

TOFINO'S VITAL CONVERSATION ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

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Introduction

This report provides an overview of *Tofino's 'Vital Conversation' about Tourism* held on April 23, 2019, located at the Tofino Community Hall for local community members. The main objective of the conversation was identified by District of Tofino Staff and Council, *"to better understand how Tofino's tourism economy interrelates with community life in Tofino and to consider this experience through the lens of varied community stakeholders"* (DOT Report to Committee of the Whole, 14-01-2019).

Over 32 local citizens and members of the community of Tofino participated in the gathering and many indicated they would like to be involved in further community dialogues and action forums on sustainable tourism. As co-hosts and organizers of the meeting, the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust and the District of Tofino staff would like to thank all those individuals and organizations who joined us for the conversation. The knowledge-sharing and level of engagement and enthusiasm of those who participated was indicative of what we can achieve when we work together for positive change. We hope the results from this vital conversation will contribute to a new phase of action for sustainable tourism and serve to highlight how Tofino can continue to show leadership and excellence in the tourism industry by aligning with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the UNESCO vision for biosphere reserves.

Tofino and Tourism in Context

Tourism is a growing industry in Tofino and has become the major economic driver for the west coast region. Over the last thirty years, employment opportunities in resource-based livelihoods, such as fishing and forestry, have significantly declined, while 55% of the work force in Tofino is now employed in seasonal tourism-based livelihoods such as those offered in accommodation, food and retail industries (2016 Census data). Over this same time period, the visitations rates in the Pacific Rim National Park Reserve have increased by an estimated 40% and in 2018, approximately 600 000 people visited Tofino, which is now one of fourteen communities participating in BC's Resort Municipality Initiative (RMI).

Tofino's resident population, approximately 2000 people, is estimated to be 4% of the total number of residents living in RMI communities in BC. However, this small town hosts 11% of all visitors hosted by RMI communities, which is a ratio of 300 visitors for every Tofino resident, as compared with 105 visitors hosted for every RMI community resident in BC (Tourism Tofino 2019:7). Equally impressive, Tofino's tourism sector generates 14% of the total RMI federal, provincial and municipal tax contributions, an estimated \$57 million out of a total \$680 million (Tourism Tofino 2019:7). At the same time, the high cost of living on the west coast is comparable to large urban areas such as Vancouver or Victoria, yet the average income level is relatively low. For example, the calculated living wage for the west coast region is \$20.11 per hour compared with \$20.91 in Vancouver and \$20.50 in Victoria (CBT 2018: 10). However, the average yearly after-tax income for an individual in our region was approximately \$31,000 in 2015, with more than half of the region's population

earning below this figure. Over 16% of women and 18% of men earn less than \$10,000 a year (CBT 2018: 10).

The Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere Region

Over 80% of visitors who come to Tofino are attracted primarily to the spectacularly beautiful natural areas and outdoor activities, such as white sand beaches, national and provincial parks, surfing, wildlife tours and marine recreation. As the gateway community for the Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere Region, Tofino is nested within an international site of excellence. Biosphere reserves work to foster the harmonious integration of people and nature for sustainable development, biodiversity conservation and reconciliation – by encouraging dialogue, sharing knowledge, reducing poverty, increasing human well-being, respecting cultural values and enhancing capacity to cope with climate change¹.

An area can only be designated as a biosphere reserve by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The Clayoquot Biosphere is one of Canada's 18 UNESCO biosphere reserves and was designated in 2000 as the result of a grassroots movement of a small but passionate group of community members – people who were seeking better ways of advancing our region with a long-term commitment to sustainability. In a nutshell, our UNESCO designation is all about keeping our region a special place to live, work and visit.

New Opportunities for Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals

In 2015, Canada and all other 192 United Nations Member States adopted the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as our commitment to Agenda 2030: a global call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure no one gets left behind². Two years later, the UN General Assembly designated 2017 as the *International Year for Sustainable*

Tourism, and inspired all UN member states to accelerate sustainable tourism by aligning policies, business operations and investments with the SDGs and targets of Agenda 2030. In 2019, Canada announced its commitment to track SDG targets and indicators with Statistics Canada census data, including Goal 8- Decent Work and Economic Growth and target 8.9: *By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products*³.



¹ [World Network of Biosphere Reserves \(WNBR\)](#)

² [Canada's Action on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)

³ [Goal 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth](#)

CBT Vital Signs Indicators of Social-Ecological Stress

The Clayoquot Biosphere Trust (CBT) is a registered charity on the west coast of British Columbia. Established in 2000, it's the only organization in Canada that is both a community foundation and a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. We pair this spirit with the power of a global presence to bring more people together for a shared understanding of sustainable development practices.

