

South Pacific Action Strategy for Green Tourism

DRAFT REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Green Tourism is defined as *‘Environmentally sustainable travel to destinations where the flora, fauna, and cultural heritage are the primary attractions and where climate impacts are minimised.’* This Strategic Action Plan (SAP) for Green Tourism has been developed by south-pacific.travel to assist the region’s tourism sector to understand and respond to the impacts of climate change.

A two way relationship exists between the tourism industry and climate change. Green Tourism development minimises the impact of tourism on the environment. At the same time changes to the world’s climate will have a major impact on the South Pacific region, which are highly vulnerable to impacts such as rising sea levels and impacts on reef and natural habitat biodiversity.

In addition, the climate change issue is increasingly impacting upon consumers, whose travel patterns and preferences are reflecting growing concerns about greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. This has a number of implications for the region, including potential loss of competitive position, particularly in long haul markets.

On a global basis, the South Pacific Islands consume very small amounts of energy and produce few GHG emissions as a result. It has been estimated that the South Pacific contributes only about 0.03 percent to global emissions.

It has been estimated by UNWTO that the tourism sector contributes approximately 5 percent to GHG emissions. At the same time tourism arrivals in the South Pacific region are less than 0.01 percent of global arrivals¹. Overall the emissions associated with tourism in the South Pacific are very small on a global scale and it can be argued that they are outweighed by the economic development benefit that tourism brings to these destinations.

¹ Regional Tourism Strategy for the Central and South Pacific – SPTO October 2003

Research conducted as part of this study indicates that the overseas travel industry have a high level of awareness of the issues developing in relation to tourism and climate change; the indications from the travel trade are that consumers patterns will change to some extent as a result of climate change, but that people will still continue to travel. Carbon offsetting is likely to become more popular, additional information on environmental initiatives in the region is required and individual countries should take steps to improve their environmental practices.

Although a number of international organisations are now undertaking initiatives supporting a Green Tourism and climate change (in particular UNWTO and PATA), most initiatives being undertaken in the region (mainly by other CROP agencies), have not being targeted specifically at the tourism sector and the level of engagement with the sector has been low. As a result, the general awareness of climate change issues among tourism stakeholders in the region is low.

There are some country level systems of tourism standards, but these only address the climate change issue on a very limited basis. The Green Globe 21 program specifically addresses operational issues relating to climate change, but take up in the region has been low.

The major risks for the South Pacific associated with the growing focus on tourism impacts due to global warming are:

- A reluctance by a growing proportion of consumers to undertake medium and long haul air travel;
- Reduced demand due to cost increases imposed by governments as levies or taxes on the sector;
- A lack of certified Green Tourism products in the region to respond to the growing demand from consumers in environmental and Green tourism products;

- A lack of information to allow the South Pacific to meaningfully contribute to the balanced debate on climate change, which considers the three sustainable pillars of development; environmental social and economic;
- Loss of attractions including reef attractions and biodiversity due to climate change (such as coral bleaching and beach erosion);
- An increased risk of contracting serious insect borne diseases;
- The limited country awareness or knowledge of the challenges facing the tourism sector.

In developing the regional response, three key strategies have been developed relating to **Communications and Engagement, Mitigation and Adaptation**; these are outlined below, together with specific action points for implementation:

Strategy One - Communications and Engagement

Develop a regional position on tourism and climate change and implement a coordinated communications plan to inform, educate and engage stakeholders.

- a. Develop and Implement a Communications Plan on ‘Climate Change and the South Pacific Tourism Industry’
- b. Develop regional and country web portals to support information dissemination on Green Tourism Development and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation
- c. Undertake country level dissemination on Green Tourism results of this study through stakeholder workshops including other regional agencies and Green Globe
- d. Continue to monitor developments in relation to climate change and tourism policy and update regional tourism stakeholders.
- e. Promote internationally accredited Green Tourism operators (such as Green Globe 21) through the South-pacific.travel website and industry communications

- f. Further engage with regional and international agencies and donors to design and implement the Green Tourism SAP
- g. Incorporate the outcomes from the regional GTS into country and provincial level tourism plans and policies.

Strategy Two - Mitigation

Coordinate and promote initiatives across the four areas of energy conservation, energy efficiency, renewable energy and carbon offsetting

- a. Increase awareness about greenhouse gas emissions and provide user-friendly information to tourism businesses
- b. Further enhance country level tourism accreditation and standards programs through incorporation of climate change mitigation measures and benchmarking
- c. Support the further development of Green Tourism by promoting international standards which support environmental sustainability
- d. Encourage investment in renewable and alternative energy and environmentally friendly equipment through the reduction of import duty and the introduction of tax concessions
- e. Assess options and provide voluntary mechanism for carbon offsetting through link to accredited offsetting portal from south-pacific.travel and individual country NTO websites and encourage industry to do the same.
- f. Enforce environmental legislation in relation to new developments and existing investments and in particular regulations in relation to pollution, waste management and other environmental impacts.
- g. Encourage that climate change and sustainable tourism are included in educational curricula and business training schemes

Strategy Three - Adaptation

Communicate the risks that tourism faces as a result of climate change and support sustainable adaptation measures

- a. Encourage the ‘mainstreaming’ of adaptation measures into policies and planning
- b. Encourage tourism businesses to take a long-term risk management approach to climate change
- c. Gather concrete information on the costs and benefits of different adaptation options
- d. Ensure that tourism is adequately included in national and local disaster management plans
- e. Promote good environmental practice amongst tourism businesses to take pressure off sensitive ecosystems

The immediate priority is to implement Strategy One on Communications and Engagement; this will also provide a firm base for the implementation of Strategies Two and Three.

It is recommended that the following five key messages should form the basis of the regional position which is communicated to all stakeholders:

- *Tourism is the major export of the South Pacific and a major source of income generation and environmental protection in the region;*
- *The South Pacific is a low generator of carbon emissions but potentially the impacts of climate change are significant;*
- *Any measures taken to reduce carbon emissions should be proportionate to industries and countries contribution to climate change a holistic approach*

needs to be taken, which gives due consideration to the economic and environmental benefits which tourism brings to the South Pacific region;

- *The region's tourism sector is adopting a partnership approach to the issue of climate change and tourism by working internationally with UNWTO, PATA and the Pacific regional partners such as Australia and New Zealand and regionally with organisations such as SOPAC, SPC and SPREP;*
- *south-pacific.travel is taking a proactive approach to the issue of tourism and climate change; a Green Tourism Strategic Action Plan has been developed to facilitate mitigation, adaptation and communication on the issue of climate change and to support the sustainable development of tourism in the region.*

In order for this regional Action Plan to be undertaken a wide range of stakeholders will need to be engaged and committed to the implementation process. This will require commitment in terms of manpower and resources from south-pacific.travel, other regional agencies such as SPREP and SOPAC, country level agencies such as the Ministries of Tourism and Environment, donors and not least the tourism operators themselves.

1. BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

Tourism underpins the economy of the South Pacific region and was estimated to be worth US\$ 1.52 bn in 2004². Tourism has become a major global economic force and contributes now about 7 percent of the worldwide export of goods and service. This contribution is much higher in many destinations in the South Pacific where tourism is often the major driver of the national economy contributing up to 50 percent of GDP (ie the Cook Islands), the largest single source of formal employment and source of foreign exchange (ie Vanuatu). In most South Pacific countries tourism has substantial potential to alleviate poverty and enhance the economic value and conservation of scarce and fragile natural resources.

Tourism in the South Pacific is dependent to large extent on the region's natural resources which provide the basis for many of the sectors tourism products. A two way relationship exists between the tourism industry and climate change. Sustainable tourism development minimises the impact of tourism on the environment. At the same time changes to the world's climate will have a major impact on the South Pacific region, particularly the small island states which are highly vulnerable to impacts such as rising sea levels and impacts on reef and natural habitat biodiversity. The tourism sector in the region therefore needs to plan for the potential impacts of climate change and to adjust and adapt to the potential impacts. This Green Tourism Action Plan is being developed by south-pacific.travel to support the efforts of its members and the region's tourism sector in this regard.

The countries of the South Pacific are committed to the further development of sustainable tourism through individual country policies, the Regional Tourism

² The Economic Impact of Tourism in SPTO Member Nations – Professor Simon Milne and Tourism Worx July 2005

Strategy³ and the Pacific Plan. A key component of the Region's vision for the tourism sector is where sustainable tourism is encouraged so that *'the region's highly distinctive environment and culture are conserved and tourism is embraced as a means of achieving this.'*

The UNWTO (2004) defines that sustainable tourism should:

- *Make optimal use of environmental resources that constitute a key element in tourism development, maintaining essential ecological processes and helping to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity.*
- *Respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserve their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values, and contribute to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance.*
- *Ensure viable, long-term economic operations, providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are fairly distributed, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities, and contributing to poverty alleviation.*

Sustainable tourism has been identified as being an effective tool in the reduction of poverty and a driver for socio-economic development, at a Regional level, through the Pacific Plan and in a broader context through the Action Plan adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the Barbados Programme of Action +10.

Green Tourism is an important component of sustainable tourism that *'is typically defined as travel to destinations where the flora, fauna, and cultural heritage are the*

³ Regional Tourism Strategy for the Central and South Pacific – SPTO – October 2003

*primary attractions*⁴. For the purposes of this Strategic Action Plan, this definition is further expanded to be:

‘Environmentally sustainable travel to destinations where the flora, fauna, and cultural heritage are the primary attractions and where climate impacts are minimised.’

PURPOSE

This Strategic Action Plan (SAP) for Green Tourism is focused on assisting the tourism sector to understand and respond to the impacts of climate change. The SAP for Green Tourism will help define the agenda and provide a framework for collaboration between South Pacific Governments and the tourism industry for targeted action on climate change and will provide essential information to allow the South Pacific tourism sector to meaningfully contribute to the debate and to develop practical initiatives on climate change, which support the development of a viable sustainable tourism industry. In line with the Terms of Reference for the Study, this SAP will ‘support decision makers to better understand climate change issues and considers ways in which the South Pacific may preserve its reputation as a “green tourism destination”’.

WORK UNDERTAKEN

This study has been undertaken by Ross Hopkins and Dr Susanne Becken of TRIP Consultants, during the period July to October 2007. Sai Too Go and Fakasoa Tealei of south-pacific.travel have assisted the consultants, specifically through the country consultation process and the Green Tourism Survey of the international travel trade.

In preparing this Strategic Action Plan the consultants have sought to consult as widely as possible within the limits imposed by the budget and time available. In preparing the Action Plan the following activities have been undertaken:

⁴ South Pacific Action Strategy for Green Tourism Terms of Reference – South-pacific.travel – July 2007

- Initial discussions held with the management of south-pacific.travel to clearly define the scope of the project, the approach to be taken and anticipated outcomes;
- A literature review has been undertaken on published information and data relating to Green Tourism and climate change and specifically on issues relating to the tourism sector in the South Pacific;
- Country consultations have been undertaken with key stakeholders in a selection on south-pacific.travel member countries including Fiji, Samoa, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea and Tonga;
- Consultations have been undertaken with relevant regional and international organisations including UNWTO, PATA, SPREP and SOPAC;
- A survey of international travel wholesalers who distribute South Pacific travel products in key source markets has been undertaken on Green Tourism related issues including consumer awareness, anticipated impacts on travel patterns and potential communication and mitigation strategies;
- Consultation has been undertaken with all south-pacific.travel country members to identify regional Green Tourism products; and
- Facilitation of a regional workshop on Green Tourism in Tonga on 26th October 2007, when key issues and emerging strategies and actions were discussed by a range of stakeholders, including delegates from each member country.

In addition Dr Susanne Becken has (independently) participated as a resource person in the UNWTO Second International Conference on Tourism and Climate Change in Davos and the key outcomes from this Conference will be incorporated into the Draft Strategic Action Plan.

