

Ecumenical Coalition on Tourism (ECOT)

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Communiqué

Towards People-Centered Tourism for Empowerment

To empower the earth household and to strengthen our global profile in the tourism debate, we as a group of faith based organisations, civil society organisations activists groups and social movements, have to confront the challenges of tourism and globalisation. We aim to launch key campaigns that reflect the struggles of peoples and communities and reflect local vitality and diversity for greater global visibility of the tourism issue. We are therefore committed to serving to revalorise sustainable tourism. We support less self-indulgent and self-centered visitation and promote more self-conscious tourism including our right to say 'no' to tourism. Our purpose is to recapture and affirm our collective memories for justice, freedom and equity.

We believe in strong inter-local and inter-contextual solidarity as the basis for mobilising and understanding the challenge of tourism development. As representatives of a multiple constituency we recognise the importance of connecting members and their alliances in an inter-continental web that is based on democratic and representative platforms, strategies and action. We recognise that this space is important for the success of any project that seeks to broaden the ecumenical spirit of the tourism debate.

Our advocacy is based on networking, sharing, learning and strengthening the whole community and the resources of the earth on which we are dependent. In this engagement, we would bring to the centre of the discourse threatened environments and ecosystems, endangered species, marginalized peoples and communities, people living under oppression and occupation. We would particularly espouse the cause of empowering women and children, indigenous heritage, culture and people.

Peoples movements have brought into focus the need to shift the developmental paradigm and infuse it with a more local and indigenous wisdom and tradition. This genius is based on non-violence, peace, justice and sustainable development. We therefore want to bring to the world, the voice of the people in the south and enrich the dialogue with each other and bring these elements into the process of integrating human values.

We will go forward through working in solidarity with local community representatives, activists and researchers from all parts of the world to develop strategies and strengthen struggles to make tourism more equitable, gender-just, ecologically sensible, child friendly and sustainable.

**Future Search Group of Ecumenical Coalition on Tourism (ECOT)
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