Vital Signs® is a national program led by community foundations and coordinated by the Community Foundations of Canada. As one of 191 community foundations across Canada, we were the first to adopt the SDGs in the 2016 CBT Vital Signs report and align local indicators with global targets for Agenda 2030. In the 2018 CBT Vital Signs report, we identified a number of indicators within the themes of *People and Work*, *Environment* and *Housing*, that could be considered as stressors from increasing numbers of visitors. The following themes and indicators were identified as potential stressors from tourism-related activities:

Table 1.0 CBT Vital Signs Themes, Stressors and Indicators (CBT 2018)

Theme	Stressor	Indicator
People and Work	Lack of access to growing tourism sector livelihoods from remote communities and local labour force.	Rising unemployment rates in the communities of Hot Springs Cove (up 127%), Ahousaht (up 41%), Esowista (up 50%) and moderately increased in Tofino (up 29%).
	Over 1/3 labour force is employed in accommodation, retail trade and food services on the west coast, with low skill requirement & earning below living wage.	Our region requires \$20.11 per hour as a living wage. However, the average yearly after-tax income for an individual in our region was approximately \$31,000 in 2015. Over 16% of women and over 18% of men earn less than \$10,000 a year.
Environment	Rising number of visitors on west coast beaches and trails leave food & garbage, leading to food conditioned animals and possible injury to humans and/or animals.	Number of food conditioned Black Bears 2016-2018 decreased from 93 to 88. Number of food conditioned wolves 2016-2018 decreased from 6 to 0 (however animals were destroyed in the process).
	Growing numbers of people and dogs off-leash increase disturbance of shorebirds during spring and fall migrations.	In 2016, between 19% and 37% of all western sandpipers counted on the west coast were feeding in the Tofino Wah-nah-jus Hilth-hoo-is Mudflats with back and forth feeding activity at nearby Cox Bay and Chestermen's beach, which are popular human and dog walking locations.
	The % of human solids entering the waste water system increases during the summer season while the % of freshwater remains constant.	Between 2014 and 2018, the shellfish contamination closure area in Tofino Harbour and surrounding area increased by 42% due to rising fecal coliform counts.
Housing	According to Canada Mortgage and Housing, rent should not exceed 30% of income.	In 2015, 31% of owner or tenant households in our region, across all income levels, were spending over 30% on their income on shelter costs.
Health and Wellness	Emergency room use is high on the west coast, particularly in the summer months due to the influx of visitors and seasonal workers.	Since 2012-2013 emergency room visits in Tofino have increased by 137%.

Vital Conversation Agenda

Tuesday, April 23, 2019 from 9:30 am -2:30 pm, Tofino Community Hall

- Welcome and acknowledgement of meeting on Tla-o-qui-aht First Nation territory, opening remarks by Mayor Josie Osborne and Rebecca Hurwitz, Executive Director of the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust (CBT).
- Community presentations by community members who shared their insights on tourism stressors, vulnerabilities and opportunities for each of the 10 themes in the 2018 CBT Vital Signs Report.
- Presentation on Tofino Tourism Economic Data, by Nancy Cameron, Executive Director, Tourism Tofino.
- Presentation of CBT Vital Signs trends and opportunity for Tofino to integrate SDG targets in the Tourism sector, by Laura Loucks, CBT Research Director and Faye Missar, CBT Program Coordinator.
- Lunch Break, opportunity to provide feedback with sticky notes in ‘Parking Lot Questions’: What patterns are we seeing? What future can we re-imagine?
- World Café method for fostering group dialogue and surfacing collective wisdom. The room was set-up with 4-5 people per table, for a total of 6 tables, with three rounds of questions for three different conversations, each of which was 20-30 minutes long.
 - Conversation I: What pressures do you know of, or experience as the number of visitors in Tofino increases? (e.g. social pressures, economic pressures, ecological pressures)
 - Conversation II: As pressures increase, what are the weak points that show-up in ourselves, our families and communities?
 - Conversation III: What new opportunities could tourism help to support that strengthen our weak points? (e.g. social opportunities, economic opportunities, ecological opportunities).
- Closing remarks and summary points on *What patterns we’re seeing and what future can we re-imagine?*

Community Presentations

Table 2.0 Community Presenters, Vital Signs Themes and Feedback

Community Presenter	Vital Sign Themes	Key Points
Michelle Hall	Environment and Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create ‘ocean friendly’ corridors, tap into people’s values, link sustainability ideas to business, educate people on why we should care, help businesses attract people who want to be ‘ocean friendly’, create coalitions of shared values, explore the idea of a surf reserve in the CS Biosphere Region.
Ursula Banks	Work and People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing, employment and health are all connected, quality of life is key, transition of maturing work force is key (currently on 25% of our population is mature age workforce), need to diversify our economy; need more integration with First Nation workforce and need a 10 year plan to assess labour needs, fill these needs and retain workforce.
Evan Hauser	Poverty and Income Inequality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remote communities have a transportation cost disadvantage for accessing labour force, need access to training to build skills & capacity in First Nation labour force, housing not an issue, but high cost of food and transit is a barrier.
Krissy Montgomery	Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business owners are now landlords to address growing staff housing crisis. Have had to turn business away because of staff shortages due to lack of housing. How will this crisis affect new business developments?

