

TRAVEL INSIGHTS



FEBRUARY 2022

SUSTAIN- ABLE TRAVEL

As tourism continues to rebound, intention to do so sustainably should be top of mind for destinations, as it is for travelers – many of whom are implementing this value through various aspects of their lifestyles. This imperative can be seen across the world with lessons to learn from both destinations who have been suffering from over tourism for years, and from locations who have implemented positive destination development practices. Sustainability includes all stakeholders and will require a combined effort from residents as well as the right quality of travelers.

In this document, we explored and report on 5 thematic areas of impact that sustainability is having on travel – and travelers – as follows:

1. Sustainability as an industry imperative
2. Sustainability as a lifestyle
3. Sustainable destinations as a goal for development
4. Sustainability as a value of residents
5. Sustainability as a measure for quality travelers

SUSTAINABILITY AS AN INDUSTRY IMPERATIVE

People around the world are acknowledging the importance of sustainable tourism, and global destinations are taking action. Beyond destinations, other organizations within the travel industry are making shifts and statements, further punctuating the imperative for travel to become more sustainable.

72%

72% of global respondents agree that if ordinary people do not act now to combat climate change, they will be failing future generations.

- IPSOS

The New York Times' 52 Places to Travel list has evolved to highlight places where positive change is happening, and travelers can contribute.

- THE NEW YORK TIMES

"FLIGHT CENTRE
NAMES FIRST GLOBAL
SUSTAINABILITY
OFFICER."

- BUSINESS TRAVEL NEWS



Some countries are implementing an upcoming "tourist tax" in 2022, with many others having a tourist fee in place. The goals are to curb the number of tourists to prevent over tourism, or act as a sustainability tax on each visitor, with the money from these taxes going towards maintaining tourism facilities and protecting natural resources.

- EURONEWS

Venice is so worried about being overwhelmed once again after the pandemic that it is planning to resort to surveillance cameras and cellphone data to control the crowds.

- THE NEW YORK TIMES

SUSTAINABILITY AS A LIFESTYLE

The value of sustainable living permeates into all forms of lifestyle preferences including the various facets of travel. Food consumed on trips, regulations in place at attractions, and means of transportation are diverse touch points within the travel industry that can create a holistically sustainable travel experience – aligning with travelers' values.

83%

83% of global travelers believe that sustainable travel is important.

– THE UN INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE (IPCC) VIA STATISTA

“Vegan Travel: It's Not Fringe Anymore. From Mexico to Greece, plant-centric hotels, restaurants and tours are proliferating.”

– THE NEW YORK TIMES

62%

62% of Americans said they were willing to reduce meat consumption based on environmental concerns.

– 2019 NIELSEN SURVEY

4/5

Four in five people would support a decision by the National Park Service to stop the sale and distribution of single-use plastics in national parks.

– IPSOS

50% 71%

Road trips may become greener. According to a survey by KPMG, **50%** of new car sales by 2030 are expected to be electric vehicles, with **71%** of Americans admitting they would like to own an EV.

– FAST COMPANY



SUSTAINABLE DESTINATIONS AS A GOAL FOR DEVELOPMENT

Sustainability is more than a short-term play or an act of greenwashing. Destinations are investing in ways their tourism offerings and community can improve in the long run, for a truly sustainable future. To better balance the dispersion of tourists and to increase the economic impact on local communities, destinations are actively promoting alternative destinations and creating tours that feature lesser-known places. Tourists can be a part of the solution through environmental volunteer opportunities, that may even encourage repeat visitation.

The Rewilding Argentina foundation and Tompkins Conservation bought land and elevated Iberá Park, which was once only tiny parcels of wilderness, to one of the largest parks in Argentina, with close to 2 million acres of protected lands — and a sanctuary for huge populations of animals.

- THE NEW YORK TIMES

Global online platform ToursByLocals encourages travelers to favor alternative locations in 2022 by offering authentic experiences in lesser-known destinations all through the eyes of a local.

- FORBES

In Humbolt, Kansas, an organization, A Bolder Humbolt, revitalized rural living and transformed their hometown into an unexpected and affordable oasis of cool surrounded by fields. The organization opened shops, community gardens and co-working spaces, with a boutique hotel, a honky-tonk bar and a bookstore all in the works.

