



**Media Release**

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# **IMPACT Sustainability Travel & Tourism Conference confirms climate change, cultural and tourism thought leaders return to the stage**

**January 23-26, 2022  
Registration to open September 15, 2021**

**Traditional territories of the Lekwungen peoples (Victoria, BC)** - The [IMPACT Sustainability Travel & Tourism Conference](#) is pleased to announce that the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada, Tourism Research Association of Canada are once again co-hosting the provocative conference, while favourite speakers Elizabeth Becker, Wade Davis, Keith Henry, and Bob Sandford will be in attendance in person.

“Like so many tourism destinations and businesses, we had to pause everything and reimagine our own business models while facing the repercussions of the global pandemic,” says Synergy’s Jill Doucette, IMPACT co-founder. “However, the discussions and needed actions identified during our conferences in the past ring as true today as they did then. Tourism’s role in a strong Canadian economy is better understood and it is our hope through IMPACT 2022 that we spur initiatives and investment to build back a better tourism industry that provides positive and regenerative impacts for communities from coast to coast to coast.”

Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada’s Henry and author Sandford have attended IMPACT since its inception in 2018. Sandford holds the Chair in Water and Climate Security at the United Nations University Institute for Water, Environment and Health. In this capacity he was the co-author of the UN [Water in the World We Want](#) report on post-2015 global sustainable development goals relating to water. Sandford is also lead author of *Canada in the Global World*, a new United Nations expert report examining the capacity of Canada’s water sector to meet and help others meet the United Nations 2030 *Transforming Our World* water-related Sustainable Development Goals.

Henry faced a significant challenge these past two years as the tourism shut down due to COVID disseminated Indigenous tourism across Canada and initial funding models were not accessible to member businesses. Henry's unrelenting advocacy work helped secure an additional over \$60 million in funding for the Indigenous tourism sector, which pre-COVID was the fastest growing sector of Canada's tourism industry. Henry sees Indigenous tourism experiences as an opportunity to support reconciliation efforts across the country as more Canadians express an interest in learning about the authentic history behind Indigenous relations across the country and the true impact on Indigenous communities.

Author [Elizabeth Becker](#) was named honorary chair of the IMPACT conference in 2018, and only missed attending 2020 as she completed her critically acclaimed book [You Don't Belong Here](#). Becker continues to comment on tourism's positive and negative impacts on communities and the world economy, following the 2013 publishing of [Overbooked: The Exploding Business of Travel & Tourism](#).

[Wade Davis](#) presented at IMPACT in 2020, the first time he had ever spoken to audience of all tourism experts and operators, yet his work has reverberated across the industry for generations. Davis is a National Geographic Explorer, anthropologist, ethnobotanist, author, and photographer whose work has focused on worldwide indigenous cultures, especially in North and South America.

He's been described as a "rare combination of scientist, scholar, poet, and passionate defender of all life's diversity." Currently, he is a Professor of Anthropology and the BC Leadership Chair in Cultures and Ecosystems at Risk at the University of British Columbia. His work has taken him to East Africa, Borneo, Nepal, Peru, Polynesia, Tibet, Mali, Benin, Togo, New Guinea, Australia, Colombia, Vanuatu, Mongolia, and the high Arctic of Nunavut and Greenland.

Registration for IMPACT will be available September 15, 2021 with delegate fees beginning at \$655.00 for early bird registration (deadline November 30, 2021), \$765.00 regular, \$550.00 student.

Thank you to our early sponsors MMGY Global, Fortis BC, Tourism Vancouver Island and to our partners the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada and Tourism Research Association of Canada.

### **About the IMPACT Sustainability Travel & Tourism Conference**

Taking place in Victoria, BC January 23-26, 2022, [IMPACT Sustainability Travel & Tourism Conference](#) was created with the goal of aligning the Canadian tourism industry, as well as stakeholders and communities touched by tourism, behind a vision to achieve economic, social and environmental sustainability. Co-founded by [Synergy Enterprises](#), [Beattie Tartan](#), Starrboard Enterprises, and [Destination Greater Victoria](#), it is

held annually at the Victoria Conference Centre, a certified carbon neutral facility in Victoria, BC. Destination Greater Victoria is also the first destination management organization in Canada to become fully accredited as carbon neutral, a significant feat accomplished during the last 18 months.

IMPACT's focus is on creating a collaborative space to learn, innovate, and discover valid and practical solutions toward the positive legacy we want from the tourism and travel industry in a modern and progressive Canada. It is a safe place where theory meets practice, and where all voices and levels of expertise are welcome. Having strong Indigenous and new Canadian voices at the conference is also a critical component of the discussion.

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