2. TOURISM AND CLIMATE CHANGE

This section provides a framework for analysing the potential response of the region's tourism industry to the issues and challenges presented by climate change, either through mitigation or adaptation. The key climate change impacts in the South Pacific will also be discussed to provide some background on the risks associated with climate change as well as to provide a suitable context for further debate and informed decision making by the region's industry.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC

The scientific understanding of climate change has increased substantially over the last decade. Most recent knowledge is compiled by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in their Fourth Assessment Report (FAR) released in 2007. The IPCC⁵ draws on knowledge of the international expert communities (about 3000 scientists world wide) and makes it available to decision makers.

Most Pacific Islands have now completed their 'First National Assessments of Vulnerability and Adaptation to Climate Change' (Hay and Sem, 2000a). Clearly, the Pacific Island Countries rank amongst the most vulnerable to natural disasters, particularly since cyclones, floods, and droughts are already regular occurrences in those countries. These hazards are increasing due to global warming.

Several studies on climate change, climate variability and vulnerability, and impact assessments have been undertaken in the South Pacific (Hay *et al.*, 2003; Feresi *et al.*, 2000; The World Bank, 2000). These show that the Pacific islands are likely to experience increases in the frequency and height of storm surges (leading to beach erosion) and in the frequency of extreme rainfall events. Cyclones in particular can have a major impact on economic and public safety, for example causing up to 25 deaths and US \$85 million in costs in a single event (Feresi *et al.*, 2000). Some islands (e.g. Fiji) also suffer from recurring droughts; the most severe drought on

⁵ The IPCC in conjunction with Al Gore have most recently been awarded the Nobel Peace prize for their work on climate change.

record was in 1997–1998, an El Niño period. The occurrence of drought inevitably results in resource use conflicts between the tourism industry and the local population, as well as other industries, mainly agriculture.



Photo 1 Beach erosion in Samoa

Health issues are also associated with climatic conditions, including dengue fever outbreaks with increased rainfall and temperatures. In addition to extreme events, there are long-term impacts predicted from global warming, such as sea level rise (in the order of 23–43 cm by 2050, and up to 1 m by 2100) and coral bleaching (Hay et al., 2003). Warmer temperatures increase the risk of coral bleaching and the associated widespread loss and degradation of coral reef systems. These can have a high impact on local economies dependent on tourism.

A 2004 tourist survey (Becken, 2004) revealed that visitors to Fiji are well aware of the potential impacts that climate change will have on this destination. Tourists were generally concerned and were able to identify a number of impacts, most prominently the impact on coral reefs and marine life, and sea level rise (Table 1).

Table 1 Impacts of climate change on Fiji (Source: Becken, 2004)

Impact	Frequency	Proportion* (%)
Impact on coral reef / marine life	93	25.0
Sea level rise	92	24.7
Changing weather patterns	49	13.2
Impacts on plants/ vegetation/ crops/ ecosystems	38	10.2
Ozone hole/ skin cancer/ UV radiation	33	8.9
Hotter temperatures	22	5.9
Impact of way of life / livelihoods	12	3.2
Erosion / impact on beaches	8	2.2
Cyclones / extreme events	6	1.6
Water shortage	3	0.8
Not sure	2	0.5

* Measured as a proportion of all 372 tourists.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC

On a global basis, the South Pacific Islands consume very small amounts of energy and produce few GHG emissions as a result. It has been estimated that the South Pacific contributes only about 0.03 percent to global emissions. The average Pacific Islander emits 0.96 tonnes of carbon dioxide per year (Hay and Sem, 2000b). This compares with 4.02 tonnes for the average world citizen. It has to be noted though, that while the average per capita emissions in the South Pacific countries are small, the ‘per tourist’ emissions are likely to be higher compared with those of the general population. The graphs below indicate the level of emissions for selected countries in the region.

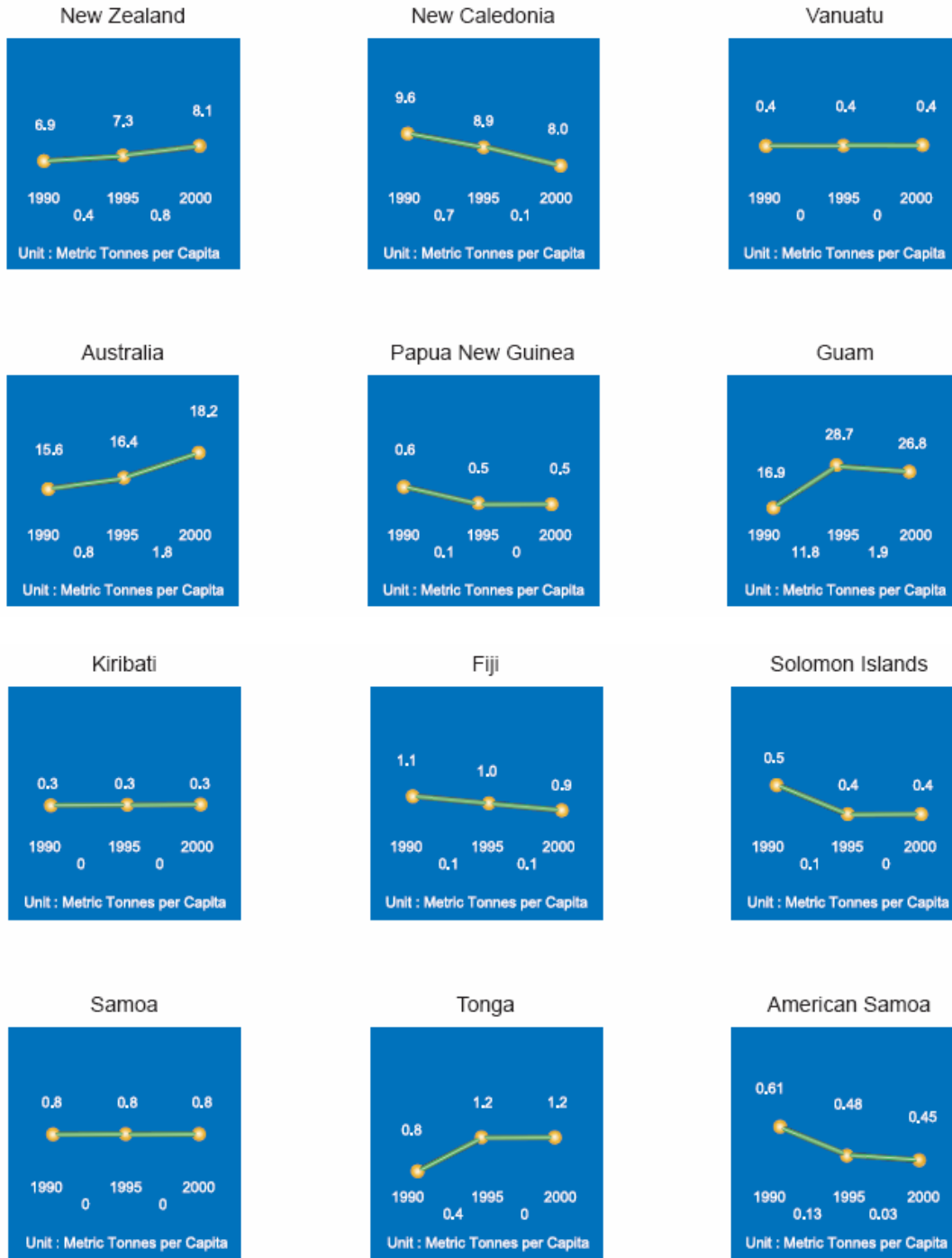


Figure 1 Per capita CO₂ emissions in various South Pacific countries (UNEP, 2004).

It has been estimated by the Stern Report that the airline sector contributes between 2 and 4 percent to global green house gas emissions, although some sources indicate that the level of impact could be much higher due to the high level altitude release in

the atmosphere. It is interesting to note that tourism arrivals in the South Pacific region are less than 0.01 percent of global arrivals⁶.

The "carbon footprint" of each island destination in the South Pacific will vary depending on the mix of source markets and distances people travel to reach their destination. The closer the source markets to the destination the smaller the carbon emissions. All together, the emissions associated with tourism in the South Pacific are very small on a global scale and it can be argued that they are outweighed by the economic development benefit that tourism brings to these destinations. The tourism sector provides an average of 17 percent of GDP for the South Pacific countries (based on unweighted data)

A FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

Whilst there is debate about the rate and extent to which climate change is taking place, it is now widely acknowledged that average surface temperatures on the earth have risen since the end of the last century and that human activity is a major contributing factor. For the tourism sector, scientific debate about the rate and level of climate change may seem academic; but the reality is that research indicates that consumer preferences are changing and that the dynamics of the travel market are increasingly being (and will in the future be) influenced by consumer perceptions that air travel is environmentally harmful. The increased public awareness of climate change risks is placing increasing pressure on governments to introduce measures to restrict carbon emissions, as well as influencing consumer purchasing decisions towards travel products which have a lower impact on the environment. In addition, there are likely direct impacts on tourism destinations in the Pacific resulting from climate change.

There are multiple interactions between tourism and the climate. In the first instance climate is a resource for tourism and it is an essential ingredient in the tourism product and experience. At the same time, climate poses a risk to tourism. For

⁶ Regional Tourism Strategy for the Central and South Pacific – SPTO October 2003

example, as a result of climate variability, weather conditions at a given location and time may prevent tourists from engaging in their planned activities. Climate can also pose a severe risk in relation to extreme events such as hurricanes and floods. These put both tourists and tourism-oriented businesses at risk, including damage to tourism infrastructure and increased financial costs combined with lower incomes.

There is another important link between climate and tourism that is attracting increasing attention. Tourism is a relatively energy-intensive activity that contributes to GHG emissions and the build up of these gases in the atmosphere⁷. One result is an exacerbation of risks due to a changing climate, with detrimental impacts on tourism. With the increasing recognition of climate change as a major environmental issue that must be addressed in a concerted manner there is increasing discussion on policies such as taxing airlines for their GHG emissions.

These diverse relationships between tourism and climate are visualised in a simplified manner in Figure 2. The consequences of climate change for tourism manifest as risks. The decision maker and planner will find it useful to differentiate between acceptable and unacceptable risks. For example a certain level of variability in precipitation will be acceptable to resort operators, but the risk of a permanent water scarcity will not be. Such considerations facilitate the prioritisation of the risks as well as of the interventions, which will reduce them to acceptable levels.

⁷ A latest report by UNWTO (2007) provides an estimate of tourism's contribution to global carbon emissions of 5 percent.

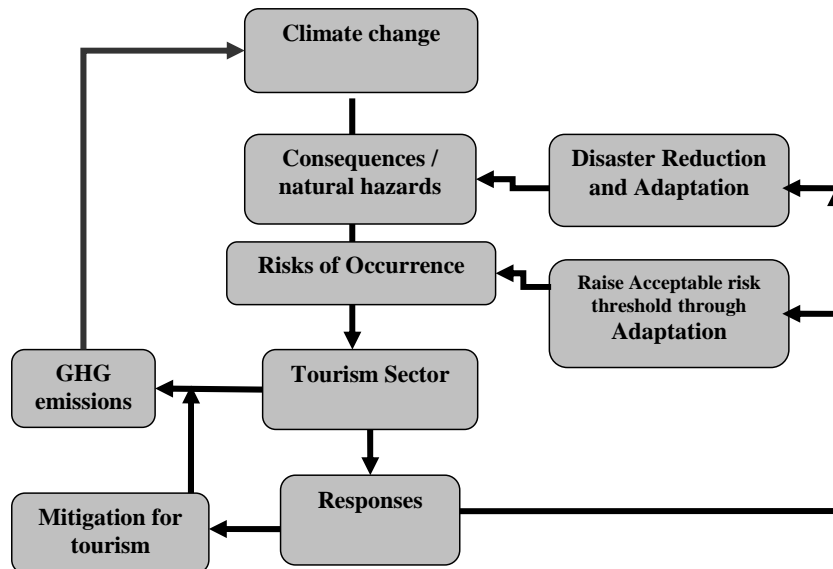


Figure 2 Framework for analysis of tourism and climate change, (Becken and Hay, 2007)

The primary strategic responses are identified in the framework as follows:

Adaptation initiatives deal with the consequence component of risk. Illustrative examples of relevance to tourism include: a) ensuring that both operational staff and guests are well informed of the actions to be taken should, say, a tropical cyclone be predicted to pass close to or over the tourist facility and b) installing and maintaining a desalination plant so that water requirements can be met during a severe drought.

