



## **Ecotourism in New Zealand Conference 1-3 August 2007, Shantytown, Greymouth**

**Media Release – for immediate use.**

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More than 200 delegates from New Zealand and overseas are expected to attend this year's Ecotourism in New Zealand Conference on the South Island's West Coast.

The annual conference will be hosted by Tai Poutini Polytechnic from 1 to 3 August. It aims to enhance New Zealand's burgeoning ecotourism industry by highlighting success stories and debating key issues around the sector, including how best to promote and manage it.

Tai Poutini Polytechnic planning and development director Brian MacKenzie said the event was only in its second year but already it seems that there will be more people wanting to come than they can accommodate.

"The rapid growth of the Ecotourism NZ Conference highlights the level of interest in this exciting growth industry."

He said ecotourism was the fastest growing sector of the New Zealand tourism industry, with 2000 to 3000 new jobs expected to be created in the next five years.

"The challenge for the industry now is to prove it can keep up with and exceed that demand."

This year's conference will examine a range of issues including how the country can deliver its 100% pure promise while continuing to grow and develop, and the impact global tourism trends will have on ecotourism in New Zealand.

Discussion topics include how to manage the carbon emission debate and the potential for Maori ecotourism.

Speakers include Ecotourism Australia chairman Alastair McCracken, international adventurer Cam McLeay and Ron Mader, founder of the world's first website dedicated to ecotourism.

Uganda-based Mr McLeay led the first-ever rafting descent of the Victoria Nile in Uganda in 1996, and is one of the most experienced guides in the industry. He has spent more than 20-years rafting rivers around the globe, including Rio Bio Bio in Chile and the United State's Grand Canyon.

Representatives from Tourism New Zealand and the Department of Conservation, international environmental experts and leading tourism operators will also address the conference.

**For further information please contact:**

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**Conference Coordinator Sarah Caseley - 03 769 9652 or 027 252 4447.**

**Or check out [www.ecotourismnz.com](http://www.ecotourismnz.com)**