

8th Session of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP)
Intervention for Item 9, "proposals to be submitted to the Human Rights Council for its
consideration and approval." Prepared 23 July 2015.

Intervention presented by Ben Sherman, member of Oglala Lakota Nation, Pine Ridge Indian
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The travel and tourism industry has become a world economic powerhouse, surpassing 1 billion
international visitors in 2012. The industry helped lead the global economy out of the recent
economic recession, with a total impact of about 7 trillion USD. The growth of tourism will exceed
that of all other retail and service sectors in coming years.

That growth offers much good fortune to nation/states globally; however, Indigenous communities
come up short on the benefits of tourism. Indigenous communities do not enjoy a proportional
share of the wealth of tourism. But they do carry a heavier burden of the negative effects of
tourism.

Both the good and the bad of tourism are presented in the Pacific Asia Travel Association's (PATA)
July 2015 study titled, "**Indigenous Tourism & Human Rights In Asia & the Pacific Region.**" In their
report PATA states, "...in the history of tourism development, human rights violations have been
frequently raised and denounced by human rights advocacy groups, NGOs, trade unions and other
civil society organisations. Sadly Indigenous groups have often been the victims of such human
rights violations."

Some of the violations are direct and explicit including removal from home territories, loss of
territorial invasion and illegal trespass, environmental degradation, and loss of subsistence
harvesting and hunting. Violations that are less obvious but ultimately just as harmful to Indigenous
cultures are the loss of sacred sites, appropriation of cultural knowledge and expressions,
exploitation and manipulation of traditional cultures, marginalization of Indigenous peoples in
societies, lack of access to resources for development, reduced educational opportunities in the
field of tourism, and a lack of political will by nation states to advance the well-being of Indigenous
communities through tourism development.

In states and locations where Indigenous Peoples are not subject to the more explicit violations,
and where they have the freedoms to pursue business success in tourism, there still exists the
barriers and limitations imposed by lasting effects of colonialism and repression.

**I respectfully appeal to this United Nations body to initiate an international study of the human
rights violations impacting Indigenous Peoples in the field of international tourism, along with
recommendations for compliance with the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The
PATA report mentioned earlier provides an example of such a study along with recommendations
that might be conducted worldwide at the direction of the United Nations HRC.**

Thank you, Esteemed Panel.

Ben Sherman

Mitakuye Oyasin. We are all related.