RCMP Sergeant Todd P.	Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key trends over the last 3-4 years: increase in service calls, alcohol is a factor in this increase and contributing to more serious calls, # of mental health files has doubled, number of assaults and sexual assaults has doubled, road safety files and # of traffic complaints has increased by 1/3.
Aaron Rodgers	Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> increase in visitor volume creates issues for parking and traffic & causes congestion & frustration for local residents, estimated extra 540 cars in Tofino in July & August, goal for Tofino multi-modal transit plan is to reduce single use trips by 20% & provide stable funding for public transit with parking fees (creating positive feedback loop).
Charmaine Enns	Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ratio of non-residents to residents is 10:1 in hospital during summer & # of emergency room visits doubles, there's an inverse relationship between the sense of well-being for guests visiting and hosts who live here during tourism season: quality of life decreases for residents, need a health impact assessment to determine social-health impacts on community & influence policy change.
Jan MacDougall	Arts & Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Artists add vitality to community, but they're not being valued, cost of living is high, wages are low and it's difficult to showcase work without high cost for studio space, lack of marketing space, lack of affordable housing, yet there's an expectation from locals to make donations for free. need to create venues for artists to showcase their work during high tourism season e.g. feature their work in local businesses, purchase local art for public installations, have market spaces secured for local resident artists at lower rates, have more festivals for local community to regain sense of place & sense of community, feature local artists at these events, invest in maker-spaces for local artists.
Iris Frank	Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It's a big challenge to find people with skills to manage and train staff, we need space for post-secondary education on west coast, Tla-o-qui-aht is building partnerships with Parks Canada to provide labour for new trail, want to participate in a surf instructor school, our workforce has housing and they are building their skills, they need transportation, a sense of community safety, relationship-based collaboration. Tla-o-qui-aht Days are for Tla-o-qui-aht people to feel proud within our Ha'Houthee...we do it to lift ourselves up to a brighter future.
Toby Terriault	Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tofino youth can easily get summer work, learn about the environment and build their resume. The challenges are for students going to school: buses are full & teachers are teaching too many subjects. How can tourists help? Add benefits that work for youth and visitors: better transportation, help us protect shorebirds and help us have better recycling programs.

World Café Questions and Findings

The questions asked within the World Café session and throughout the day were designed to invite inquiry and curiosity. The following feedback was provided by participants as a result of several conversations throughout the day and reveals several high level patterns with which we can use to identify various actions for positive change in the tourism industry.

Table 3.0 Patterns We're Seeing and the Future We Can RE-imagine

1. What patterns we are seeing?	2. What future can we re-imagine?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is more focus on the economic value of Tofino rather than the ecological value of the region; • Sustainable targets are interconnected (poverty → Reskilling → employment → health → housing → happiness) • We are not a town of 2000 people, closer to 3500 due to staff accommodation, yet not reflected in census numbers. • Values of community impact culture; Education is vital to overcome barriers to knowledge Let's reskill the community to fill the employment gaps • Youth, adults, and many visitors (guests) do share a common set of values; • The more successful we are (as measure of \$ & visitation) the less happy & healthy we are. Are we measuring success the right way? • Summer staff burnout is a key issue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tofino Restaurant Association: Scheduled boat trips for Ahousaht and Opitsaht workforce • Raise our median wage to meet or exceed living wage; • Draw upon a diversity of stakeholders to create a sustainable vision that's adaptable to change • Invest in public transportation that extends to our waterways/offshore communities • A sustainable tourism for now and the future; this will include the guest, the industry, the environment and the community. • Looking for local solutions: Increasing the utilization of local residents for workforce through the provision of skills training, childcare & transportation options • Artist's stations down back alleys or in existing locations such as the covered look-out at 4th and main; with waterproof bin w. padlock for artist's supplies. Artists can demonstrate and 'create' to encourage pedestrian appreciation. • Increased local (Indigenous + mature + youth) employment • An engaged youth demographic that is supported through education and inclusivity to participate in the workforce that is about environmental protection and regeneration and not the extraction of resources.

Table 4.0 Summary of Key Stressors





Driving Forces Contributing to Increased Pressure/Stressors	Examples of Stressors
1. An increase in visitors decreases health of natural environment.	Water vulnerability, ocean habitat contamination, human-wildlife conflicts, shore bird disturbance, loss of habitat with development.
2. As costs increase for visitor experiences, both visitor expectations and demands on customer service rise.	Work pressure increases, staff feel burned out earlier in the season, staff attrition rates increase, rapid & repeating boom-bust cycle (lay-off staff/re-hire/work hard/staff-leave/re-hire & re-train)
3. Increase in number of visitors increases demand on emergency service providers.	1/3 of local paramedics live outside Tofino, yet increasing frequency of emergency calls is harder to service in required response time, increasing safety issues such as drownings & injuries.

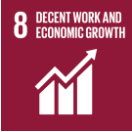

4. Increasing number of visitors increases demand for high-cost infrastructure.	Highway construction causes closures & anxiety, need for water, waste-water, transportation infrastructure is driving up municipal tax rates and decreasing affordability to live here.
5. Increase in ratio of tourism employment decreases median wage of labour force.	Increase in tourism industry drives increase in minimum wage employment, youth will not be able to afford to live here: the future costs and employment/income earning opportunities will not match.
6. Increase numbers of visitors decreases local resident sense of well-being.	Rising safety issues, we're losing our social connection, access to affordable food is a challenge, tourists trespass and disrespect Tla-o-qui-aht communities, life quality experience is decreasing.