Mitigation initiatives reduce GHG emissions. However, even if the necessary reductions in emissions were to be achieved tomorrow, changes in the climate will still occur. This is due to inertia in the climate system. Thus mitigation brings climate benefits only in the longer term. Mitigation of GHG emissions does generate short-term opportunities and benefits for tourism, for example through energy conservation and increased use of renewable energy.

3. MARKET TRENDS AND GREEN TOURISM

THE INFLUENCE OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON TOURISM

The last year or two have seen dramatic changes in people's perception of climate change, and recognition of the risks if these are not addressed. The 'Stern Report'⁸ and Al Gore's movie 'An Inconvenient Truth' in particular received unprecedented attention world wide. Stern concluded that a stabilization of CO₂ concentrations in the atmosphere (e.g. at 450 parts per million) would require that emissions have to be reduced by 80 percent relative to current levels.

The issue of climate change has become a major political issue in many countries which are major source markets for the South Pacific tourism sector, including Australia, New Zealand, the USA and Europe. The media has highlighted the issue of climate change, especially in relation to GHG emissions from travel.

Widespread media coverage has contributed to an increased awareness among the general public and among travelers. Headlines such as those below are increasingly influencing consumer perceptions on the issue and consequential demand for tourism products;

- 'Aviation huge threat to CO₂ aim' *BBC News*, 21 September 2005
- 'It's a sin to fly,' says church' *The Sunday Times*, 23 July 2006
- 'Night flights much worse for global warming' *The Independent*, 3 August 2006
- 'Eco dilemma. Is it OK to fly to New Zealand for a holiday?' *Guardian Unlimited*, 20 January 2007
- 'Flight or fright?' *New Zealand Listener*, 3 March 2007
- '100% Pure not enough for green future' *Stuff.co.nz*, 17 May 2007
- 'The plane truth' *Guardian Unlimited*, 20 July 2007
- 'Eco-friendly flyers buy carbon offsets' *The Calgary Herald*, 1 August 2007

⁸ Sir Nicholas Stern is an Adviser to the British Government on the economics of climate change and development.

Recent surveys also support the view that climate change is having an increasing influence on travellers, with consumer perceptions changing rapidly in relation to carbon offsetting and travel. The 2007 Lonely Planet Annual Travellers Pulse Survey indicates that travellers will make significant change to their behaviour to travel sustainably. This survey polled over 24,500 people worldwide and revealed that the majority were concerned about aircraft emissions, while only 7 percent did not think carbon emissions were a concern. The survey also showed that 84 percent of respondents would consider offsetting their emissions in the future (88 percent in Asia) and 31 percent had done so in the past (45 percent in Asia). Seventy percent said they had purposefully travelled in a low impact way in the past (e.g. catching a bus instead of flying) and 90 percent said they would or might do in the future. Travellers also indicated they had good intentions when it comes to protecting the environment; 36 percent of people had never purposefully considered the environment in their previous travels, 93 percent of people said they would or might purposefully participate in environmentally friendly travel in the future.

The Lonely Planet survey also indicated a huge surge in volunteering with 79 percent indicating they would volunteer overseas in the future (although only 25 percent had done so in the past).

The links between tourism and climate change are acknowledged by key players in the tourism industry. Both Tony Wheeler, who created Lonely Planet, and Mark Ellingham, the founder of Rough Guides, want fellow travellers to 'fly less and stay longer' and donate money to carbon-offsetting schemes. They urge their readers to: 'join to discourage 'casual flying''. A Rough Guide to Climate Change has appeared in late 2006. Lonely Planet will issue a new handbook called Volunteer; A Travellers Guide to Making A Difference Around the World and the new Australia Guide will have a new GreenDex – a quick reference index of sustainable accommodation, tours and experiences.

Evidence is that consumer behaviour can change rapidly when conditions are favourable; for example in 2000 only 3.2 percent of households recycled, whilst today over 80 percent of households recycle paper, plastic bottles and clothing (and 88 percent of households now reuse plastic bags). This major change in behaviour has been caused by increased awareness (on the benefits of recycling), responsive policy and convenient access to new processes (separate household recycling collection). The same favourable conditions appear to be in place (or are being established) in relation to travel purchases and carbon offsetting.

Research by Moxie Design Group in New Zealand profiles the LOHAS market in New Zealand (Lifestyle of Health and Sustainability) which includes consumers interested in ecotourism, green stocks, healthy lifestyle and green products. They are described as a \$US 209 market and represent 32 percent of the New Zealand market. In New Zealand they are known as ‘Solution Seekers’ and the market size has grown by 6 percent in the last two years. Climate change is currently thought to be the biggest driver of change in New Zealand society with 83 percent of New Zealanders aware of the problems including global warming and wanting to take action to reduce these problems⁹

Governments in key source markets are also contributing to the debate. Very recently, it was proposed in Germany to abstain from going on holidays abroad in order to limit GHG emissions. The President of the Federal Environment Agency urged consumers to do so, on the eve of Berlin's ITB in March 2007: *‘Anyone who travels to South Asia by plane should be aware that he is producing over six tons of carbon dioxide’*.

A recent European Union report *Action for More Sustainable European Tourism*⁹ published by the EU Tourism Sustainability Group, indicates some of the trends emerging in the European Market. The Report recommends that:

⁹ Commissioned Research – Moxie Group – New Zealand 2005

- Consumers actively participate in travel related carbon offsetting schemes and take fewer and longer holidays
- Government and the industry adjust taxation and pricing to reflect environmental costs and promote alternative travel options (to air travel)
- Destinations seek to promote more to domestic and short haul destinations and build facilities close to existing infrastructure

While most media coverage alerts people to the need to adjust travel patterns in response to impact climate change, there is also some media coverage to the contrary. For example, a comment was posted onto TravelMole UK (a travel discussion forum) with the headline ‘Holidaymakers are sick of hearing about climate change’.

CONSUMER DEMAND FOR GREEN TOURISM PRODUCTS

Heightened awareness of the environment has combined with increased income to make travel to natural areas the fastest growing sector of the tourism industry.

Ecotourism and nature travel are estimated to constitute 20 percent of current global leisure travel, up from 2 percent in the late 1980s¹⁰.

It has been estimated by south-pacific.travel (SPTO)¹¹ that between 20 and 40 percent of visitors to the South Pacific engage in some ecotourism activity, and that this demand is growing by about 10 to 20 percent per annum. This does not mean that all of these tourists are ‘ecotourists’ in a strict sense.

Most research indicates that the main motivation for tourists to visit South Pacific destinations is to enjoy the relatively unspoilt natural environment and beaches, together with the local culture; however, tourists are increasingly interested in soft and hard adventure activities, which provide a greater exposure to the unspoilt land and sea based natural environments. At a country level the Fiji Visitor Survey

¹⁰ Newsome, D., Moore, S., Dowling, C. – Natural Area Tourism; Ecology, Impacts and Management 2002

¹¹ Feasibility Study on Pacific Ecotourism Association – SPTO - 2006

provides some information on these trends for different environmentally based activities (Table 2).

The Fiji data also shows that there are distinct differences between markets. For example, trekking and bushwalking was strongest among Europeans (15 percent, visitors from the United Kingdom (12 percent), Canadians (11 percent) and those from the United States (10 percent). Countryside tours were most likely to be undertaken by visitors from the United Kingdom (43 percent), and the United States (41 percent), whereas adventure activities were most likely undertaken by Japanese visitors. Village tours appealed mostly to New Zealanders (15 percent).

Table 2 Proportion of tourists taking non-organised activities in Fiji 1998 - 2002 (Ministry of Tourism)

ACTIVITY	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998
	%	%	%	%	%
Swimming	62	65	69	74	76
Snorkelling	61	57	59	64	66
Fijian Meke	19	16	20	31	38
Restaurant	19	16	18	17	17
Village Tour	17	11	12	15	22
Watching	10	8	6	13	13
Playing Golf	7	6	8	12	12
Scuba-diving	12	12	13	11	14
Fishing	8	8	7	8	9
Trekking/Bush	7	6	6	7	8
Kayaking	4	6	N/A	N/A	N/A
Reef walks	4	2	5	5	8
Horse riding	5	4	3	3	6
Cinema	2	2	1	1	1
Cultural Tours	4	1	1	1	4
Bird watching	3	1			2

There is a growing debate about the increasing environmental awareness of tourists. While most studies focus on European and North American markets (e.g. EplerWood International, 2004; Goodwin and Francis, 2003), there is also some indication that

similar trends might apply in other world regions. A recent study about mega trends in tourism in Asia Pacific, for example, noted that ‘Consolidation of social-environmental awareness and consciousness’ and ‘Emphasis on travel experiences and customised tours’ are key trends that will determine tourism in the future (UNWTO, 2006).

In a recent paper on ‘hypermobile travellers’, Burns and Bibbings (unpublished) discuss the emergence of a new type of consumer in the UK, the ‘New Puritan’. According to an article in the Observer, the New Puritan ‘does not binge drink, smoke, buy big brands, take cheap flights, eat junk food, have multiple sexual partners, waste money on designer clothes, grow beyond their optimum weight, subscribe to celebrity magazines, drive a flash car, or live to watch television’. Other reports (in Burns and Bibbings) note that the British are increasingly discontent and demand quality instead of quantity. A recent survey indicated that 70 percent of consumers believe that everyone needs to do more about climate change.

Goodwin and Francis (2003) argued that the wider trends of ethical consumption now spread to tourism. This poses some new opportunities for companies to compete on attributes other than price, assuming that an increasing number of consumers are willing to pay a premium for environmentally friendly products. There is some indication that tourists would be willing to pay more for responsible products. For example, Honey (2002) discusses a Tearfund study which indicates the existence of consumer demand for a more ethical tourism industry and a willingness to pay for it. Wight (2001) (citing Cook *et al.*, 1992) reported that ‘green’ travellers were willing to spend on average 8 percent more for travel and accommodation provided by environmentally friendly operators. In a recent study on Canadian travellers, 7 out of 10 reported that they would pay \$10 or more for every \$1000 spent on airfares.

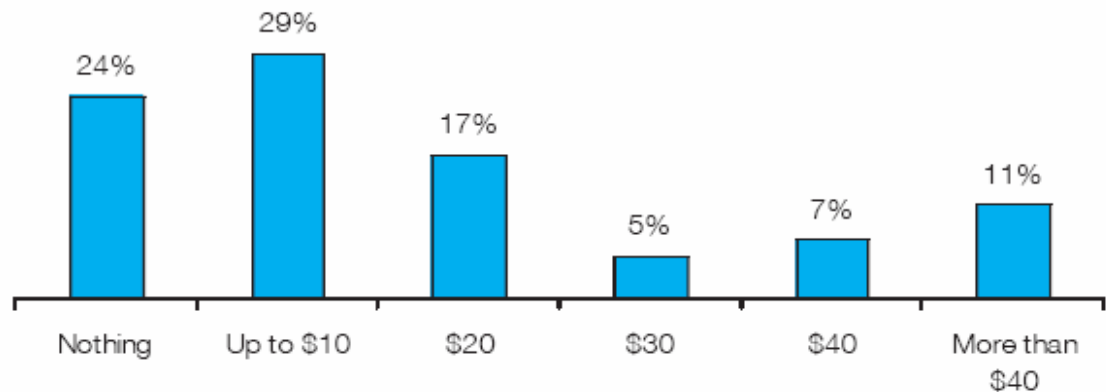


Figure 3 Amount Canadians Are Willing to Pay to Offset Carbon Emissions (Source: Canadian Tourism Commission, 2007)

A 2004 study in Fiji showed that tourists would be most willing to pay for the protection of coral reefs and marine life, and they would also pay more for coral-related measures (F\$18.10 on average) than for other measures (Table 3). Forest-related initiatives¹² would also find support by tourists, on average at a contribution of F\$14.18 per tourist. Interestingly, waste management would be less likely to be supported financially and to a lesser degree (F\$11.34), although tourists stated earlier that rubbish was a disappointing factor during their holiday. Energy efficiency measures are not seen as equally important as other measures (tourists would only pay F\$10.21 on average).

