

Community Specific Guidelines

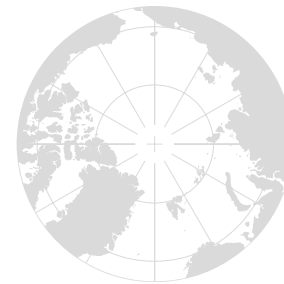


Photo: Mads Phil - Visit Greenland

Guidelines for the development of Community Specific Guidelines

Tourism is growing in the northern hemisphere. As numbers grows in both small and sometimes remote areas that are new to tourism, as well as in more urban communities, there may be a need to pay attention to cultural and social interactions between visitors and locals.

AECO – the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators – promotes best practices among most of the expedition cruise operators who provide tourism to the North Atlantic and High Arctic regions. AECO's objectives are designed to ensure environmentally friendly, safe and considerate tourism. The association and its members strive to set the highest possible operational standards. Included in these objectives are the pledge to ensure value and sustainability in the interaction between the operators and their guest, and with the communities visited.

One of several initiatives taken by AECO is the development of community guidelines for visitors to the North Atlantic and High Arctic regions. This work has been undertaken in cooperation with Visit Greenland, Visit Svalbard, Northern Norway Tourist Board and Cruise Iceland, with financial support from the Nordic Atlantic Cooperation. These guidelines

are general and apply in most North Atlantic and High Arctic communities, and will be implemented in the tourism work by all partners, as far as possible.

In addition to the general community guidelines for the vast North Atlantic and High Arctic regions, some communities may find the need to develop community specific guidelines. Community guidelines provide visitors with community-specific information, which can occasionally include special cautions and considerations that visitors should be aware of in that locale.

For operators and guests visiting, it may be beneficial if different community specific guidelines are developed from a common template, making the more easily recognizable from one place to another.

This guideline aims to provide such a template to those communities that wish to develop community specific guidelines. It should not be misunderstood as an unalterable way of developing community specific guidelines, but rather as helpful advice and an inspiration for those who would like to undertake such a project.

Working process – who to involve

When developing community specific guidelines, it is recommended to involve local stakeholders that are engaged in tourism and others that might have an interest or a say. In addition, it is recommended to consult stakeholders that represent and cater to visiting guests. e.g. tour operators or tourism associations. If there is a local tourist board or tourist office, this might be the right entity to take the lead in such a process. But it is also recommended to consider involving community councils.

Working hours and costs

It is up to each community to decide the level of work and resources to use in such a project, but developing community specific guidelines do not need to be very resource intensive. When the text is agreed and ready, one can employ professionals to design and layout the guidelines. But much can also be done without such involvement.

Content

Below is a list with what may be useful to include in community-specific guideline:

- Running head with “Community Specific Guidelines”
- Community name
- Where the community is located, e.g. using the latitude and longitude position
- A small map that shows where the community is located, within the larger region or world
- As introduction, a large representative picture of the community. Remember to include the name of the photographer, if possible.
- A heading to the introductory text, perhaps something that is descriptive for this community.
- Some introductory text presenting some general information about the area and the people living there. In addition to the number of inhabitants, traditions, ways of life and history, think about the questions visitors may have. What would you like visitors to know about your community?
- A map of the area visitors are likely to walk around in. On this map, indicate the places of significance and interest. This may be areas visitors should stay away from – e.g. because they are vulnerable, protected, or there are other reasons not to access – and areas that you think visitors would be interested in seeing – e.g. attractions, view-points, nature, and other phenomena, and installations of interest. This does not need to be a complete “tourist map,” but may also be an opportunity to point visitors in the direction of shops, markets, museums, etc., especially if the community does not have an additional tourist map for visitors.
- Guidelines – how you ask travelers to behave when visiting your community. Normal issues are covered by the general community guidelines, but if there are specific considerations or behavior you ask from your visitors, this is an opportunity to list these. Some communities might have limited supplies, e.g. fresh food. If you want the visitors to consider what they might buy in local shops, please include this information. Also, if the community has challenges in handling or disposing of garbage, the guidelines could include information encouraging visitors to bring back their own garbage whenever possible.
- Some more pictures as illustrations may be helpful. Descriptive text or captions are also helpful.
- A “helpful tips” section of the guidelines can be a way of directing guest’s attention to something that is not on the map or in the guidelines, such as events, ceremonies, special traditions and so forth.
- Include who created or is responsible for the guidelines along with a contact address for questions and inputs.

Example

On the next 2 pages is an example how Community Specific Guidelines could be set up



Example **Page 1**

COMMUNITY SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

NICE INLET

75°0.9'N 011°52.3'E

Nice Inlet

Nice Inlet has its name from the being a very beautiful location with rich nature resources and a safe-haven for sailors.

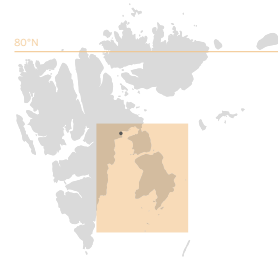


Photo: Christian Bothner

Breathtaking beauty and warm hospitality

We are very happy that you are visiting with us, and we will do our best to help you enjoy your stay. Let us start by giving you a short introduction to Nice Inlet.

Findings of cultural remains show that there were people living in this area more than 10.000 years ago. The place was coincidentally rediscovered by Captain Joe Kingly. In an attempt to circumnavigate the Arctic, his vessel *Aurora* was caught in a bad storm and forced to change course and find a safe haven. When the storm had subsided, he was stunned by the area and its rich natural beauty, writing in his diary, "Not only have I never seen such beautiful mountains and green woods, but this place has access to enough fish and wild game to feed a whole town."

Today we are a "whole town" with approximately 380 inhabitants. This includes almost 100 children, most of them in kindergarten and school. When our children have finished junior high school, they have to move to Big Inlet, where they stay during weekdays and commute home for weekends.

The main industry in our town is gold mining, but farming and fishing are also major ways of life. Hunting and fishing are also leisure activities and ways of adding to the household's pantry. The town receives most supplies from cargo vessels.

Our traditions include handicraft, and many locals make beautiful items of wood, bone and stone. These are available for sale at our main store. Bargaining for a lower price is not part of our tradition. We have an active cultural life and our local choir practices once a week in our beautiful 200-year-old church.

We wish you a warm welcome and hope you will enjoy your stay. The local tourist office offers more information.

Example Page 2



Guidelines

You are welcome to watch the activities around in the harbor. Just try not to get in the way of people working, and avoid situations that involve safety risks.

The Church is unlocked during the day and you are welcome to visit. Please take off your shoes before entering, keep conversations low, and be respectful.

Please do not walk around on the graveyard.

Due to limited fresh-food supplies, we kindly ask visitors to not buy fresh fruit and vegetables. You are welcome to buy other goods at the store.

Our children use the playground frequently. Please do not take pictures of the children here or other places without permission from an adult.

Ten-thousand-year-old cultural remains are being excavated. Please do not enter the area of excavation.

If you enjoy playing football, you are most often welcome to join anyone using the football field.

Tip

If you follow the road east of town for three miles, it will bring you to a 200-meter-high waterfall called Goldfall. If you are there at sunrise on a clear day, the water will be gold colored.



Photo: AECO

Be careful around the harbor.



Photo: AECO

The Joe Kingly Monument is worth a visit. From here you can enjoy a very nice view.



Photo: AECO

We appreciate if you buy our handicraft and locally made souvenirs.