

# Education Tourism: Transitioning to Sustainable Livelihoods in the Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere Region

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## Introduction:

- Clayoquot Sound was designated a United Nations Biosphere region in 2000, after more than a decade of conflict and collective action to prevent the logging of old growth coastal temperate rainforests on Vancouver Island's West Coast. The *Clayoquot Biosphere Trust* was established as the lead organization to oversee the mandate of the Biosphere region designation.

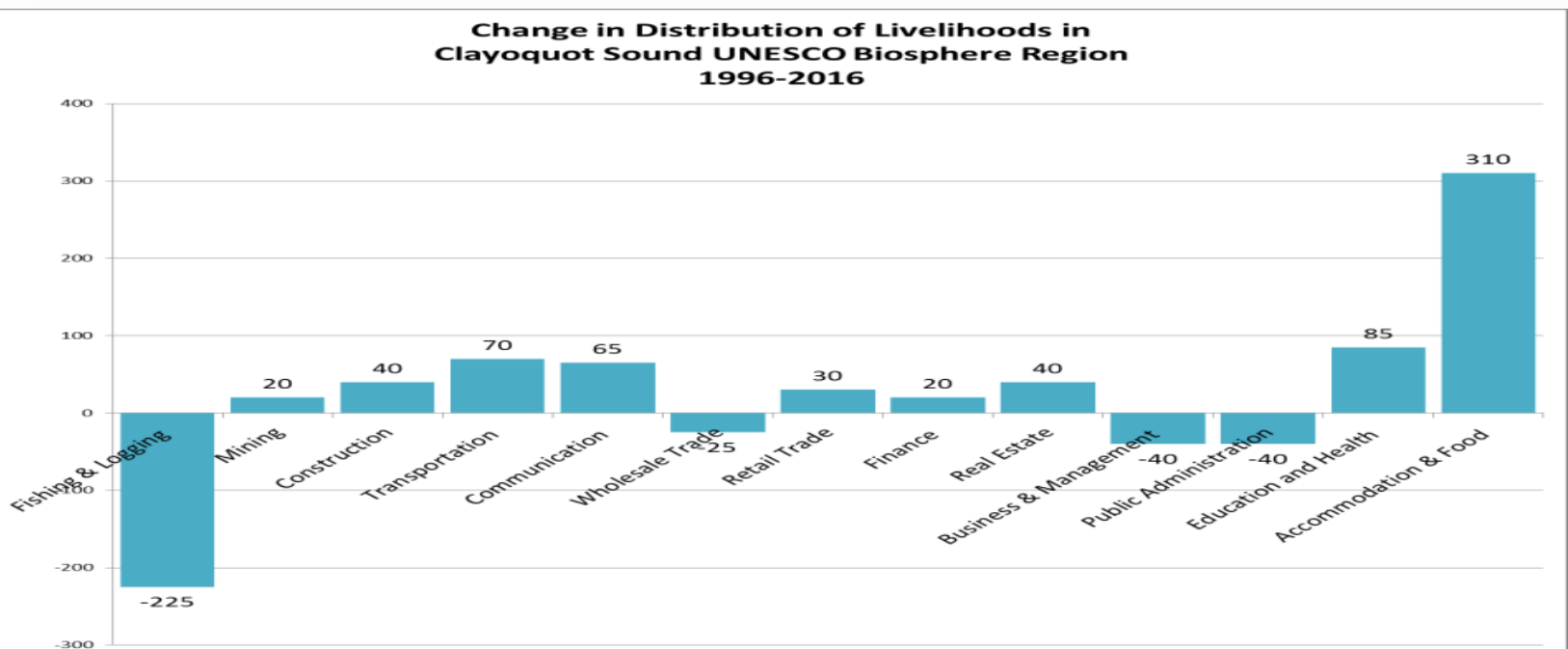
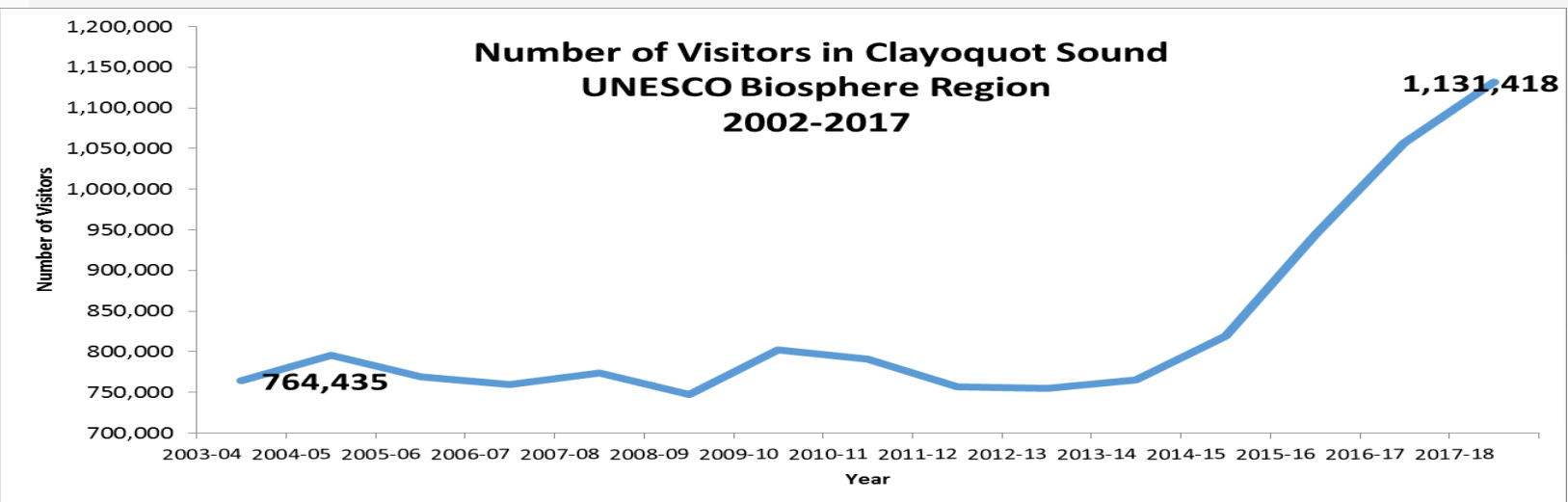
- Biosphere region designation does not provide legal protection for conservation areas, the purpose of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Man and Biosphere programme (MAB) is to unite communities and nations in peace and cooperation through education, science, culture and communication, and to safeguard the sustainability of natural and managed Ecosystems<sup>1</sup>.