¹² Forest initiatives can be a win-win when reforested or afforested areas are also used as carbon sinks. Often tourists find it easier to associate with the biodiversity functions than with the carbon sequestration aspect of a forest.

Table 3 Willingness to pay for specific environmental measures (Source: Becken, 2004)

Environmental measure	Tourists providing a \$ amount	Mean payment (F\$)	Standard deviation (F\$)	Tourists paying (F\$)
Protection of coral reefs and marine life	217	18.10	21.66	17
Protection of forest and mangroves ecosystems	207	14.18	17.64	21
A good sewage treatment system to reduce water pollution	211	12.44	16.11	21
Water efficiency measures	200	12.15	16.49	23
Carbon-offsetting by planting forest	190	11.76	15.76	27
A good waste management system	206	11.34	14.73	21
Energy efficiency measures	194	10.21	14.91	30

TripAdvisor®, the world's largest travel community, recently surveyed more than 1,000 (largely eco-) travellers worldwide. Thirty-four percent of travellers surveyed would pay more to stay at an environmentally-friendly hotel. Twenty-five percent would be willing to pay a 5-10 percent premium, and 12 percent would pay a 10-20 percent premium. Twenty-four percent of respondents said that air travel should be avoided to help preserve the environment. Thirty-eight percent of travellers surveyed would pay more to take an eco-friendly flight and 26 percent would pay a premium of up to 10 percent. Only three percent of travellers surveyed, however, have purchased carbon credits (Adventure Travel, 2007).

Tourists who are interested in nature were found to have a stronger ecological orientation than other tourists. In a study on Swedish tourists, ecotourists showed the highest pro-environmental (and also pro-social issues) beliefs compared with nature and city tourists (Wurzinger and Johansson, 2007). These kinds of tourists are also strongly supportive of environmental labelling and certification (Issavardis, 2001).

Concern for the environment amongst travellers does not necessarily translate into environmentally friendly behaviours. For example, concern about air pollution does not stop people using cars or flying to destinations. Sharpley (2001) noted that if any

green product costs more, is inferior, involves more effort or does not satisfy consumer needs, then environmental values are likely to be of little consequence in consumer decision.

Food (and in particular organic food and fair trade products) is probably the best example of a product where consumers are more likely to translate their green attitudes into actual behaviour¹³. For example, spending on fair trade food in the UK increased from 92 million pounds in 2003 to 140 million pounds in 2004 (an increase of over 50 percent). The sales of free range eggs increased by 14 percent and organic food grew by over 10 percent (Cooperative Bank, 2005 in Burns and Bibbings, unpublished). These trends are further underpinned by recent trends in relation to 'food miles', i.e. food that has been transported over large distances to the consumer. New Zealand produce was particularly targeted by environmental campaigns and media coverage in Europe and some companies have started to label products according to their food miles (e.g. Marks and Spencers). The Observer, for example, suggested a 'low carbon diet' and used the example of New Zealand wine to illustrate how to reduce 'carbs' (drinking two bottles of NZ wine +36 carbs).

While there seem to be visible shifts in consumer attitudes and maybe behaviour as well, this does not seem to have impacted on the travel market at this point. Despite a feeling of 'guilt' and the awareness of climate change, there is no sign of significant reductions in bookings and trips undertaken. The airline industry is booming and most airlines are expanding heavily at present. Airports are also seeking to extend their capacity. A press release by the TUI at the time of the ITB in Berlin in March 2007 announced that bookings are healthy and that long-distance travel in particular is growing at high rates.

Similarly, a recent study in Great Britain showed that while tourists are increasingly concerned about their travel impacts (70 percent believed that air travel harmed the

¹³ This may be related to actual or perceived direct health benefits resulting from the consumption of organic food.

environment), a higher proportion of people undertake multiple air trips compared with previous years, and of those who did not travel by air the majority anticipated to travel more in the future. When people were asked why they did not travel, the most common reasons were personal circumstances or the cost of holidays. The environment was not mentioned as a reason for less travel (Department for Transport, 2007).

The apparent discrepancy between awareness and behaviour has been coined the 'Green Market Gap' (EplerWood International, 2004). The actual number of tourists that really act on their environmental beliefs is estimated to be very small, making 'true Green Tourists' a minor market segment, maybe even less than one percent. Goodwin and Francis (2003: 282) concluded:

'Rebellious consumers will expect the suppliers they purchase from to provide products, which are economically, socially and environmentally responsible. But they will not be prepared to pay any price for responsible ethically traded products. They will pay a greater or lesser premium according to what they can afford and the priority which they accord to the ethical dimension for their purchasing as against more traditional criteria.'

It is possible though, that in the last year tourists' priority has changed and tourists are either increasingly willing to pay for their environmental impact (e.g. through carbon offsetting) and they may be willing to amend their behaviour. This is indicated in a variety of sources including the Lonely Planet Survey. The recent TotalTravel.com survey of Australian tourists that indicated that 35 percent of interviewees were so concerned about flying that they were prepared to pay to offset their carbon emissions. The Guardian Weekly (2007) reported that 3 percent of Britons had stopped flying and further 10 percent have cut back due to the impacts on climate change and airlines such as Ryanair have issued press statements indicating that

concerns over climate change are impacting upon demand for low cost carrier services.

SOUTH PACIFIC GREEN TOURISM INDUSTRY SURVEY

In order to assist in gauging the views of the travel industry in key South Pacific tourism source markets a survey of wholesalers was undertaken as part of this study.

In general the Green Tourism Survey findings highlighted that overseas travel wholesalers were very much aware of the issues developing in relation to tourism and climate change. In summary the survey indicated that:

- The general environmental cleanliness of the destination was seen as the strongest advocate for influencing travel to the South Pacific. Better waste and energy management within the South Pacific countries was seen as an important measure to support Green Tourism development in the region.
- Although there is awareness of Carbon Offsetting Accreditations Schemes, at the present, travel wholesalers do not place too much emphasis on recognising such schemes. Most of the surveyed travel wholesalers indicated that they do not offer clients the option of participating in carbon offsetting schemes in relation to their holiday or air ticket purchase.
- The majority of the surveyed consumers believe that consumer travel patterns will change by the awareness of impacts of air travel on climate change and consumers are also very likely to want more information on the environmental impact of their travel. However, most travel wholesalers think that it is not very likely that people would travel on holiday less frequently in the next five years because of the issue surrounding air travel and climate change.

A more detailed analysis of the Green Tourism Survey results is presented below:

Cleanliness and environmental friendliness of the destination

93 percent of the wholesalers surveyed identified “the general cleanliness of the destination” as an **extremely important** environmental issue that influence consumer decisions when purchasing a holiday to the South Pacific, while the remaining 7 percent agreed that it was *somewhat important*.

64 percent of respondents thought “the availability of country level certified environmentally friendly tourism products” was **somewhat important** (14 percent – *extremely important*) when influencing travel to the South Pacific. 14 percent of the respondents recommended that it was *not very important* while 7 percent “did not know” if “the availability of country level certified environmentally friendly tourism products” would have any influence on consumer purchasing decisions.

A majority of the surveyed wholesalers recommended that “a contribution from the cost of the holiday being paid to support environmental protection in the country” was **somewhat important** (59 percent) in influencing travel to the South Pacific. 24 percent thought it was *extremely important* while 12 percent said it was *not very important* and 6 percent said they *did not know*.

Survey findings indicate that only 33 percent of the surveyed wholesalers recognised Accreditation Schemes such as Green Globe International or AAA Hotels Classification. 67 percent of the wholesalers said they do not recognise any international or country level accreditation schemes.

Air travel and carbon offsetting

43 percent of the respondents recommended that the issue of “impact of the air travel component on greenhouse gas emissions” was **not very important** in influencing

travel to the region however there were a good number that said it was *extremely important* (29 percent) and *somewhat important* (29 percent)

“A contribution from the cost of the holiday being to offset the effect of greenhouse gas emissions associated with the air travel component” received mixed views from surveyed wholesalers with 36 percent saying it was *extremely important* in influencing consumer holiday choices while another 36 percent thought it was *not very important*. A further 29 percent indicated that it was *somewhat important* to let consumers know that “a contribution from the cost of the holiday being to the offset the effect of greenhouse gas emissions associated with the air travel component”.

“The potential to offset greenhouse gas emissions on a voluntary basis” was recognised by 60 percent of the respondents as **somewhat important** when influencing consumers to purchase travel to the South Pacific. A further 13 percent said that it was *extremely important*. 20 percent of the respondents thought it was *not very important* and 7 percent *did not know* if it would influence travel decisions.

Survey findings highlight that 20 percent of the surveyed wholesalers offer their clients the option of participating in a carbon-offsetting program in relation to their holiday or air ticket purchase. 80 percent indicated that they do not offer such programs their clients.

Consumer behaviour

There is strong indication from travel wholesalers that ‘consumer patterns are changing as a result of increased awareness of the impacts of air travel on climate change’. A majority of the survey wholesalers (70 percent) said consumer travel patterns are changing, while 20 percent insisted that consumer travels patterns would not change because of the increased awareness of air travel and its impact on climate change (Figure 4). 7 percent of the respondents were unsure if the increased awareness of air travel climate impact would alter consumer travel patterns.

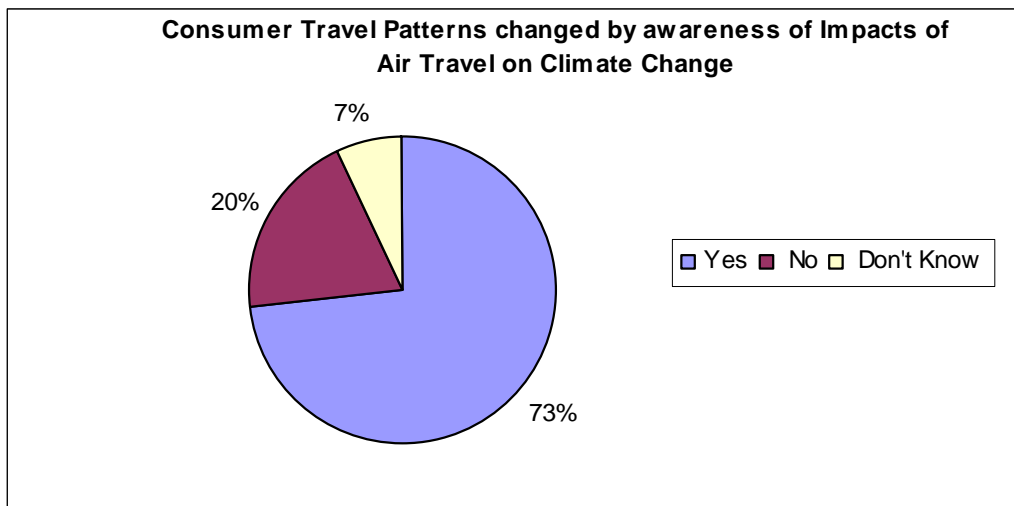


Figure 4 Consumer Travel Patterns Influenced by Climate Change Awareness; Green Tourism Survey 2007

Of the total travel wholesaler responses, 63 percent predict that consumers would most likely (**Very Likely**) want more information on the environmental impact of their travel in the future while 37 percent thought consumers are *somewhat likely* to change their behaviour.