Table 5.0 Summary of Vulnerable Sustainable Development Goals with Rising Tourism Pressure/Stressors

Vulnerable SDGs with Rising Tourism Pressure/Stressors	Examples of Vulnerabilities
1. SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being	Mental health impacts, increasing effects & impacts from alcohol use, increasing burn-out, can't restore self or family, boom-bust cycle too difficult to manage.
2. SDG 4: Quality Education	We haven't invested in re-skilling local people to fill staffing needs, we don't enough about transient youth work-force, we need respectful ways to build relationships with First Nation communities, we need to prioritize education skills training for our local youth.
3. SDG 6: Clean water and Sanitation	Water restrictions for local residents don't seem to apply for visiting tourists, increasing pressure on local residents to pay for waste water management: higher capacity, higher costs, higher volume on demand, marine contamination threatening local livelihoods e.g Oyster Farming and who pays?
4. SDG 11: Sustainable Housing & Transportation	Lack of housing is stressful, transportation network not yet in-place & doesn't include water transit, over-use of hospital and medical services for visitors, facilities zoned for one use but used for another on industrial way, growing number of issues with homeless people.
5. SDG 15: Life on Land	Exceeding carrying capacity of water supply, land supply, ocean environment.
6. SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities	Tax-base can't sustain costs of infrastructure, First nation communities are not benefiting from tourism.
7. SDG 14: Life Below Water	Increasing marine pollution is threatening our food security, Noro-virus is threatening sustainable livelihoods.
8. SDG 17: Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions	Rising safety issues and concerns reduces our sense of community.
9. SDG 8: Decent Work & Economic Growth	Year-round staffing for essential services can't cope with influx of visitors (hospital & RCMP), local residents can't get access to services and staff are suffering from over-work, families and residents are leaving our community.

Table 6.0 Summary of Tourism Opportunities to Support Sustainable Development Goals

Sustainable Development Goals	Suggested Tourism Sector Support for Building Community Resilience
<p>1. SDG 3: Good Health & Wellbeing</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Invest in local culture & activities to maintain sense of community - Recreation facilities - Community choir (joy + cohesion) - The normalization of alcohol consumption is a huge problem for our youth; where can our kids hang out? We need tourism sector to invest in community/youth facilities/sports - How do we get more events for locals? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Bring back the MUP SUP o Clayoquot Days for locals o Other events that perhaps our visitors just don't know about... o Community dinners - Need to talk about value of tourism in units other than dollars - Need to nurture & embrace local needs, put community first
<p>2. SDG 4: Quality Education</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to invest directly in education programming and strengthening our sense of community; - Education- can we use tourism to educate everyone who visits? (build awareness of local values & culture) - Modify/adapt/build the Ambassador program to be even more empowering (for residents, staff & visitors) - Build on and expand Ukee Aquarium "How to live like a local" package of information - Ask second home owners & regular visitors to contribute by giving talks or leading events (West Coast NEST?) - Create a regional human resource training hub; secure support for a 10 year HR Assessment and Development Plan - Invest in educational tourism in the shoulder season & support local learners and educators - Provide access to local training opportunities - Invest in local youth: training & education as future labour force - Harness education & outreach through local tourism businesses re: visitor behavior to reduce incidents, risk, impacts - Support employers to improve onboard training skills for new employees in advance of employment starting; e.g. housekeeping, restaurant, machine operator, carpentry etc. - Need a gap analysis to see where training needs are
<p>3. SDG 6 & SDG 11: Clean Water & Sanitation / Sustainable Cities (Housing, Transportation)</p>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communicate the impacts to visitors; generate a sense of community; stop sugar coating the reality for tourists - Invest in scheduled boat service to support workers from Ahousaht, Opitsaht, Ty-histanis & Estowista - Invest in scheduled bus transit between communities - Coordinate shared costs from businesses, organizations/governments to support water, sewer, housing, transit - Policy shift to change MRDT spending: Need dollars to support infrastructure improvements and expansion; - New opportunities to leave cars at home & hotel: Increase Shuttle...add a contest or a benefit - Introduce more pay parking: Talk about a municipal sales tax - Need Support for Neighborhood Associations - MRDT should be used for infrastructure, affordable housing: Continue lobbying for Fed & Prov. Govnt. Support for all tourism services such as sewer, infrastructure, true costs , limit total number of short term rentals