### The Vision :

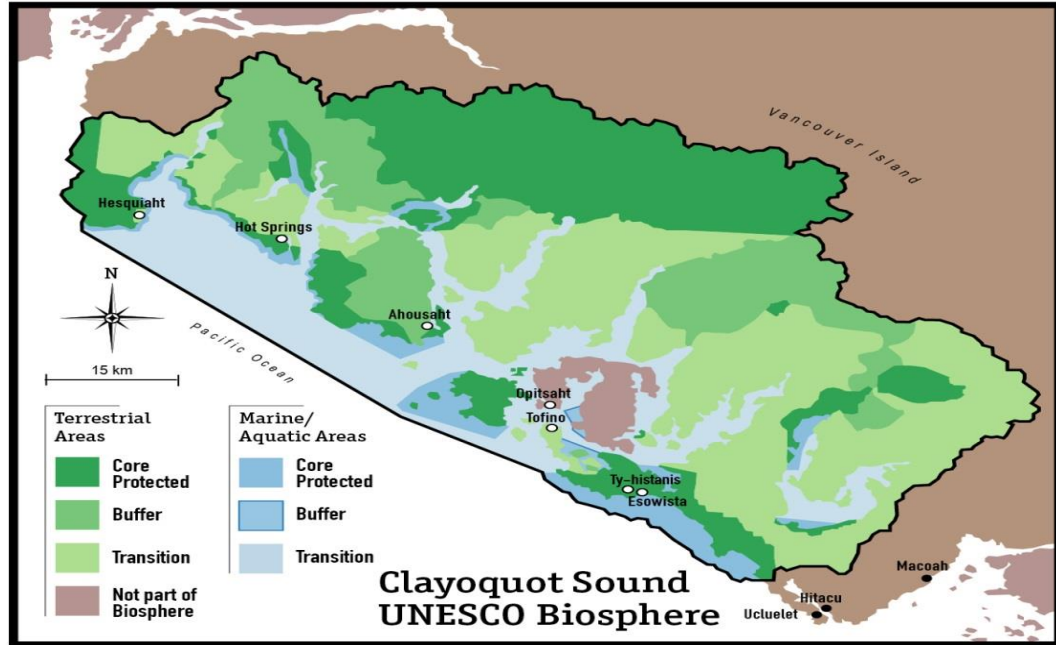
“...to live sustainably in a healthy ecosystem with a diversified economy and strong, vibrant and united cultures while embracing the Nuu-chah-nulth First Nations living philosophies of lisaak, (living respectfully), Qwa'aak qin techmis (life in balance) and Hishuk ish ts'awalk (all things are connected)”<sup>2</sup>