50 percent of the respondents thought that the climate change issue would not likely (**Not Very Likely**) change consumer holiday travel patterns and frequency. 40 percent believe that consumer behaviour will somewhat likely change and consumers would travel on holiday less frequently while 10 percent predicted that consumers were very likely to travel less because of the climate change issue.

In the next 5 years according to survey feedback, 70 percent of wholesalers believe that travellers' would *somewhat likely* pay fees to offset their carbon emissions associated with their travel. while 30 percent think it will be *very likely* to happen.

The other likely change in consumer behaviour is that "people will travel to long haul holiday destinations less frequently". 20 percent of the surveyed wholesalers believe that this would likely happen (**Very Likely**), 40 percent say it would *somewhat likely* to happen and 50 percent believe it is *not very likely* to happen in the next five years.

The majority of the wholesalers considered that it is *not very likely* that “people will stay longer” in their holiday destination. 30 percent considered that it will be *very likely* that visitors would have longer holidays in the next 5 years, whilst 20 percent believe this change in consumer travel behaviour will be *somewhat likely* to happen.

Surveyed wholesalers have indicated that it is *very likely* (36 percent) or *somewhat likely* (55 percent) for visitors to want to have some involvement in local environmental projects in the near future. 9% of the respondents predict that it is *not very likely* that visitors would want to get involved in local environmental projects.

Table 4: Change in Consumer Behaviour: Green Tourism Survey 2007

Change in Consumer Behaviour	Very Likely	Somewhat Likely	Not very Likely
<i>Factor 1.</i> People want more information on the environmental impact of their travel	63	37	0
<i>Factor 2.</i> People will travel on holiday less frequently	10	40	50
<i>Factor 3.</i> People will travel to long haul holiday destinations less frequently	20	30	50
<i>Factor 4.</i> People will pay to offset their carbon emissions associated with their travel	30	70	0
<i>Factor 5.</i> People will stay longer	30	20	50
<i>Factor 6.</i> People want to be involved in local environmental projects	36	55	9

‘Better waste and energy management within the South Pacific countries to make them cleaner’ was identified by 85 percent of the surveyed travel wholesalers to be significant or **very useful** in supporting the development of Green Tourism in the South Pacific. A further 15 percent supported this practice by stating that it was *somewhat useful*.

Respondents thought it was *very useful* (38 percent) or *somewhat useful* (54 percent) to develop regional Carbon Offsetting Schemes or promotion of Carbon Offsetting Schemes in conjunction with South Pacific. Eight percent thought the development or promotion of Carbon Offsetting Schemes was *no useful at all* in supporting the development of Green Tourism in the South Pacific.

‘Promotion of the economic and environmental benefits of tourism to the South Pacific’ was seen as a *very useful* (54 percent) or *somewhat useful* (46 percent) measure in supporting the development of Green Tourism in the South Pacific.

64 percent of the respondents highlighted that more involvement of the industry in international or national environmental accreditation programs would be in **very useful** in the development of Green Tourism in the region. 29 percent stated that it was *somewhat useful* while 7 percent thought it was *not useful at all*.

Surveyed travel wholesalers generally agreed that “other carbon offsetting initiatives such as reforestation” in conjunction with tourism would be **very useful** (69 percent) or *somewhat useful* (31 percent) in supporting the development of Green Tourism in the region.

‘Developing a mechanism where tourists can contribute financially to local environmental projects (e.g. renewable energy sources)’ was viewed by 69 percent of the respondents to be *somewhat useful* in developing Green Tourism with a further 31 percent indicating that it would be *very useful*.

Table 5: Useful measures for development of Green Tourism: Green Tourism Survey 2007

Useful Measures	Very Useful	Somewhat Useful	Not Useful at All
<i>Measure 1.</i> Development of regional carbon Offsetting Scheme or promotion of carbon offsetting schemes in conjunction with South Pacific	38	54	8
<i>Measure 2.</i> Promotion of the economic and environmental benefits of tourism to the South Pacific	54	46	0
<i>Measure 3.</i> Higher take up by the industry of the international or national environmental accreditation programs	64	29	7
<i>Measure 4.</i> Better waste and energy management within the South Pacific countries to make them cleaner	85	15	0
<i>Measure 5.</i> Other carbon offsetting initiatives such as reforestation in conjunction with tourism	69	31	0
<i>Measure 6.</i> Developing a mechanism where tourists can contribute financially to local environmental projects (e.g. renewable energy sources)	31	69	0

GREEN TOURISM INITIATIVES AND PRODUCTS

This section discusses Green Tourism initiatives and products identified at a global, regional and country level within the South Pacific.

Global Initiatives and Products

Depending on the exact definition, there are about 80 sustainable tourism accreditation schemes worldwide. Green Globe 21 is the only global scheme, but there are a number of regional or local schemes, for example the Green Key in Canada. Green schemes have some similarity with accommodation ratings (e.g. the star system), but there has been little cross-over between these types of schemes so far. More recently, the Australian AAA has developed a Green Star programme for tourism and similarly the Costa Rica Sustainable Tourism Certificate also takes a wider quality approach.

It has to be noted that international hotel chains (e.g. Accor group) require minimum standards of all of their hotels, including guidelines for environmental management.

A number of international organisations are now getting involved in discussions and initiatives around sustainable tourism in general and climate change in particular. Key organisations include the UNWTO, UNEP, OECD and PATA.

United Nations World Tourism Organisation

The UNWTO made an important contribution to addressing the interrelationships between climate change and tourism by convening the First International Conference on Climate Change and Tourism, in April 2003, in Djerba, Tunisia. The conference brought together over 140 delegates from 53 countries, drawn from representatives of the scientific community, various United Nations agencies, the tourism industry, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), national tourism administrators and environmental managers, and local governments. The main outcome of the conference was the Djerba Declaration on Climate Change and Tourism¹⁴. The Declaration recognises the two-way interaction between climate change and tourism and provides a basic reference and framework for further action by major stakeholder groups. Since the Djerba Conference, UNWTO has contributed to various events related to climate change and tourism (e.g. research workshops, tourism fairs, and the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties).

In response to increased concern about climate change, UNWTO has recently held a second international conference, namely the Global Climate Summit in Davos, Switzerland, from 1-3 October 2007. The Conference was organised in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and supported by the World Economic Forum (WEF) and the World Meteorological Organisation. The Davos Summit was attended by representatives from over 100 countries. The Davos Summit and the follow-up Ministerial Summit in London are intended to trigger

¹⁴ The archives of the Djerba Conference can be found at <http://www.world-tourism.org/sustainable/climate/brochure.htm>

research and policy measures that will enable tourism to respond to the challenges of climate change and at the same time reduce the industry's own contributions to global warming. Ways will be explored for tourism to respond to today's climate challenge, while still advancing other priorities, such as UNWTO's commitment to the UN Millennium Development Goals.

The key outcomes from Davos included agreement that:

- Climate change is unequivocal and is already influencing decision-making in the tourism sector
- Climate change must be seen in a broader context of international sustainable development and poverty reduction
- Changes in the global climate will affect tourism in four ways:
 - Directly (e.g. higher temperatures, less water)
 - Indirectly through environmental change (e.g. changes of biodiversity)
 - Through policies that impact on tourist mobility (e.g. carbon taxes on travel)
 - Through wider societal and economic changes (e.g. increased poverty, changing lifestyles)
- Long-haul tourism is more at risk to these changes than short-haul tourism
- Tourism contributes 5 percent to global CO₂ emissions; 40 percent of this is due to air travel
- Developing countries are the most vulnerable

The conference produced the Davos Declaration that calls for concrete action by Governments, international organisations, the tourism industry, consumers and research networks (see http://www.unwto.org/media/news/en/press_det.php?id=1411&idioma=E)

UNWTO is currently working with UNEP and UNDP in Fiji and the Maldives to develop projects to enhance adaptation to climate change by tourism. These two projects are demonstration case studies that will highlight cost-effective adaptation measures that can be adopted in other island or coastal destinations around the world.

In 2002, the UNWTO commissioned a study on voluntary initiatives for Sustainable Tourism. This study was based on the analysis of 104 voluntary initiatives worldwide and it provides an evaluation of the effectiveness of existing schemes by identifying similarities and differences among them, finding out the factors that make them successful in terms of sustainable tourism development. As a further step, WTO is currently supporting a feasibility study concerning the establishment of an independent, global accreditation body to grant approval to certification schemes, thus giving higher credibility to these and other voluntary initiatives in tourism.

United Nations Environment Programme

One of the focus areas within UNEP is climate change and UNEP maintains a number of Climate Change Centres that deal with both adaptation and mitigation. UNEP provides technical assistance and supporting voluntary initiatives such as the UNEP/WTO/UNESCO Tour Operator Initiative for Sustainable Tourism Development. UNEP has also been involved in tourism-climate change initiatives through various units, including their tourism group.

In 2003, UNEP published a handbook for renewable energy sources for tourism: 'Switched On: Renewable Energy Opportunities in the Tourism Industry'. This handbook explores how clean and renewable forms of energy can sustainably power tourism. It provides the latest information on solar, wind, hydro, geothermal and biomass (plant and animal matter) resources. The publication demonstrates how tourism businesses powered by renewable energy can reduce environmental impacts, generate benefits for local communities and, often, lower costs. While some of the information could be slightly out dated, this publication is still the only one that provides some guidance in this area to tourism businesses specifically.

UNEP is also active in a wide range of other areas in relation to tourism, for example tourism and biodiversity, ecotourism, and tourism in marine environments.

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

OECD is very involved in the areas of Climate Change Policy, Sustainable Development and Transport – all of which are highly relevant to tourism and climate change. For example, OECD (2005) organised a ‘Tourism, Leisure and Environment workshop’ in 2005 in cooperation with the German Federal Agency for the Environment. This workshop discussed tourism transport between home and the destination, as well as destination-based transport. Examples of eco-mobility were provided from Austria, Germany and Japan.

Earlier in 2007, OECD released their report ‘Climate Change in the European Alps: Adapting Winter Tourism and Natural Hazards Management’. This report acknowledges that international commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions are essential, but it also highlights the importance of integrating adaptation to the impacts of climate change into sectoral and economic policies worldwide.

In July 2007, OECD produced a draft Environmental Outlook to 2030 paper for tourism (OECD, 2007). A key issue highlighted in this paper is tourism’s contribution to global warming of about 5.3 percent (based on Gossling, 2002). The paper gives a red light to the fact that ‘international arrivals will reach almost 1.6 billion in 2020 – with the associated environmental pressures from air travel’. As a result, OECD predicts that short-haul travel will be stronger than long-haul travel.

Other Global Initiatives

The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) has launched an international campaign to call to dialogue the issues on climate change in April 2007. The campaign ran full pages in authoritative publications including The Daily Telegraph, Newsweek, The Wall Street Journal and travel trade media around the world. In addition, an online forum has been created to encourage open dialogue on the issues that need to be addressed on climate change. The forum also intends to draw input concerning environmental good practice, working together with sustainable

communities, nations and business. Climate change was also discussed at the 7th Global Travel and Tourism Summit in Lisbon, Portugal, May 11 and 12, 2007. The summit was made a carbon neutral event.

The World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) has engaged with UNWTO on several occasions to further the debate around climate change and tourism. In 2006, WMO established an Expert Commission on 'Climate and Tourism', which is charged with gathering current knowledge about the issue.

Green Globe (GG) 21

GG21 was established in 1994 by WTTC to turn the principles of Agenda 21 into practice. It aims to improve environmental management in tourism businesses and use this to increase the company's profile. It is a tourism-focused green environmental management system (EMS) that also provides benchmarking and certification for 26 different categories of tourism operation from accommodation to wineries. The emphasis is on awarding companies that improve rather than those that have achieved a particular level, and various forms of internet-based assistance are provided to assist with upgrading. It uses some of the ISO 14001 system and triple bottom line analysis to address environment issues in 10 key areas (energy, greenhouse gas, air quality, noise, waste water, community relations, cultural heritage, social performance, conservation, land management and eco-systems). GG21 also incorporates ecotourism certification principles identified in the Mohonk Agreement in 2000 and Australian National Ecotourism Assessment Programme (NEAP) programme.