<p>4. SDG 8: Decent Work</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There's a tension between housing and the need for seasonal employment, and our vulnerability with rising unemployment rates: we need to focus on local employee/labour force opportunities - Tourism sector needs to Invest in these aspects of a healthier community: Shared green spaces; Community events (off-season); Parks/sensitive area/habitat protection; Recreation facilities; Community choir (joy + cohesion) - More opportunities for visitors to get involved in volun-tourism - We need a more regional approach to tourism (destination) management; we know visitors, employees, business owners are region-wide - Ask visitors to take a pledge - Sustainable tourism: need to facilitate communal temporary job postings system ('temp agency'): post daily job availability short term; post volunteer needs that could be met by visitors; more education for guests; more collaborative initiatives/groups to reduce costs - Share success stories e.g. hiring practices, creating culturally safe employment opportunities - Regional approach: create a pathway for rewarding achievement as an employer; align our community visions; employ local people
<p>5. SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn from what's working e.g. Tofino Co-op HR & replicate - Need to address inequity of wealth distribution & invest in community services - Need to increase social equity and reduce wealth gap between First Nation communities and Tofino/Ucluelet - RMI funds need to invest money back to communities - Establish a fund for local community benefits with tourism dollars - Payment For Ecosystem Services
<p>6. SDG 15: Life on Land</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need recommitment to sustainability at appropriate designation level e.g. Biosphere Region; Pacific Rim National Park Reserve - Invest in shared green spaces - Invest in more Parks/protect sensitive areas & habitat - Shift the conversation from economic value of tourism to environmental values we need to protect - Restaurants could add small tax for food security initiatives such as composting, emergency food stores
<p>7. SDG 14: Life Below Water</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need recommitment to sustainability at appropriate designation level e.g. Biosphere Region; Pacific Rim National Park Reserve - everyone sign-on such as businesses, organizations, Districts, resorts to more regional approach - Continue RMI lobbying for supporting all tourism services such as sewer, infrastructure, true costs
<p>8. SDG 17: Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Culture: we need to invest in article 92 in Truth & Reconciliation Calls to Action; we need to respect UN Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples - we need to convey the message we are all guests on these First Nations homelands and we need to behave accordingly as good guests - Create a visitor volunteer collective; a central website; Facebook page linked with Tofino Tourism Website - Increase/supplement RCMP staffing during times of high visitation - Harness education & outreach through local tourism businesses re: visitor behavior to reduce incidents, risk, impacts, support Emergency services, reduce by-law complaints etc. - Build our sense of feeling connected; support cultural practices

Participant Evaluation

As a follow-up to the Vital Conversation, 25 participants were invited to respond to an on-line evaluation of their experience, of which 14 responded (approximately 50%). Of these responses, 86% would likely or very likely recommend attending a Vital Conversation to their friends, neighbors or colleagues. 98% felt it is very valuable to continue the community dialogue on sustainable tourism in Tofino. As a result of participating in this conversation, 22% responded it was extremely likely and 43 % responded it was very likely they would take action for positive change. When asked how participants would like to be engaged in the future, 40% responded they would like to participate on a sustainable tourism working group to provide recommendations to Tofino Council and Tourism stakeholders. That said, one participant also expressed their concern the event lacked a focus on actions.

“My only concern with the event was the lack of action. I have been involved in these conversations before, and I find I often start with a ton of passion and motivation, but leave feeling lost and frustrated because I wonder if anything is going to change. Who there has the power to implement change in the way it is needed? What were our main action items? We all know something needs to change, but what and how will it be done? Will we still have this conversation in five years? Will it be worse? Because we had it five years ago amongst ourselves and yet nothing drastic is done. I am still happy with the event and would attend again, but I'd like to break up into groups with council members in each and determine what can actually be done” (Vital Conversation participant).

The following table summarizes the key pressures, vulnerabilities and opportunities identified in the vital conversation and indicates the order of topics participants are interested in discussing further.

Table 7.0 Summary of Priority Pressure Areas, Vulnerabilities and Opportunities for Further Discussion

1. Affordable Housing	We have an opportunity to use the Municipal Regional District Tax for affordable housing. What can we do to support this and other programs that address local pressures and vulnerabilities?	71%
2.Reconciliation	We need to invest more in the calls to action outlined in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report and the United Nations Declaration of Rights of Indigenous People. What actions can local businesses take to support these calls? (e.g. payment for ecosystem services, Tribal Parks Allies)	64%
3. Sense of Place	The sense of place issue: as the number of visitors increases, we often feel a loss in our community connections. How can we recover our sense of place and strengthen our community cultures.	50%
4. Living in Balance	We need to consider how to re-balance our limited resources (ecological, social, economic). Are we willing to slow growth? (e.g. living within our social-ecological safe-space)	50%
5. Marine Pollution	We have a limited tax base to service growing infrastructure costs such as water and sewer, yet the increase in the number of visitors put more demand on these services and puts more pressure on the health of the marine environment. How can the tourism industry and other sectors reduce the pressure on water and sewer costs and contribute to improved marine ecosystems?	50%

6. Youth Mental Health and Well-being	While visitors can experience a range of exciting outdoor adventures, our local youth experience a number of barriers to access these recreational experiences or job opportunities. What can local businesses do to increase the participation of local youth in the adventure tourism experience? (e.g. education tourism, outdoor education)	43%
7. Emergency Services	As the number of visitors increases, the pressure on emergency services also increases, yet our volunteer emergency responders and year-round emergency service providers struggle to meet the growing demand. What actions can we take to reduce the pressure on local emergency services and service providers?	43%
8. The Boom-Bust Cycle	Business owners struggle to manage the rising costs of seasonal staff training and accommodation. What can we do to increase the capacity of our local workforce to fulfill local employment needs? (education tourism, 10 year HR training program)	36%
9. Regional Wildlife Threats	As development increases, wildlife habitat decreases and the number of human-wildlife conflicts rises. What can we do to re-commit to our regional vision for conservation of biodiversity? (e.g. the Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere Region designation)	36%
10. Widening Income Gap	As the cost of living rises, visitor expectations also rise, which puts more pressure on customer service providers. Consequently, staff experience a decline in job satisfaction while, at the same time, the gap between wages and costs widens. What can we do to reduce the cost of living for visitors and local residents alike?	36%

