**Tourism industry worried cuts will hurt NZ long-term**

Tourism Industry Aotearoa is welcoming tourism policies by political parties to aid the industry.

However, it continues to have concerns about under-investment in the sector and tourism’s ability to be competitive on the world stage.

Its concerns include $60 million in proposed funding cuts over the next four years, affecting Tourism New Zealand, New Zealand Cycle Trails programme, and the Innovation Programme for Tourism Recovery, which will lose $30m.

TIA is particularly concerned about cuts to Tourism New Zealand, which stands to lose $15m, and which appears to be disproportionate to the baseline savings being made elsewhere.

“We’re very concerned for Tourism NZ, and that our tourism funding is falling behind other countries, especially Australia,” Ingram says. “TNZ ensures New Zealand remains competitive on the world stage.”

This year tourism has also seen the end of the Go With Tourism skills programme and the Tourism Infrastructure Fund, which has resulted in much-needed roads, toilets, carparks and other facilities.

Tourism remains one of New Zealand’s top three export industries. Ingram acknowledged that it could seem “counter intuitive” to suggest tourism needed funding or direction.

“Despite our size, tourism has a lack of industry good funding, research, or data for planning and for innovation,” she said.

Most tourism operators were small to medium businesses still recovering from the pandemic. And as tourism recovered, there was an opportunity to do it in a managed and more meaningful way.

Tourism’s economic benefits include substantial tax for central government through GST and the International Visitor Levy. As a result, TIA is calling for secure, sustainable funding for TNZ and important industry good activities and tourism infrastructure.

“We cannot let tourism develop by accident,” Ingram said.

“We have a plan, but it will need commitment and courage from all those involved, whether government, industry and range of other stakeholders, to make it happen.”

For more information, please contact:

Catherine Clouston

External Communications Specialist

Tourism Industry Aotearoa

0274 379 687

catherine.clouston@tia.org.nz

|  |
| --- |
| **Key Facts** |
| * Tourism Industry Aotearoa is New Zealand tourism’s peak industry body. We are the only independent association that represents all sectors of New Zealand’s large and diverse tourism industry.
* TIA has about 1300 member businesses from across the industry, ranging from small owner/operators to large publicly listed tourism corporates and international hotel chains.
* TIA is deeply involved in discussions on recovery and what the future of tourism in New Zealand will look like.
* TIA leads implementation of the industry's [Tourism Sustainability Commitment](https://sustainabletourism.nz/) which aims to see every New Zealand tourism business contributing positively to our people and cultures, our environment and our economy
* TIA delivers a comprehensive and diverse range of industry events including TRENZ, New Zealand Tourism Awards, Discussing Tourism regional events and the Tourism Summit Aotearoa.
 |
| Visit **www.tia.org.nz** for more information |