Certification involves 3 steps (ABC): Awareness (affiliation), Benchmarking and Certification. Awareness involves paying membership fees and receiving information about green globe. Benchmarking involves moving towards 10 areas of environmental improvement using a self-assessment that is verified by independent auditors to see if it reaches GG21 standards. A site visit is only arranged for the Certification level when assessors provide participants with an action plan for

improvement. The fee structure increases with the level of the programme achieved and is calculated based on employees and numbers of rooms from USD200-7000, not including the cost of the assessors' visit. The advertised benefits include: utilities saving, competitiveness, marketing, staff commitment, knowledge and use of logo for companies claiming to exceed standards. They have worked hard on marketing, developing alliances with airlines and global distribution systems. It has also developed an award system.

Currently there has been limited take up of GG21 among the tourism industry in the South Pacific. Some operators have suggested that the system is too complex, time consuming and costly to be commercially attractive or practical in application. A total of 16 operators have signed up for GG21, with 1 Certified (Sonaisali resort Fiji), 13 Benchmarked and 2 Affiliates; those participating in the scheme are mainly based in Fiji and Tahiti

Regional Initiatives and Products

south-pacific.travel coordinated a one day workshop during “Tonga Tourism Week”, which was held in Nuku’alofa, Tonga on the 26th October 2007 as a key part of the development of a Regional Action Strategy for Green Tourism in the South Pacific.

The workshop highlighted that issues relating to Green Tourism were central to the future development of the sector in the region; the Pacific has many advantages in relation to Green Tourism products but equally consumer demands, global trends and changing government policies in key source markets had the potential to impact upon future tourism demand and growth in a significant way. The workshop examined market and global trends and identified potential impacts, particularly in relation to climate change, carbon emissions and tourism in the South Pacific. The workshop was facilitated by Mr Ross Hopkins and Dr Susanne Becken of TRIP Consultants who have been engaged to develop the Green Tourism Action Strategy

“Climate change must be seen in a broader context of international sustainable development and poverty reduction” was identified as one of the key outcomes from the recent UNWTO Global Climate Summit in Davos, Switzerland.

A workshop on “Expanding the Role of Tourism in Poverty Reduction” was facilitated by UNESCAP – Pacific Operations Centre during the PROINVEST funded “Tonga Tourism Week” in Nuku’alofa, Tonga.

The workshop reflected that tourism played a significant role in socio-economic development, poverty reduction and attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. Development of the tourism sector often leads to expansion of the economic base in both rural as well as urban areas, increase in foreign exchange earnings and greater opportunities for employment in countries of the Pacific. Tourism, based on the principle of sustainable development, furthermore could address environmental concerns while contributing to economic growth and social development.

The tourism sector, which is often composed of many small and medium businesses, is labor-intensive and often employs a relatively high proportion of women, youth and members of indigenous communities. As a result, the tourism sector often provides an opportunity to different communities to reduce poverty through diversification of their economies and rise in their standards of living. Tourism also could lead to economic growth in regions that may not have previously benefited from other types of economic activity.

The workshop on “Expanding the Role of Tourism in Poverty Reduction” considered how tourism could reduce poverty and the measures needed in order to achieve this objective. The workshop was also held in line with resolutions 62/3 implementation of the Plan of Action for Sustainable Tourism Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase II (2006-2012) and the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Tourism

Development and 62/12 on strengthening Pacific island developing countries and territories through regional cooperation.

south-pacific.travel in partnership with the New Zealand Tourism Research Institute developed an online toolkit for operators to green their business. The toolkit is divided into two parts, one for start-up businesses and one for existing tourism businesses. Key steps are to measure and monitor the business' performance on a number of indicators and to set targets for improvement. The toolkit provides practical advice on issues such as saving energy. The website also features a number of best practice case studies, for example Nukubati Island resort in Fiji which produces its own electricity with one of the largest solar power plants in the South Pacific islands. Nukubati can generate over 10 kilowatts of electricity from the sun and wind every day using 300 solar panels and four wind generators. south-pacific.travel also published an Environmental Management Guide for Small Hotels and Resorts, with practical information on energy use and other areas of environmental concern.

The use of Environmental Management Systems, ecolabelling or certification is limited in South Pacific destinations. In 2004, the Fiji Hotels Association had subscribed all of its 80 members to the Environmental Management System of Green Globe 21. Only two resorts have benchmarked and only one resort has become certified. Two more are still affiliated with Green Globe 21. All the other businesses have not renewed their affiliation after the initial Hotel Association initiative.

The only other destination in the South Pacific where Green Globe 21 has been taken up is French Polynesia. Ten businesses have reached the benchmarking status in French Polynesia. There is one business that is Green Globe 21 benchmarked in the Cook Islands. No other ecolabelling schemes are in (wider) use in South Pacific destinations. However, there are a number of non-certified, yet successful ecotourism

businesses operating in different South Pacific destinations, for example ‘Friendly Island Kayak Company’ in Tonga and the ‘Tranquility Island Resort in Vanuatu’.

In 2005, south-pacific.travel commissioned a project to explore the potential for a South Pacific wide Ecotourism Association (Tourism Resource Consultants, 2005). The recommendation was that a website based organisation, a ‘Green Hub’, could be created to provide a profile at minimal costs.

A comprehensive ‘Community-Based Ecotourism & Conservation in the Pacific Islands’ toolkit has been developed by the South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme. This toolkit provides useful information on identifying a market, setting up an ecotourism business and delivering a quality experience.

Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA)

While PATA has not been involved in any initiatives related to climate change, there are signs that PATA is increasingly concerned about the issue. On their website there is a link to the Stern Report published in late 2006, and PATA also produced a one-pager flyer to raise awareness of climate change and tourism in a warming world.

Most recently, PATA called upon industry leaders to sign onto a cross-sectoral industry response to climate change. The PATA ‘CEO challenge 2008: Confronting Climate Change’ will take place in Bangkok on April 29-30, 2008. So far, the challenge was met with huge supports by players in the industry, such as Qantas Airways, the Association of Asia Pacific Airlines, Accor Asia Pacific and Banyan Tree Hotels and Resorts.

European Union

The European Union is currently pushing towards integrating aviation into global climate change policies. The European Commission (EC) advocates including GHG emissions from intra-European flights in the EU Emission Trading Scheme from

2011 and all other aircraft flying into and out of the EU from 2012. This is an important step towards a worldwide cap and trade scheme that is likely to reduce demand through higher ticket prices and encourage airlines to press the aircraft and engine manufactures to produce less CO₂ in their new product. Some players, however, see a risk that aviation will continue to grow by buying permits from other sectors, which is likely to make future reduction achievements in these sectors more costly. This European initiative was at the core of the discussions at the International Civil Aviation Organisation's (ICAO) meeting in September 2007. No agreement has been achieved at this meeting.

Country Initiatives and Products

There are a number of environmental initiatives in different countries in the South Pacific which support the development of Green Tourism. These involve the tourism industry, public sector organisations, or both. There are also a number of not-for-profit organisations that seek to improve the environmental performance of tourism. One example is the Mamanuca Environment Society (MES), which was formed in 2002 by the Mamanuca Fiji Islands Hotel and Tourism Association (MFIHTA) members with a recommendation from Coral Cay Conservation (CCC). The main objective of the Society is to promote environmental awareness and protection that supports sustainable tourism and community livelihood in the Mamanuca group.

In early July, the Sustainable Tourism CRC in Australia organised a two-day workshop on climate change with the goal of developing a research agenda in this priority area. This workshop was followed by a Tourism Transport Forum (TTF) Climate Summit on the 10th of July that brought together players from the tourism industry, transport, aviation and government. In the meantime, the STCRC has developed an Action Plan for Climate Change and tourism

New Zealand through its Ministry of Tourism, the Tourism Industry Association and Tourism New Zealand is currently developing a New Zealand Tourism Strategy in

which climate change is seen as a key factor affecting tourism (largely as a result of tourists' perceptions of air travel). Actions such as energy efficiency and carbon offsetting are specifically outlined in the draft strategy.

Other examples of South Pacific country-level projects on energy efficiency and renewable energy sources include Aalbersberg *et al.* (2003), who published a practical guide for small-scale accommodation providers to improve their environmental bottom line. Most of the topics dealt with in this publication can be directly or indirectly linked to climate change mitigation or adaptation. For example, there are chapters on how to construct and build the resort, how to minimise energy and water use, and how to reduce discharges and emissions.

The Samoa Tourism Authority (STA) has developed a quality standard for accommodation ('Accommodation Standards Guide' and 'Beach Fale Standards Guide') and based on this standard STA have inspected all hotels and fale to provide star ratings. These have never been released and the standards are currently being revised. The existing standards do not include aspects of environmental management but focus on services provided and quality of the accommodation. There is an opportunity, however, to include environmental dimensions in the quality standards. Such a step is currently being undertaken in New Zealand, where the quality standard of Qualmark will soon incorporate a mandatory Qualmark Green.

In 1998, the Samoa Sustainable Tourism Indicator Project (SSTIP) was initiated to develop practical tools to develop tourism in a sustainable manner (Miller and Twining-Ward, 2005). After extensive consultation the project came up with a list of 12 final indicators, taking into account the environment, economy, society and culture, and tourism. Monitoring of these indicators showed that tourist participation in nature tourism and tourism village participation in marine protection were ranked as 'poor'. Similarly, the indicators of new hotels undertaken environmental assessment and tourism operators using sustainable tourism practices were classified

as ‘poor’ as well. It was the intention to monitor the indicators on an ongoing basis, but the project has not continued after the key researcher left the island. Since the project has been well documented it should be relatively straightforward to revive this monitoring programme.

Some South Pacific countries are more focused on pro-poor or community-based tourism rather than environmental or eco tourism. This is the case for Samoa, where the concept of beach fales has proven to be a successful partnership between local communities and tourism businesses. A number of ecotourism related initiatives took place in Samoa in the 1990s, however some of the products that have been established in this phase are no longer operating (e.g. EcoTour and Green Turtle). Notwithstanding, the general opinion seems to be that there is demand for eco-tours and the success of the current (very few) ‘scenic tours’ demonstrates that tourists are interested in exploring Samoa’s nature and culture.

There are already a number of country level policies in place that should help the tourism sector to become more environmentally sustainable. One such policy is that of Environmental Impact Assessment in association with new developments. In most Pacific countries development are subject to an EIA to ensure sustainable management of environmental and social resources. However, climate change concerns are currently not specifically considered and it could be useful to include those dimensions more explicitly in future reviews of EIA legislation. Fiji recently passed the *Environmental Management Act* (EMA) which will provide more executive power to the Ministry of Environment to possibly include such provisions.

Tourism strategies or Master plans are important documents to consider environmental issues and risks resulting from climate change. The recently revised Fiji Master Plan mentions climate change as an important issue, in particular in relation to potential climatic impacts on tourism and the natural environment (e.g. resulting from cyclones), but many countries do not have current tourism plans and

several of the plans that exist do not consider the climate change issue (ie Solomon island Tourism development Plan and the revised Vanuatu Tourism Master Plan).

The Fiji Ministry of Tourism and Environment is committed to the sustainable development of tourism (e.g. Fiji Ecotourism and Village-Based Tourism Policy and Strategy 1998). The Department maintains a Sustainable Tourism Development Section and appointed three 'sustainable development tourism officers' in 2005. To assist local communities in establishing sustainable small tourism ventures, the Government provided an *Ecotourism Grant* of FJD 500,000 per annum.