Next Steps

The purpose of Tofino's Vital Conversation on Sustainable Tourism was to better understand how local community members experience the tourism economy and to identify opportunities in which tourism can be better aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The dialogue approach was designed to generate deeper inquiry into the underlying patterns contributing to stressors and vulnerabilities for local Tofino residents, and in so doing, the conversations also revealed areas of opportunity for further dialogue and investment in sustainable development. The following themes and SDGs were identified in the Vital Conversation as opportunities for Tofino to integrate sustainable development action for positive change in the tourism industry:

Table 8.0 Sustainable Development Goals for Positive Change in Tofino's Tourism Industry

Biosphere	Society	Economy	Governance
SDGs 6, 14, 15	SDGs 3, 4, 11	SDGs 8,10,	SDG 17

The findings from Tofino's Vital Conversation on Sustainable Tourism are not easily summarized into a set of final conclusions or recommendations. Rather, we have identified a number of shared issues local residents feel the Tourism industry, local organizations and local government need to address. While this event was designed as an initial conversation, there is a high level of interest in continuing the dialogue. However, participants also caution that convening more dialogue without designing a plan for action is

not a solution. Future actions need to address deeper patterns such as the multiple factors contributing to the increasing costs of living and the declining median wage. The following table outlines examples of deeper patterns identified by participants.

Table 9.0 Key Focus Areas for Next Steps and Future Action

What Deeper Patterns Are We Seeing?
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Seasonality: we feel differently in the Winter than the anxiety we feel in the Summer. 2. Business owners need help to manage the seasonal boom-bust cycle. 3. We're really a region and we may need to recommit to our sustainability vision (e.g. Biosphere Region designation, core protected areas). 4. We need to look at both the balance & the process of re-balancing of resources (for social, economic, ecological well-being). 5. The gap is widening between visitor expectations and the quality of life for staff and local residents. 6. We have a limited municipal government tax-base with which to service costs such as infrastructure that should be supported by federal and provincial taxes (based on Tofino's \$57 million annual Tourism revenue tax contribution). 7. We have an opportunity to use MRDT to service costs 8. How can we access other Tourist assets, what can they give? 9. We need to invest in Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action & UN Declaration of Rights of Indigenous People...we are guests in FN territories.

References:

CBT 2018. *Clayoquot Sound Biosphere Region's Vital Signs Report*, published by the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust, Tofino, British Columbia, 26 pages.

Tourism Tofino 2019. *Economic Impact of Tourism in Tofino, BC*, prepared for Tourism Tofino by Inter VISTAS Consulting INC., Tofino, British Columbia, 76 pages.



Appendix A

Summary of Driving Forces/Pressures:

1.	Increase in visitors decreases natural environment/habitats	
	Burning beach wood really bothers me; increase of disrespectful behaviours upsets me	
	Tourism was supposed to be the solution to resource economy (forestry & fishing), but the impacts of tourism on the environment are drastic	
	Tourists are disconnected from our community; don't take care of our environment	
	Disconnect between using Tourism dollars and our need for infrastructure	
	More and more people are camping in public green spaces...looking for free camping. There's a disconnect that we're inviting more people when we're saturated	
	Disrespect for environment is a concern.	
	"I don't want more tourists. Our beaches and habitats can't hold anymore".	
	Our space is limited (on the peninsula)- not enough places for people to stay;	
	Puts pressure on our forest communities/outback areas like Kennedy lake	
	Increase in garbage and slum camping...people are camping everywhere and damaging sensitive habitats and food areas e.g mushroom picking areas	
	Secret spots are no longer secret with social media	
	Climate change + increasing visitors increases ecological impact	
	Volume creates impact on beaches and environment. Is there a way to limit visitors?	
	We need to ensure we aren't driven by economics...ecology needs to be a part of the decision making.	
	What renewable resources do we have? Need to move away from consumption model.	
	Need education on these issues to instill environmental values	
	Increasing number of visitors increases the amount of waste and increases the amount of Green House Gases produced	
	Increasing number of visitors increases the focus on economic value and decreases the focus on ecological value	
	Litter- crowding	
	'beach fires' accidental habitat destruction ie. Sand verbena disturbed	
	Human-wildlife interactions increasing	
	Indian paintbrush disturbed	
	Shore birds disturbed	
	I don't go mushroom picking anymore on Kennedy Flats	
	There's way more people camping on Kennedy Flats	
	More use of MUP means maybe we can change the way it's used	
	Increased number of wildlife incidents	
	Feel the pressure of lack of water	
	Increased conservation & changing our rainwater capture	
	Increasingly aware that we are different from other places in Canada	
	The longer I live here, the more I notice how I want to maintain the reasons why I came here	
	More footprints on the beach	
	What is the saturation point? Have we reached capacity?	
	Is there a place we can test limits?	
	How does this relate to the OCP?	
	How do we change the expectation that visitors can't catch and eat west coast Salmon? Will tourists comply with conservation regulations?	
	No quiet spaces to go to	

