



The International Indigenous Action Summit will focus on initiating sustainable social, cultural and economic development action, building business partnerships, indigenous-to-indigenous trade, cultural exchange, and investment and banking opportunities in the Caribbean.

A registration fee of C\$495.00 or US\$375.00 includes four luncheons and a gala cultural banquet. For more information, please contact: **Four Worlds International Institute for Human and Community Development/ Four Directions International**, 347 Fairmont Blvd S., Lethbridge, Alberta T1K 7J8

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CENTRE FOR INDIGENOUS ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

The Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources (CIER), a Winnipeg-based First Nations environmental training, research and consulting firm, was recently invited by the World Bank to attend the third Tripartite Meeting between the World Bank, Arpel (representing the oil and gas industry) and Coordinadora de las Organizaciones Indigenas de la Cuenca Amazonica (COICA), on behalf of the indigenous groups of the sub-Andean basin. The meeting was held in Columbia, a country with a history of clashes between indigenous communities, and the oil and gas industry. "We are very honoured to have been invited to such an important dialogue, and are impressed with the level of commitment of all participants to building meaningful partnerships," said CIER board member, Phil Fontaine.

He and Executive Director Merrell-Ann Phare had very successful meetings with over a dozen indigenous groups, including the leadership of COICA. COICA members expressed their urgent need for expertise and training related to the assessment of the environmental effects of oil and gas exploration and development in their countries, and their desire to work more closely with Canadian indigenous peoples and companies. CIER and COICA have continued to build this partnership, and CIER is readying itself to be able to provide indigenous-to-indigenous environmental training and technical services in the international market. CIER is also working with E2 Environmental, a company based in Calgary, Alberta, to provide training to indigenous people in Bolivia relating to the role of traditional knowledge in the assessment of the environmental, social and cultural impacts of oil and gas development. Visit CIER's Web site: <http://www.cier.com>

ABORIGINAL AGRI-FOOD SECTOR

SIAL: INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF FOOD, BEVERAGES, WINES AND SPIRITS

SIAL, a biennial international trade fair for the food and beverage sector, was held in Montreal on **March 5-6**, with 30 countries represented at the event. Nine aboriginal firms exhibited in the Aboriginal Pavilion. In addition to pursuing individual sales opportunities, the exhibitors gained experience in an international forum, established contacts with other producers and met with 52 Canadian trade commissioners who can help them with ongoing export opportunities.

Producers of specialty items such as dried meats and fish, blueberry and cranberry products, wild rice and herbal teas were on hand to promote their companies and to represent the diversity of Canada's aboriginal agri-food sector. Participating companies were required to be experienced exporters or export-ready, and had to submit to a jury process to be selected for SIAL. For more information on SIAL, visit: <http://www.sialmontreal.com>

Reflecting the objectives of the Aboriginal International Business Development Plan, Industry Canada, through Aboriginal Business Canada, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, and the Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food jointly sponsored this initiative. Aboriginal Business Canada and the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development provided financial support to the First People's Business Association for this initiative.

The Aboriginal Pavilion at SIAL contained the following exhibits:

- **Aliments TOKA Foods**, Wendake, Quebec. The Huron-Wendat company markets gourmet specialties produced from wild fruits and vegetables.
- **Les Tisanes du Nunavik**, Montreal, Quebec. Owned by the Avataq Cultural Institute, this company offers traditional Inuit herbs for therapeutic and culinary use.
- **Bleuets Mistassini Ltd.**, Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean, Quebec. This firm exports the region's famous wild blueberries.
- **Iroquois Cranberry Growers**, Bala, Ontario. Owned by the Wahta Mohawk community, Iroquois markets cranberry-based native health-food products.