## The Conservation Challenge:

Shifting from Resource Extraction to Tourism Livelihoods	
Benefits	Costs
1. Protection of old growth forests and decline in annual allowable logging	Reduction in harvest rate leads to increasing debt for First Nation owned forestry company
2. First Nation territories and sacred lands remain in-tact	Increasing pressure within First Nation communities to log old growth forests
3. Opportunity to recover Salmon habitat destroyed from unsustainable logging practices	Salmon habitat destruction continues as a result of flash flooding and river bank erosion catalyzed by road building and exacerbated from climate change
4. Biodiversity conservation aligns with eco-tourism values	Exponential increase in number of visitors is exceeding carrying capacity of social-ecological system <sup>3</sup> (local population ~ 5000)
5. Local knowledge and skills can transition to sustainable livelihoods	Embedded social belief you don't need an education for a viable livelihood leading to low high school graduation rates and unequal distribution of economic benefits from Tourism

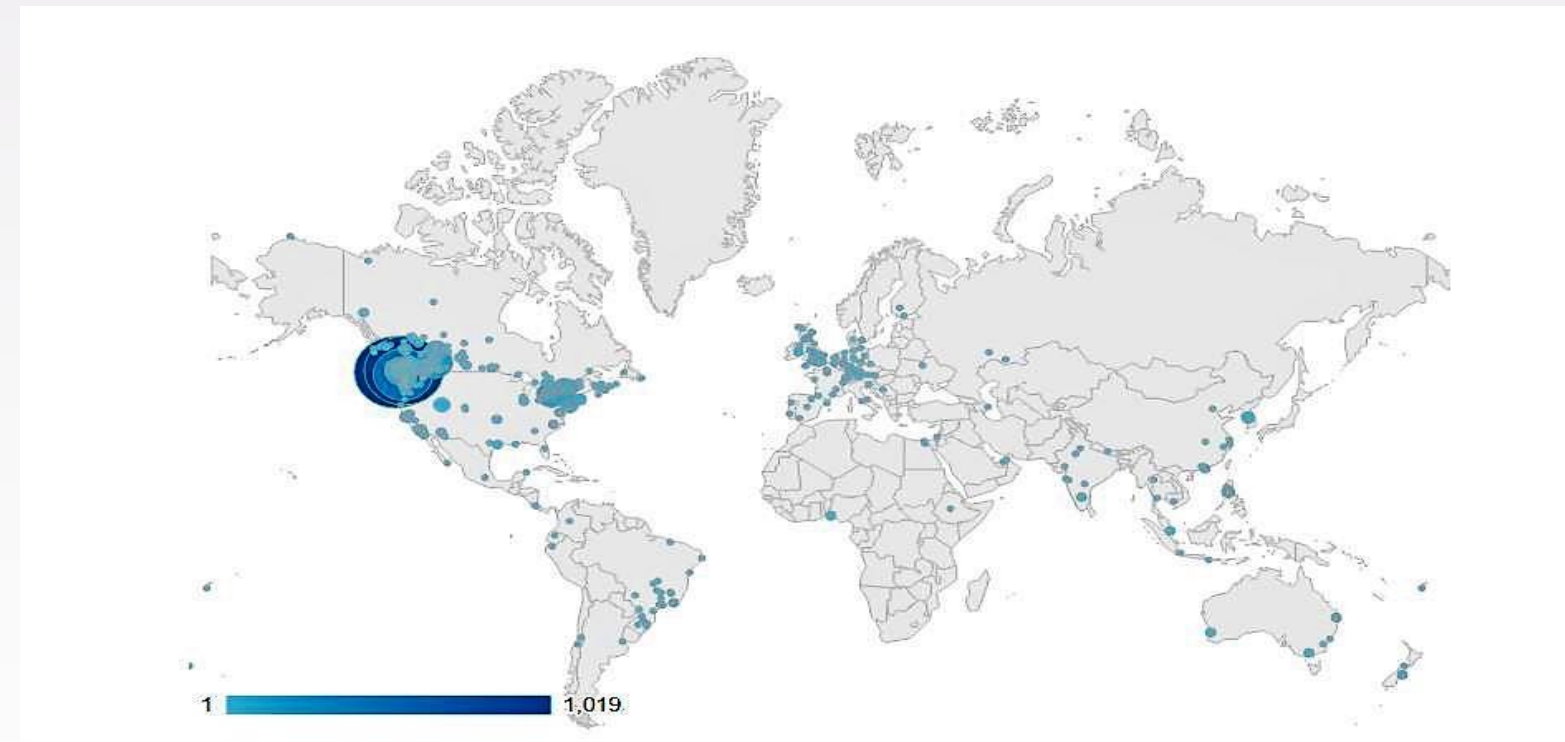


## Objectives of West Coast NEST: (Nature. Education. Sustainability. Transformation)



- West Coast N.E.S.T is an online education hub to showcase transformative learning experiences in one of the last great natural environments on the planet.