2.	Increase in cost of visitor experience increases visitor expectations & increases demand on staff customer service level	
	Work pressure increases	
	More people want more service	
	Have to adjust my behavior & expectations seasonally	
	Feel burn-out in August (but go family camping)	
	Employers having to do more on the job training	
	Less joy in providing service to visitors	
	Having to shut business down or close because we don't have staff capacity to respond to demand	
	Quality of job applicant is decreasing	
	Decrease in patience and understanding	
	Lines in general (increasing): (surf breaks, restaurants, beaches, coffee shops, parking)	
	Blurring of professional and personal boundaries	
	Increased call for services (including complaints)	
	Rapid boom-bust cycle (lay-off/hire/ work hard/lay off cycle)	
	How can we plan for human resources in the 'growth machine'? 10 year plan...we are finite on the peninsula	
	People don't respect that we're a functioning community. They arrive 'to take ' but they don't make an effort to 'give back'.	
	Don't recognize what it takes to maintain a community	
	How do we change the expectation that visitors can't catch and eat west coast Salmon? Will tourists comply with conservation regulations?	
3.	Increase in number of visitors increases demand on service providers (e.g. emergency responders, safety/law enforcement, search & rescue, affordable housing)	
	1/3 of local paramedics live out of town;	
	More requirement for emergency response at a time when is harder to find staff; (3)	
	More people in the water	
	Increasing number of safety stresses:	
	Novice swimmers	
	Rip current	
	'By-law is stressed in the Summer- too much to enforce'	
	Companies are buying houses for staff accommodation, supply is low and demand is high, therefore prices are high.	
	"I've written-off the possibility of ever owning a house in Tofino. It's too expensive, even though I have a good job".	
	Social support systems are maxed...while 'Tofino Slums' have grown...how can we monitor 'free loaders'? There is a transient community ...adds to safety concerns.	
	As number of visitors increase during peak months the pressure on services increases (emergency room services, water supply, search & rescue, safety, By-law enforcement)	
4.	Increasing number of visitors increases demand for infrastructure (water, transportation, multi-use path)	
	More visitation/congestion makes me change my car use	
	Highway into Tofino = anxiety/safety	
	Infrastructure issues: water/sewer; Roads/MUP	
	Challenges in unfettered time-off (staffing challenges in service environments e.g. police/hospital etc.)	

	Lack of resources + support (infrastructure) unable to expand to accommodate influx of guests	
	Parking offshore/ results in tickets & harassment	
	Transportation in and out of town is a concern. Not everyone can ride a bicycle	
5.	Increase in ratio of tourism employment decreases median wage of labour force	
	Increasing tourism industry leads to increase in minimum wage jobs, therefore we either increase wages to = Living Wage or we diversify sectors to achieve higher wages	
	Also concerns for our youth...unattainable affordable future here	
	The dream is to have a University here to diversify the economy and build the learning/knowledge economy	
	If you live in Hesquiaht, it costs \$80/day to get to Tofino for work; if you live in Ahousaht, it costs \$40/day. Therefore, you're already at a loss financially even before you start your day. What is the motivation to work in Tofino?	
6.	Increase in number of visitors decreases local resident sense of well-being	
	Access to food-Tofino is thin, shelves in Ukee full & produce is better	
	Shop out of town because I won't go downtown in Tofino	
	Disconnect between high volume of food waste and rising local food costs	
	Need to ask what benefits Tourism can bring local community & residents	
	Need to leave home to get away during busy tourist season	
	Lack of knowledge of First Nation communities; tourists trespass in Tyhistanis & Estowista	
	"last summer people camped in our graveyard in Estowista"	
	We no longer feel safe when visitors/outsideers come into our communities (we've had tourists take our dogs and attempt to pick-up our kids at the playground.	
	"we want to gate our community to keep tourists out" (from Ty-histanis and Estowista)	
	Local shopping at Co-op is too expensive	
	"I live in Ukee and it's a lot quieter"	
	We are losing our social connection...lost recreation opportunities with increasing numbers of visitors	
	Tourism needs to give equal benefits to all three: Social, economic & ecological	
	We are losing our social connection...lost recreation opportunities with increasing numbers of visitors	
	Seniors: Social + economic costs, but they carry costs as tax payers. How do they benefit?	
	Cost of simple pleasures has grown- we can't spend as if we're on holiday!	
	How does this relate to the OCP?	
	Higher ratio of guests/visitors to residents can decrease life quality experience	
	Housing: quality & lack of housing for seasonal staff and residents	
	Community development & building negatively impacted	