The majority of South Pacific countries have introduced classification schemes for accommodation; the type of scheme, together with an indication of whether the scheme includes minimum standards is summarized in Table 6 below. The specific type of scheme varies by country; some (such as the Cook Islands) have a broad accreditation program which includes an assessment on basic environmental aspects of an accommodation operation, such as waste management and renewable energy usage; other countries have developed standards specifically for accommodation, but these are more facility and service based (such as Samoa and Tonga) with a reliance upon Environmental Health legislation to assess the environmental aspects of an operation. Fiji has adopted the international standards of the AAA system, although this has not been adopted uniformly by all operators. Others are more loosely defined around a rating system based on accommodation standards and quality (e.g. Vanuatu), whilst several countries have no official rating or system of accommodation standards (e.g. PNG, Solomon Islands, Kiribati and Tuvalu). None of the current rating systems specifically define Green Tourism or have a major 'Green' component in terms of any assessment of greenhouse emissions or any mitigation measures in place.

Only the Cook Islands Accreditation scheme provides any assessment of tour operator standards within the region; whilst no specific assessment of an operator's

greenhouse gas emission is included, an assessment of their environmental policies is undertaken. It is worth noting that the Only Green Globe member in the Cook Islands is a tour (inbound) operator (Island Hopper Vacations). Very few accommodation or tour operators in the South Pacific currently offer voluntary offsetting of carbon emissions as part of their environmental policy; those that have been identified as best practice examples include the Vanautu-hotels.vu which offers the option of offsetting carbon emissions, as well as information on the Earthday Network and the Travel Foundation, which support sustainable tourism development. Carbon offsetting schemes are further discussed in the section below.

Table 6 South Pacific Country Level Initiatives and Programs for the Accommodation Sector

Country	Agency Responsible	Accreditation/ Classification Approach	System	No. of Categories	Includes Minimum Environmental Standards	Includes Assessment of Carbon Mitigation Component
Cook Islands	CITC	Accreditation Program	Annual, 1 inspector	4	Yes	No
Fiji	FITHA and Ministry of Tourism AAA Australia	Room rates & location and facilities	Annual checks for licensing	4	Yes	Bo
French Polynesia	Office of Tourism	5-star & 3 Tiare	On application	2	Environmental Health Legislation	No
Kiribati	Kiribati	None	None	None	Environmental Health Legislation	No
Niue	Niue Tourism Office	Minimum standards	Proposed only	4	Yes	No
PNG	PNGTPA	Province & type	Proposed only	Proposed	Environmental Health Legislation	No
Samoa	Samoa Tourism Authority	5 Star Rating System	Annual, 5 inspectors	2	Yes	No
Solomon Island	SIVB	None	None	None	Environmental Health Legislation	No
Tonga	Tonga Visitors Bureau	Minimum standards for licensing	Annual, 5 inspectors	4	Yes	No
Tuvalu	Tuvalu National Tourism Office	None	None	0	Environmental Health Legislation	No
Vanuatu	Vanuatu tourism	By type of facility	Proposed accreditation program	4	Licensing requires health, safety and fire checks	No

Carbon Offsetting Schemes

The term *carbon compensation* or *offsetting* means that an amount of GHG emissions equal to that caused by a certain activity, i.e. a flight, will be reduced elsewhere, for example by reforestation or investment into energy efficiency. Carbon offsetting is growing rapidly, and promoted by actors, from Al Gore's film "An Inconvenient Truth" to influential guidebooks such as Lonely Planet and Rough Guide.



Figure 5 Carbon offsetting option and background information for the Polynesian Blue airline.

There is still a lot of confusion among tourists about what carbon offsetting is. There is also a risk that carbon offsetting, which has been initiated as a voluntary form of carbon reductions, is now becoming the means used by the industry to "reduce" emissions. As such, carbon offsetting can be seen as a controversial solution to climate protection, because it potentially diverts from the real causes of the problems and therefore bypasses the structural and technological changes that need to be made to achieve long-term GHG reductions. There is also a moral or guilt dimension to

carbon offsetting –redemption through payment. Carbon offsetting does appear to be a relatively market friendly solution, however, and is becoming increasingly adopted by individual operators, airlines and even industry associations.

The Samoa Hotel Association (SHA) offers a web link to the British carbon offsetting company Climate Care. This has been in place since April 2007, but SHA has not yet monitored how many web users used the link. The website has been implemented by a global hotel web management company with little involvement in this carbon offsetting initiative by SHA itself. SHA members are not necessarily aware of this initiative.

Polynesian Blue (part of the Virgin Airlines Group) offers carbon offsetting (Figure 5), and so does Qantas. Money collected by tourists on a voluntary basis contribute to projects in Australia and New Zealand. These projects are approved by the Australian Greenhouse Office's and the New Zealand Ministry for the Environment. Examples of types of approved abatement activities include energy efficiency measures, waste diversion and recycling, generation of renewable energy and avoided deforestation projects.

Regional Climate Change Initiatives

SPREP is the South Pacific Organisation dealing with environmental issues. They have completed and are currently involved in a number of climate change related projects. Most relevant to tourism is the Pacific Islands Renewable Energy Programme [PIREP], which seeks to improve the contribution of renewable energy sources to electricity generation. The project has been completed in 2006 and has been the basis for a new application (approved) for the Pacific Islands Greenhouse Gas Abatement through Renewable Energy (PIGGAREP) Project. This project aims at reducing greenhouse gas emissions and energy use in Pacific Island countries. Tourism is not a key focal area, but it is mentioned and it is still possible to include

tourism aspects in the project implementation (Samoa is currently considering this option).

SPREP is also currently developing a new framework for 2005-2009 following the earlier Pacific Islands Regional Framework for Climate Change, Climate Variability and Sea Level Rise which was developed for 2000-2004. This current Framework provides a strategic framework to address the climate related needs of the region and is the product of Pacific island nations, donors, multilateral institutions and regional organisations.

WWF South Pacific is undertaking a wide number of communication measures, including their Climate Witness Programme and climate newsletters. WWF also works in collaboration with conservationists on coral monitoring and on a project called “Coastal Resilience to Climate Change”.

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) is currently developing a new programme for the South Pacific, namely the GEF-Pacific alliance for sustainability. The PAS is a proposed Multi-Focal GEF Program for Pacific SIDs, structured on a three-pronged approach which includes:

1. Biodiversity;
2. Climate change mitigation and adaptation;
3. International waters; and
4. Cross-cutting issues integrated across sectors such as land and water management.

The cross-cutting area explicitly mentions tourism as a focal area. At present, World Bank consultants are travelling to the South Pacific countries to help with initial submissions to the GEF-Pas.

SOPAC

SOPAC is involved in both climate change mitigation activities (e.g. in relation to renewable energy sources) and adaptation programmes. The key programmes are Community Risk, Community Lifelines and Ocean and Islands.

There are a number of country-level projects on climate change. Samoa, for example, has a project called “Sustainable management and conservation of forests on Savaii Island” which has clear links to climate change and could be linked to a carbon offsetting scheme for tourism. Moreover, most countries are working on their national communications as well as their greenhouse gas inventories as required by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The Cook Islands, for example, are considering collecting specific information on tourism greenhouse gas emissions. Generally, however, the national communications do not focus on tourism and a stronger voice by tourism organizations might be beneficial.

4. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE SOUTH PACIFIC TRAVEL INDUSTRY

INTRODUCTION

Whilst debate continues in relation to the severity and rate of climate change and the significance of air transport and the wider tourism sector in contributing to changing climatic conditions, it is apparent that there are a number of significant implications which will impact upon the sector, both from the demand (market) side and from the supply (product) side. This section provides the background for the Strategic Statements and the Action Plan further below.

The major risks for the South Pacific associated with the growing focus on tourism impacts due to global warming are:

- A reluctance by a growing proportion of consumers to undertake medium and long haul air travel;

- Reduced demand due to cost increases imposed by governments as levies or taxes on the sector;
- A lack of certified Green Tourism products in the region to respond to the growing demand from consumers in environmental and Green tourism products;
- A lack of information to allow the South Pacific to meaningfully contribute to the balanced debate on climate change, which considers the three sustainable pillars of development; environmental social and economic;
- Loss of attractions including reef attractions and biodiversity due to climate change (such as coral bleaching and beach erosion);
- An increased risk of contracting serious insect borne diseases;
- The limited country awareness or knowledge of the challenges facing the tourism sector.

These implications are discussed in more detail below.

MARKET DEMAND

Aviation transport underpins the tourism sector in the South Pacific and hence any significant change in demand for air travel, particularly from long haul markets, has the potential to significantly impact upon tourism in the region. As previously indicated the indications are that a significant market shift is occurring, particularly in relation to the European market.

Potential policy responses from source market governments that increase the cost of air travel relative to other goods (the recent doubling of the UK passenger duty is an example of this). It is likely that (future) climate change mitigation policies such as carbon taxes and emissions trading schemes will have a negative impact upon the South Pacific travel sector. The long haul markets of North America and Europe for example make up almost 35 percent of the visitors the South Pacific and an even higher percentage in terms of expenditure. Japan and other Asian countries make up

an additional 10 percent. The remaining tourists come from markets in closer proximity including Australia, New Zealand and other Pacific countries.

The effects will be more severe for those countries which have a strong reliance upon the long haul sector (e.g. Tahiti depending on visitors from France) where the cost increase per passenger will be higher and the competitive position of those destinations will be more significantly eroded in those long haul markets.

Some consumers will increasingly seek out Green Tourism products, which indicates that increasingly such products may be able to charge a premium. The implication is therefore that the region's industry needs to respond to these risks and the opportunities by investing more in Green Tourism products and initiatives.

There is a danger that the South Pacific tourism sector will be marginalized in the whole debate regarding climate change and the impact of the travel sector. This marginalisation will take place unless the region is well organised and well briefed on the relevant facts and risks associated with greenhouse gas emissions. Whilst the important implications of climate change should not be overlooked (not least the potential for rising sea levels, to which the region is particularly vulnerable) it is important to recognise within the overall debate the three pillars of sustainability; namely the economic, social and environmental components. In other words it is important that the economic value of tourism to the South Pacific countries is considered and communicated to stakeholders, including potential consumers, the travel industry and source market governments. This requires considerable coordination, commitment and communications. This issue of effective communications by the region's tourism sector is critical, both in order to influence policy development which will impact upon the sector and to inform the region's tourism sectors and wider stakeholders. Communication and engagement also need to include international agencies such as the UNWTO who are taking a global role in representing the position of the tourism sector. Initiatives such as the PATA CEO

challenge should be supported to enable the south-pacific.travel member countries to influence and leverage of the broader position being developed.

It is recommended that the following messages should form the basis of the position which is communicated through a range of mediums but focusing on the internet and public relations:

- Tourism is the major export of the South Pacific and a major source of income generation and environmental protection in the region;
- The South Pacific is a low generator of carbon emissions but potentially the impacts of climate change are significant;
- Any measures taken to reduce carbon emissions should be proportionate to industries and countries contribution to climate change; a holistic approach needs to be taken, which gives due consideration to the economic and environmental benefits which tourism brings to the South Pacific region;
- The region's tourism sector is adopting a partnership approach to the issue of climate change and tourism by working internationally with UNWTO, PATA and the Pacific regional partners such as Australia and New Zealand and regionally with organisations such as SOPAC, SPC and SPREP;
- south-pacific.travel is taking proactive approach to the issue of tourism and climate change; a Green Tourism Strategic Action Plan has been developed to facilitate mitigation, adaptation and communication on the issue of climate change and to support the sustainable development of tourism in the region.

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS AND ADAPTATION

The tourism industry is heavily reliant upon favorable weather conditions; this is particularly so with the South Pacific countries which focus on outdoor leisure activities. The small islands of the Pacific are highly vulnerable to climate change, with potentially major impacts on the tourism industry, particularly in coastal areas.

