

Travel agencies must adapt to this evolution, if they want to hold on to their customers. In the name of ecotourism, many companies have already started to view their business from the environmental point of view. Hotels are granted trademarked credit labels judging by the level of their eco-friendliness. These days the consumers are more and more aware of these honorary titles.

The world is getting smaller rapidly and the steep rise of the tourism is unstoppable. The only option is to develop tourism to sustainable direction. There are plenty of ways to do so and ecotourism alone can't solve the future of travel trade. The most significant single power player towards more ecological traveling is the traveler himself – and his attitudes. Responsibility is something that we all must take. Our choices dictate the ethical justice and environmental friendliness of our travels.

AIR TRAVEL AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Air travel has grown even faster than travel in general.

It is believed to double or even triple from the existing situation in the next few decades. Air travel causes same environment-hurting emissions as other traffic, the worst being carbon dioxide. In the United States airlines are responsible for 10 percent of the whole country's greenhouse gas releases.

Two-way flight to Thailand causes 2,5 tons of carbon dioxide discharge per passenger, according to WWF. The same amount of energy would keep a light bulb on for 11 years in a row.

Even if the air travel isn't the biggest scapegoat of the climate change (Manufacturing and other forms of traffic are even worse), its share of the overall emissions grows all the time, especially when other polluters have been reined in. The global growth of the airline travel threatens to minimize the advances other fields have made in decreasing emissions.

Tourist can fight the climate change. No vacation is necessary from the point of view of the environmental conservation, but of course the matter is not this simple. Madventures believes that traveling is necessary, even vital in the world today, to battle and prevent cultural collisions and war. So air travel shouldn't be completely banned, but the disadvantages it causes should be minimized.

In general, try changing things politically (as much as any individual has the authority to do so). Airlines should be taxed and they should pay compensation for the pollution they cause. Many non-governmental organizations are working on this matter and anyone can support these groups.



Fair Trade Travel

Here are a couple of hints to lessen the travel-induced guilt, pain and destruction.

- **Travel off-season.** You balance the load on environment and the polarization of wealth in the destination.
- **Choose the most responsible operator** whenever searching an organization that plans hikes or sporting activities. Travel agency must be able to substantiate that their operation benefits the local community and minimizes the environmental harm.
- **Use trains and buses** instead of airplanes. From Europe, train can take you far into Asia. The old school backpackers knew this and it's still true.
- **Use the bus** instead of a taxi. A bus uses less fuel, saves your money and gives you an opportunity for the human contact.
- **Use the train** instead of a bus whenever possible.
- **Walk and bicycle** as much as possible.
- **Avoid bottled water** and plastic containers in general. You can purify drinking water with iodine or by boiling and filtering. Read more in the chapter **Health**.
- **Conserve water.** Do not spend more time in the shower than is necessary. Use local services to do laundry.
- **Conserve electricity.** You don't really need air conditioning, or in most cases, electricity at all.
- **Spend as little as possible.** You don't need what you can't carry on you.
- **Minimize the litter.** Pack reasonably, recycle when possible, bring hazardous waste back home if there isn't a designated place for it in your destination.
- Leave the nature as it was. From the hikes, **take the garbage you generate with you.**
- **Avoid driving.** Choose safari by foot.
- **Buy local produce** instead of imported goods and **favor small family guesthouses and other family businesses.** Aim to leave the largest possible portion of your budget into the destination country.
- **Favor local food.** Eat at the local restaurants: their crops and vegetables are from the local fields, fish from the local fishermen and meat is more often than not organic.
- **Protect humans, animals and plants.** Do not take part in unethical events or buy products or services that cause subjugation, damage or prejudice. Don't buy products made of endangered species.
- **Share your experiences.** This will inspire others to fair travel. Give feedback to the organizers of your trip.

(Source: The organization for fair travel, www.reilumatkailu.fi)

Voluntary Greenhouse Fee

Voluntary fee can make up for the carbon dioxide emissions caused by your air travel. These carbon offsetting schemes are often driven by non-profit organizations. The idea is to use the money from the fee for environmental conservation projects, usually energy saving projects or tree plantings. These projects aim to decrease the air travel-induced carbon dioxide that increases temperature of the earth.