- Key objectives of the education tourism website are to:
  - Meet *Local Learning* needs;
  - Increase the *Visibility* of available skills training
  - Build the *Learning Economy* by meeting increasing demand for lifelong learning, the growing desire for experiential place-based learning, and the increasing need for cross-cultural exchange.
  - Transition to *Education Tourism* to attract the type of visitor who wants to stay longer, support local learning , practice stewardship in-place, and learn together in spectacular outdoor classrooms.
  - Use a *branded product* and *social media* to market experiential education locally, regionally and internationally.



**Results:**

[www.westcoastnest.org](http://www.westcoastnest.org)

**www.westcoastnest.org**

Nature. Education. Sustainability. Transformation.

Indigenous

From resurgent First Nations in the north to Metis and Maliseet in the south, our communities are rich in indigenous knowledge and culture. Respect for, and connection to, the natural world is part of who we are. Learn the teachings of the elders, and experience their unique combination of ancient wisdom for a modern world. If you are already visiting in the region, let us show you the world through their eyes. New courses and programs are being added weekly. Check back regularly for new info for community-based experiences for your group. Please contact our Education Coordinator.

Customized Group Programs: Pacific Canada - ongoing

Cedar Coast Youth Engagement Camp - August 2018

Cedar Coast Field Science Camp - August 2018

Cedar Weaving Workshop: Custom Programs - ongoing

Nature Kids Programs - ongoing

Customized Group Programs: Hoodlum Outdoor School - ongoing

Our Regional Partners

Our region is home to close to 100 community organizations with varied areas of focus. The mandates of the organizations featured here include education. They may have courses, programs or events that can be searched on this map. Contact or events. They may also be available to your group for custom educational activities or interpretation services. Just ask!

Clayoquot Biosphere Trust

Ucluelet Aquarium Society

Raincoast Education Society

Hoodlum Outdoor School Society

SKS

Central Westcoast Forest Society

Royal Roads University MA Program:  
Environmental Education & Communication-  
Biosphere & Sustainability - July 2018

This course draws heavily on the principles of resilience thinking as a key component of sustainability science. Resilience is the ability of a system to respond to shocks and stresses in a manner that protects and restores the main functions and components of the system (Walker et al. 2004). In recognition of our location of learning within the Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and our host communities of Ahousaht, Tla-o-qui-aht, and Tofino.

**Results**

Measures of Success in First Year	
<b>Rates of Website Visibility:</b>	<b>Rates of Course Participation:</b>
1139 instagram followers within 1 year	150 courses offered
1019 website site visits with user interactions	500 learning events listed
over 250 facebook followers	Over 50 learning organizations posting courses on west coast NEST Website



## Conclusions

### Seven Principles for Education Tourism In Clayoquot Sound<sup>4</sup>:

- Attract Co-learners:** we welcome others to learn with us.
- Community Reciprocity:** we share benefits within the region.
- Local Knowledge Holders are Experts:** we reimburse people for sharing their knowledge.
- Learning Networks of Practice:** together, we are creating a culture of learning and collaborative problem solving.
- Stewardship-in-place:** every community has an outdoor classroom and a place to learn from the land.
- Holistic Hands-On Learning:** we learn best by applied learning and practice.
- Cultural Safety and Sharing:** we create safe spaces for learning and healing across cultural boundaries.

## References

<sup>1</sup>International Co-ordinating Council (ICC) of the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme Twenty-ninth session UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, 12 – 15 June 2017, Final Report. Accessed Sept. 6, 2017.

<sup>2</sup>CBT (2014) Vision Statement. <http://clayoquotbiosphere.org/who-we-are/vision-mission/>

<sup>3</sup>Loucks, L. and E. Goldt (2016) “2016 Vital Signs Report”, Clayoquot Biosphere Trust, Tofino, British Columbia ,23p. <http://clayoquotbiosphere.org/vital-signs/>

<sup>4</sup>Loucks, L. C. Thicke, G. Bird, B. White and R.Harris (2015) “Education Tourism Market Development Strategy for the Pacific Rim Knowledge Initiative”, Royal Roads University, Sooke, BC.

## Acknowledgements

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