- THE NEW YORK TIMES

Gouda, a small historic city in the southern Netherlands, has been developed with an extensive system of well-marked bicycle routes perfect for exploring this charming city as a sustainable alternative to the over-visited Amsterdam.

- THE NEW YORK TIMES

Resorts such as the Four Seasons Resort Bora Bora offer coral grafting and restoration activities at the property to support environmental protection.

90%

Coral planted by volunteers has a success rate often over **90%** — almost the same success rate as coral gardened by experts. If guests return a year later, they could see their impact, as coral can grow to maturity as quickly as six to twelve months.

- TRAVEL AGE WEST

SUSTAINABILITY AS A VALUE OF RESIDENTS

Becoming a sustainable tourism destination starts with those closest to home – the residents themselves. In order to create a place that travelers want to visit, destinations should first consider what factors create a place where people want to live. Many locals have a valuable perspective on how they can work alongside tourism departments and visitors to keep their home a sustainable and pleasant place to live and visit. The expenditures gained through the tourism industry can be used as a means to loop back support for the local community.

Estes Park, Colorado helps the environment and their community through unmechanized recreational offerings, ski-lift free ski areas, and a local brewery perfect for après-ski which donates \$1 of every Altruism beer sold to local organizations and nonprofits.

- THE NEW YORK TIMES

In Evia, Greece, the Other Human food pantry was established to serve locals who lost livelihoods in the wake of Greece's financial crisis and welcomes travelers to get involved.

- THE NEW YORK TIMES

Three main strategies from residents on how to better manage tourism:

- 1 Regenerative tourism, or teaching visitors to care for the lands and communities
- 2 Accommodations – particularly the elimination of illegal vacation rentals
- 3 Charging visitor access fees for natural attractions.

- SKIFT

Palau created a unique tourism campaign, The Palau Pledge, presented as a request from the local children for every visitor to commit to treating their country – along with its people, animals and natural resources – respectfully.

- PALAU PLEDGE

70%

More than **70%** of respondents across Hawaii's popular island destinations said tourism is worth the issues associated with the industry.

“This is the overarching goal of every destination with a living community, as the essential belief of Hawaiian hospitality is: a happy place to live is a happy place to visit.”

- SKIFT

SUSTAINABILITY AS A MEASURE FOR QUALITY TRAVELERS

While targeting visitors, destinations benefit from prioritizing higher quality travelers. These types of travelers could be defined as those who stay longer and spend more, however the indicators of 'quality' should be broadened for dual goals of sustainability and accessibility. A growing number of travelers prioritize sustainable travel behaviors, making environmental consciousness an indicator of what defines the type of travelers that are most beneficial for destinations to attract. Accessibility must be kept in mind as well, as travel brands have a growing responsibility to reach diverse audiences.

Green Book Global is an online booking platform with reviews of more than 400 destinations by Black travelers. In addition to things to do, the site offers personal experiences and recommendations for Black-friendly places.

- FORBES

80%

80% of luxury travelers are willing to travel to destinations during the offseason so that it is less crowded.

- AMERICAN EXPRESS GLOBAL TRAVEL TRENDS REPORT

'Disabled Hikers' is a project founded to empower others and share detailed trail guides for outdoor enthusiasts with disabilities.

- THE NEW YORK TIMES

Digital nomads or workationers could be seen as higher value travelers due to their extended stay and contribution to the community.



Since teen climate activist Greta Thunberg sailed across the Atlantic in 2019 to avoid flying on a greenhouse-gas emitting airplane, a growing cohort of individuals and organizations have likewise turned to wind for a more climate friendly mode of transportation.

- WUNDERMAN THOMPSON FUTURE 100 2022

The European Union is working on evaluating its "ghost flights," where minimal to no travelers are present, to reduce these inefficient trips and the associated carbon emissions.

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If you found these insights valuable, or would like to discuss them further, we'd welcome the opportunity to speak with you. Feel free to reach out to matt.stiker@bvk.com or victoria.simmons@bvk.com

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