference Proceedings are available for download in PDF format [here](#).

For information on the founding of Intiruna at the original meeting in 2006 in Quito, Ecuador, click [here](#) or follow the link in the sidebar.