

Thompson Okanagan

Climate Action Plan

2023

TOTA THOMPSON OKANAGAN
TOURISM ASSOCIATION



Climate Action Plan (2023)

Sustainability is an underlying principle and focus of the Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association (TOTA). In keeping with this principle, TOTA is committed to facilitate business and community growth that is environmentally, culturally, and economically sustainable in alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

As a Regional Destination Management Organisation which supports over 2,500 tourism stakeholders, TOTA can effect impact through providing resources, activities, and programs across the region.

TOTA's Commitment

As a signatory to the Glasgow Declaration, TOTA commits to accelerate climate action in tourism and supports the global commitment to cut emissions in half by 2030 and reach Net Zero as soon as possible before 2050. TOTA commits to raise awareness about the urgency for the tourism sector to take action and play a role as an agent of change.

TOTA will lead by example: driving action, sharing knowledge, and committing to collaboration.

TOTA offers the Biosphere Commitment Program, a sustainable tourism support program for tourism stakeholders in the Thompson Okanagan region of British Columbia called the in alignment with the Thompson Okanagan Destination Biosphere Certification, through the Responsible Tourism Institute. This program is the primary mechanism to support and encourage tourism businesses to begin and continue their journey to sustainability through resources, tools and one-on-one support.

Areas of Focus



Measure



Decarbonize



Regenerate



Collaborate



Finance

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Measure

Measure and disclose all travel and tourism-related emissions. Ensure methodologies and tools are aligned to UNFCCC-relevant guidelines on measurement, reporting and verification, and that they are transparent and accessible.

- Make regional climate related data transparent and accessible.
- Support measurement and reporting of Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions:
 - Office operations emissions including staff home working and team travel
 - Carbon footprint of in person events
 - Waste audits for office operations
 - Combustion emissions from fleet vehicles
 - Grid electricity usage
 - Natural gas usage
 - Employee commuting
 - Business travel
- Monitor and grow the number of stakeholders that have committed to sustainable principles through the [Biosphere Committed Companies](#) program.
- Monitor and grow the number of stakeholders that have committed to reducing their carbon footprint through the [Biosphere Committed Companies](#) program.
- Once measurement processes are in place we commit to developing Key Performance Indicators (KPI), if not already in place, and to develop an annual reporting template.
- Partner with Fortis BC and GreenStep to provide energy, water and waste audits for both the Biosphere Committed Companies program and for TOTA operations.

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Decarbonize

Set and deliver targets aligned with climate science to accelerate tourism's decarbonisation. This includes transport, infrastructure, accommodation, activities, food & drink, and waste management. While offsetting may have a subsidiary role, it must be complementary to real reductions.

- Commit to becoming Carbon Neutral: where the greenhouse gas emissions associated with TOTA are estimated, plans are developed and implemented to reduce or avoid them, and any non-avoided emissions are compensated or "offset" with carbon credits by 2030.
- Commit to alignment with [Canada's National Climate Action Plan](#) of a 40% reduction in emissions 2005 levels by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2050.
- General and Office Operations
 - Reduce office energy footprint, consumables, and commuting.
 - Reduce printed materials in favour of digital alternatives.
 - Implement good practice in procurement, facilities use and business travel, including a requirement to use low carbon travel where practical.
- Develop an events policy for all TOTA in person events to include policy on menus, single use plastics, use of reusable and recyclable materials and request and encourage verified carbon footprint measurement from vendors.
- Continue to encourage and support tourism businesses to reduce their carbon footprint through the [Biosphere Committed Companies](#) program
- Commit to using our communications platforms to share and disseminate information, stories and examples of carbon footprint reduction activities.
- To use a carbon reduction lens for Destination Development in our region.

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Regenerate

Restore and protect ecosystems, supporting nature's ability to draw down carbon, as well as safeguarding biodiversity, food security, and water supply. As much of tourism is based in regions most immediately vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, ensure the sector can support affected and at-risk communities in resilience building, adaptation and disaster response. Help visitors and host communities experience better balance with nature.

- Commit to identify, support and promote regenerative tourism opportunities that will “leave a place better than they found it”.
- Support those businesses that have committed to sustainable business practices through the Biosphere Committed Companies program and work to grow the number of participating Thompson Okanagan businesses.
- Promote and encourage visitors to commit to sustainable behaviors through the Thompson Okanagan Regional Pledge
- Increase destination engagement on tourism's products, operation, value, and impact in partnership with Destination BC and Destination Canada.

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Collaborate

Share evidence of risks and solutions with all stakeholders and our guests, and work together to ensure our plans are as effective and co-ordinated as possible. Strengthen governance and capacity for action at all levels, including national and sub-national authorities, civil society, large companies and SMEs, vulnerable groups, local communities and visitors.

- Commit to annual reporting on this climate action plan.
- Commit to engaging employees, board members, and our networks in climate action opportunities.
- Commit to active participation in community processes and on local municipal climate action plans where possible (Eg. Tamarack Climate Transitions Cohort, Penticton Fuel Free campaign)
- Commit to align with and work beside organizations that actively promote Climate actions in the Thompson Okanagan.
- Work with destinations, policy makers, operators, and the supply chain to develop mutual benefit arising from carbon reduction and reporting.

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Finance

Ensure organisational resources and capacity are sufficient to meet objectives set out in climate plans, including the financing of training, research and implementation of effective fiscal and policy tools where appropriate to accelerate transition.

- Commit to support and incentivize the development of sustainable action plans of tourism stakeholders in the Thompson Okanagan through the Biosphere Committed Companies program.
- Ensure sufficient financial resources are in place to support the TOTA's Climate Action Plan.
- Continue to employ staff focused on Destination Stewardship
- Identify and apply for funding sources, grants and sponsorship to continue to act on these Climate Action Goals.