

Press release from the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators (AECO), Visit Greenland, Cruise Iceland, Visit Svalbard and the Northern Norway Tourist Board.

For immediate release, May 11, 2017:

Arctic tourism organizations launch guidelines for community visits in the Arctic

Five Arctic tourism organizations have joined forces to develop guidelines for tourists visiting Arctic communities. In addition to general advice on how to behave, the organizations presented a tool that allows communities create their own tailored guidelines.

Guidance for visitors

In April, the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators (AECO), Visit Greenland, Cruise Iceland, Visit Svalbard and the Northern Norway Tourist Board presented a set of [Community Guidelines](#) aimed at Arctic tourists. The guidelines, which provide travelers with useful dos and don'ts when visiting Arctic communities, have been developed with the input of local stakeholders. In addition to general advice, the tool includes a template that Arctic towns and hamlets can use to establish guidelines specific to their own community.

A positive footprint

Frigg Jørgensen, Executive Director of AECO, hopes that the new tool can be a resource for everyone who wants Arctic tourism to leave a positive footprint.

- We are working to promote sustainable tourism in the Arctic, and social and cultural interactions between visitors and locals are an important part of that. We know that many Arctic communities welcome the economic opportunities associated with increased tourism. We want to educate tourists and tour operators on how they can make sure that their visit benefits the local community, says Ms. Jørgensen.

The guidelines include pointers on everything from cultural considerations to recommendations on what kind of souvenirs to buy.

Harvesting local knowledge

Anders la Cour Vahl, Deputy Director of Visit Greenland, underlines that one of the goals of the project is to make it easier for communities to share their knowledge with tour operators.

- Ultimately, it is the local communities in cooperation with tour operators that are best placed to advise tourists on what they should and shouldn't do. We are excited to present a template that can be used to create Community Specific Guidelines. The template is a starting point for communities that want to work with tour operators to educate visitors on how they can make a positive impact. Using a common format will make it easier for tourists and operators to quickly understand what they should keep in mind in each place they visit, Mr. la Cour Vahl says.

The project is funded by the Nordic Fund, and the Community Guidelines and template for Community Specific Guidelines are available from all partners in the project.

Photo

A game of soccer between cruise guests and Itilleq locals in Greenland. Photo by Mads Pihl / Visit Greenland.

Contacts

AECO - Executive Director Frigg Jørgensen: frigg@aeco.no, tel: +47 79 02 63 50/+47 913 90 554.

Visit Svalbard - Managing Director Ronny Brunvoll: ronny@visitsvalbard.com, tel: +47 951 16 165

Visit Greenland – Deputy Director Anders Ullrich la Cour Vahl: anders@greenland.com, tel: +299 34 28 31 / +299 55 25 34

Northern Norway Tourist Board – CEO Trond Øverås: trond@nordnorge.com, tel: +47 906 26 170.

Cruise Island – Board Member Erna Kristjansdottir: erna@faxafloahafnir.is, tel: +354 665 8766

Project partners

AECO - www.aeco.no

Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators is an international organisation for expedition cruise operators and associates in the Arctic, dedicated to manage environmentally-friendly, safe and considerate cruise tourism. The more than 50 international operators and 30-35 expedition cruise vessels that are organized by AECO represent the great majority of these operations in the Arctic.

Visit Svalbard - www.visitsvalbard.com

Visit Svalbard AS is owned by Svalbard Reiselivsråd, which is a member based organization for the travel industry in Svalbard. The company's vision is for Svalbard to be the world's leading and best preserved High Arctic travel destination. This will be achieved through deliberate development based on and consideration of the peninsula's fragile nature, with a focus of environment and knowledge based tourism. Visit Svalbard's activities include marketing, promotion and selling Svalbard as a destination. Visit Svalbard also functions as a secretariat for all of the travel industry in Longyearbyen.

Visit Greenland - www.greenland.com

Visit Greenland is the national tourist board of Greenland and a government owned agency for the development of tourism in Greenland. Visit Greenland is dedicated to develop and promote Greenland as an adventure and exclusive cruise destination through destination development, regional and national branding, innovation and marketing.

Northern Norway Tourist Board - www.nordnorge.com

The Northern Norway Tourist Board was established in 2009 and covers the Nordland, Troms, Finnmark and Svalbard. The goal of the company is to establish and develop Northern Norway as an all-year destination through development, marketing and sales facilitation for Northern Norwegian travel products, to the benefit of employment, population and other general interests in Northern Norway. The company has offices in Alta, Tromsø and Bodø.

Cruise Iceland - www.cruiseiceland.com

Cruise Iceland was established in 2004 to combine the resources of all those involved in receiving cruise ships to help promote the island as an exciting destination. Today 30 companies are members of Cruise Iceland including 16 ports providing easy access to every area of the country. Other members are for example bus companies, shipping companies and tour operators which have an abundance of both diverse and exciting shore excursions to offer.