Summary of Vulnerabilities Categorized by SDGs

1.	Good Health & Wellbeing	SDG 3
	Mental health impacts	
	The consumption of culture is vulnerable to exploitation	
	“ Destination Employment” and the shadow population, weak point is social services	
	Effects and impacts of alcohol	
	Member/staff wellness- how do we carry the increased workload?	
	Mental health & wellness (place, community, service, employment, burn-out)	
	Massage therapists give all day long, when do they get their massage?	
	Community cohesiveness and vision decreases	
	Increased sense of the high cost resulting in high expectations of visitors.	
	Stressful meeting those growing expectations.	
	Employers need to put more emotional investment into their staff	
	It’s harder to find balance	
	Increased sense of panic, anxiety because people are in such long line ups; or run out of parking spots	
	How can I give great customer service when I’m stressed out?	
	I tell my friends and family out of town that the best way they can support me is NOT visit in the Summer	
	We leave town - I can’t relax in my own town	
	I can’t restore myself or my family	
	I’m overwhelmed: I can’t meet everyone’s expectations.	
	There are more “you shoulds” than “we can”.	
	Resentment builds up when we feel like we sacrifice more than others	
	Lack of housing is stressful, lack of long term leases is stressful	
	Mental health, improperly housed staff are straining services	
	Volunteer burn out	
2.	Quality Education	SDG 4
	We need to find authentic and respectful ways/relationships for sharing culture (FN knowledge holders are asked permission, & paid well, honoured and thanked appropriately)	
	Weak points: we haven’t invested in re-skilling or skilling-up local people to fill staffing needs for tourism sector.	
	What do we need to know about seasonal workforce? Young, transient, low level of life skills	
	What can Ambassador program do to address these skill needs? E.g. here’s how you survive in Tofino, here are our values, here’s how we need you to behave	
	Weak point: lack of knowledge in visitors to know how to respect local environment, but local knowledge holders/community members retreat in high tourism season.	
3.	Clean Water & Sanitation / Sustainable Cities (Housing, Transportation)	SDG 6 & SDG 11
	Water restrictions don’t always work – we have to limit the water we use to grow food, but a tourist can have a hot tub?	
	Degrading environment: Visitors with different expectations/habits around waste, compost etc.	
	Increased pressure on waste water management (higher capacity, higher costs, higher volume on demand)	
	How do we reduce waste, not increase waste?	

	The increasing waste at landfill is a motivation for new (green) solutions	
	weakening infrastructure + higher infrastructure costs	
	Year round staffing can't cope with increased pressure on infrastructure/ services e.g. police, hospital	
	Norovirus: while it isn't direct/conclusive, we know that the impact is there...intuitive. Negative impacts are growing and impacting an otherwise low impact industry (Oyster growing).	
	Water & sewer issues	
	Low water pressure, not enough supply + drought	
	Waste water impacts industry (Oyster growing).	
	Overuse of hospital and other infrastructure weak points : Growing tension about RMI and MRDT not being used to support our local needs (weak points)	
	Expectation of land of plenty; but no place for those people to be adequately housed + served	
	Expectation to be provided for : WCRS, employment, under-housed	
	Lack of housing is stressful, lack of long term leases is stressful	
	Pooles land and Slums are unsustainable	
	Food security (food supply) issues	
	Transportation network weak points	
	pedestrian safety	
	By-law response time	
	Facilities being used for different purposes e.g Industrial Way – not the intended use	
	We aren't unified on the vision for the community. What does sustainable look like?	
4.	Life on Land	SDG 15
	We focus on the economic value of tourism rather than ask "what industry could be more regenerative + innovative with smaller footprint/impact on Environment".	
	Human-wildlife conflicts	
	Natural environment (litter, degradation increasing, carrying capacity)	
	Degrading environment	
	Trail degradation	
	We endanger the very environment and animals that people come to see	
5.	Reduced Inequalities	SDG 10
	Tax base can't sustain costs of infrastructure (ratio of tourists to residents...what are the limits of our capacity?)	
	Ecosystem service fees: how can we embrace + create equity in a solution: Benefits need to support culture + education	
	Frustrated visitors will take it out on local employees, who say "why am I doing this?"; "I'm not paid enough".	
	Less sales in the summer (e.g. at Co-op) means harder for local residents to afford food	
6.	Life Below Water	SDG 14
	Weak points showing up in our marine ecosystem e.g. increasing marine pollution/contamination, threats to our food supply e.g. shellfish contamination closure areas	
	Waste water impacts industry (Oyster growing).	

	Norovirus: while it isn't direct/conclusive, we know that the impact is there...intuitive. Negative impacts are growing and impacting an otherwise low impact industry (Oyster growing).	
7.	Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions	SDG 17
	In Summer I worry more about safety and theft: I feel like maybe I need a gate	
8.	Decent Work and Economic Growth	SDG 8
	Quality of service & production is a weak point: Lack of time for training employees; Staff turnover and burnout	
	Increasing birthrate in local population will result in more local people leaving if they can't have a high quality of life; need to look at cost of living + conditions for thriving in local community	
	Year round staffing can't cope with increased pressure e.g. police, hospital	
	Youth have good employment; but Parents are working split shifts	
	Staff burnout	
	Deteriorating visitor service/experience	
	Overworked (staff) during peak times	
	Decreased volunteerism: Time deficit	
	We may lose our cohesive culture and values if we (local residents) are at a lower ratio than the visiting population. We see locals no longer are visiting Stubbs Island...it's mostly visitors.	
	Widening gap between expectations and the reality (or our limiting conditions)	
	Residents and families are leaving	