A significant risk associated with increased global warming will be the impact on the marine and reef environment; whilst little specific research in the South Pacific context has been undertaken, research in Australia indicates that even small rises in sea temperature can have significant impacts upon reef systems through increased coral bleaching and increase in other negative changes to habitats such as increased number so crown of thorns or jellyfish. Studies from Australia have indicated that potentially the Great Barrier Reef could decline severely due to only relatively small changes in sea temperature.

Whilst a number of risks can be identified which will impact upon the tourism sector in the region, it is important to recognise that tourism cannot be seen in isolation. Major impacts in the pattern of demand will lead to wider impacts on many areas of economic and social policy, such as employment and labour demand. Knock on effects of any major long term market adjustment will also have a significant effect on other sectors in the region including construction, agriculture, handicrafts and a range of small and medium sized service enterprises.

Climate change adaptation strategies are important in reducing the region's vulnerability to climate change. Country level climate change adaptation strategies have been prepared by most countries aimed at minimising the adverse effects on individual countries; of particular significance for the Pacific region will be the impact of extreme events, sea level change and the impact on the regions reef systems. No tourism-specific measures have been implemented at this stage.

Key principles for adaptation are:

- Climate change has consequences for various components of tourism: appeal of a destination, transport infrastructure and operations, the resource base, tourist satisfaction and safety, and the viability of tourist facilities.

- Adaptation should be “mainstreamed” and implemented as an integral part of national and tourism development planning, environmental management and disaster management.
- Adaptation measures can be technological, managerial, behavioural or policy related; a mix of all of the above is most effective.

CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION

The mitigation of climate change through reduction in GHG emissions is a strategy that the region should pursue in order to further encourage the development of Green Tourism; however the reality is that only concerted and united efforts to tackle the problem at a global scale will address the problem. Even with immediate concerted global efforts to significantly reduce the level of GHG emission climate change is already taking place and impacts will continue to be felt in the region to a greater or lesser extent, depending on the global level of mitigation actions undertaken.

Climate change *mitigation* means reducing the human impact on the global climate. Broadly, there are four mitigation strategies:

1. Reducing energy use (i.e. energy conservation): this can for example be achieved by switching off equipment or favouring non-motorized over motorized transportation.
2. Improving energy efficiency: this largely refers to the use of new and innovative technology to decrease energy demand,
3. Increasing the use of renewable or carbon neutral energy: substituting fossil fuels with energy sources that are not finite and cause lower emissions, such as biomass, hydro-, wind-, and solar energy;
4. Sequestering CO₂ through carbon sinks: CO₂ can be stored in biomass (e.g. forests), in aquifers or oceans, and in geological sinks (e.g. depleted gas fields).

Mitigation in these four areas can be achieved through various mechanisms, including technological improvements, environmental management, and behavioural change. Policy can support all of these mechanisms.

Mitigation Measures for Tourism Operators

A low-cost approach to reduce energy use and GHG emissions is to implement ‘low hanging fruit’ in the areas of energy conservation and efficiency. Often such measures reduce operational costs of a business, especially against the background of rising global oil prices. Measures include for example:

- Improving driving behaviour (e.g. avoiding unnecessary acceleration)
- Maintaining good tyre pressure
- Maintaining the engine and cleaning oil filters
- Ensuring that vehicles are used according to purpose if there is more than one vehicle in the fleet (e.g. use of a small car when only a few passengers need to be transported)
- Switching off the engine when waiting
- Maintaining comfortable temperatures levels in guestrooms at levels, ideally between 20–25°C.
- Planting trees to provide shade, and if building new accommodation areas consider a building design (and material) that maintains cool temperatures
- Ensuring that air conditioning units are in the right location to avoid inefficient use; cleaning filters of air conditioning units regularly
- Setting water temperatures at no more than 60°C
- Covering your swimming pool to avoid heat loss (and also evaporation)
- Reducing your costs for cooling food: set the refrigerator is set at no cooler than 3°C and the freezer is between –18° and –15°C; allow hot food to cool before storing it in refrigerators and freezers, check and clean fans, condensers and compressors, ensure doors fit tightly, defrost freezers regularly

- Making the best use of daylight to avoid high electricity costs for lighting
- Using energy efficient light bulbs (fluorescent bulbs)
- Encouraging staff to switch off lights when rooms are not in use

Mitigation Through Renewable Energy

There are additional energy reduction measures that can be implemented with some investment, for example making use of renewable energy sources. A number of renewable energy sources are relevant for tourism. These are wind, photovoltaic, solar thermal, geothermal, biomass and waste (UNEP, 2003; Twinshare, 2005). Several studies have explored the extent to which renewable energy sources can be used for tourism, in particular in island destinations where energy supply based on fossil fuels is expensive. These studies come to the conclusion that the use of renewable energy sources is generally economical and technically feasible.

Wind energy is of interest in areas with average wind speeds of more than 5–5.5 metres per second (Cavallaro & Ciraolo, 2005). There are different systems for wind energy, ranging from small scale to medium scale (100–700 kW) and large scale (up to 5 MW output). Tourism businesses require small applications, unless a region invests collectively in larger units. The capital costs of wind power are generally smaller than those of solar power. While windmills produce low-carbon electricity and cause no other air pollution, they are sometimes criticised for other environmental impacts, for example noise or visual impacts. Wind energy has the disadvantage that it needs to be backed up with other energy sources in periods of insufficient wind speeds. Wind mills are also problematic in areas of with frequent storms (e.g. cyclones). A windfarm in Sigatoka, Fiji, consists of two-bladed wind mills that can be taken down in the case of a cyclone.

Solar energy can be used in three ways: to heat space, generate hot water, or to produce electricity. Many hotels in the South Pacific already use solar radiation to heat their water for guest consumption. This is a cost-effective way of providing hot

water without increasing the electricity bill. The pay-back time for solar energy panels depends on the climate and can be between 2 years in tropical destinations and 10 years in higher latitudes.

Another way of using solar energy is photovoltaic. PV systems are simple to operate and therefore attractive for a range of tourism applications. PVs have low operating maintenance costs and are reliable in terms of energy production. PV cells can be used at most locations, but they must be positioned to capture maximum sunlight. A PV system needs a component for energy storage, usually batteries (UNEP, 2003). A back-up diesel-powered generator can be necessary in some locations; however, it might also be possible to combine PV with, for instance, wind power.

Samoa and Vanuatu have experience with using coconut oil for electricity generation (blended with diesel) and as a transport fuel. Currently, the increase in production in Samoa is hampered by a number of issues, however, there is potential to use coconut oil at least to cover some parts of tourism energy demand. This could also provide a marketing advantage as it is likely to appeal to environmentally conscious travellers.

Mitigation Policy Measures

At present there are very few policies in the region (if any) that directly support mitigation specifically by the tourism industry, although some of the more generic environmental policy options would support tourism's efforts. A range of policies can be considered by individual South Pacific countries which would include:

- Mandatory vehicle exhaust emissions standards for all road vehicles
- Minimum aircraft emissions standards for inbound carriers
- Substantial action at a local government level on generic environmental measures such as water quality, infrastructure and waste management
- Implementation and enforcement of Environmental Impact Assessment policies
- Energy efficiency labelling of appliances

- Revenue generation from international visitors (voluntary or mandatory) that is invested in sustainability initiatives (or directly offsetting carbon)
- Mandatory labelling of sustainability for tourism businesses (i.e. a minimum standard)
- Incentivising of investment into energy efficiency (e.g. tax breaks), (potentially this could be for aviation operators as well as tourism operators in country)
- Marketing investment targeted at carefully selected markets (such as low energy consumers like backpackers and ecotourists)
- Investing in renewable energy initiatives for tourism, e.g. coconut-driven tourist vehicles, photovoltaic in remote areas.

5. STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

This section covers specific strategies and actions that the tourism industry can take in addressing the issue of climate change and promoting the further development of Green Tourism, including stakeholder engagement and communication, as well as adaptation and mitigation measures.

STRATEGIES

In developing the regional response to the issue of the further development of Green Tourism and climate change three key strategies emerge from the analysis of the key issues and risks. These are outlined below and specific action points for each strategy are highlighted in the Strategic Action Plan which follows:

Strategy One - Communications and Engagement

Develop a regional position on tourism and climate change and implement a coordinated communications plan to inform, educate and engage stakeholders

Strategy Two - Mitigation

Coordinate and promote initiatives across the four areas of energy conservation, energy efficiency, renewable energy and carbon offsetting

Strategy Three - Adaptation

Communicate the risks that tourism faces as a result of climate change and support sustainable adaptation measures

ACTION PLAN

In developing a Strategic Action Plan for Green Tourism a number of initiatives have been identified which can be implemented at regional, country level and industry (private sector) level which focus on specific actions. These are summarised in the Strategic Action Plan table below under each of the three identified strategies:

Table 7: Green Tourism Strategic Action Plan

Strategy One - Communication and Engagement		
Recommendation	Actions	Responsibility
1. Develop and Implement Communications Plan on Climate Change and the South Pacific Tourism Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt regional position/statement • Communicate position out to relevant media and agencies • Liaise with regional and global stakeholders and ensure regional position is incorporated into broader policy positions • Monitor climate change initiatives and policy development and communicate to the regional and national industry 	south-pacific.travel/ Countries/Industry
2. Develop regional and country web portals to support information dissemination on Green Tourism Development and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redesign websites and incorporate new content and links • Develop a brochure or special issue newsletter on climate change and tourism to be distributed to wholesalers, tourists or other agents when demanded 	south-pacific.travel/Countries
3. Undertake country level dissemination on Green Tourism and the results of this study through stakeholder workshops including other regional agencies and Green Globe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulate study findings • Conduct country level tourism and Climate Change Workshops 	south-pacific.travel/CROP Agencies/Countries/Green Globe 21
4. Continue to monitor developments in relation to climate change and tourism policy and update regional tourism stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor developments through media and international networks • Communicate to stakeholders through monthly newsletters 	south-pacific.travel/Countries

Strategy One - Communication and Engagement		
Recommendation	Actions	Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor tourists' perceptions and demands 	
5. Promote internationally accredited Green Tourism operators (such as Green Globe 21) through the SPTO website and industry communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redesign website to highlight accredited Green Globe operators in the Pacific 	south-pacific.travel/Countries
6. Further engage with regional and international agencies and donors to design and implement the Green Tourism SAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct meetings with SPREP/SOPAC/SPC to identify opportunities for partnerships • Hold discussions with country Ministries of Tourism and Environment officials • Prepare project design and submit for donor funding 	south-pacific.travel/SOPAC/SPREP/SPC/Donor agencies (e.g. EU), and the new GEF Pacific Alliance for Sustainability
7. Incorporate the outcomes from the regional GTS into country and provincial level tourism plans and policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review existing country tourism plans and identify policy gaps in relation to climate change • Revise country level plans to reflect the three GTS strategies of Communication, Mitigation and Adaptation 	south-pacific.travel/Countries
Strategy Two - Mitigation		
Recommendation	Actions	Responsibility
1. Increase awareness about greenhouse gas emissions and provide user-friendly information to tourism businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce a simple tourism industry guide on cost effective Climate Mitigation and Adaptation measures for the South Pacific tourism sector, including building design criteria and operational mitigation measures 	south-pacific.travel /Countries / Industry associations

Strategy One - Communication and Engagement		
Recommendation	Actions	Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct country level tourism and Climate Change Workshops 	
2. Further enhance country level tourism accreditation and standards programs through development and incorporation of climate change mitigation measures and benchmarking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop criteria for accommodation and tour operator benchmarking in climate mitigation measures • Conduct review of individual country standards programs and revise to reflect Green Tourism standards • Incorporate into country tourism standards programs 	south-pacific.travel/Countries
3. Support the further development of Green Tourism by promoting international standards which support environmental sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Green Globe membership through South-pacific.travel website and country NTO websites • Conduct regional Green Globe and accreditation workshop for NTOs and industry associations 	south-pacific.travel/Countries/Green Globe
4. Encourage investment in renewable and alternative energy and environmentally friendly equipment through the reduction of import duty and the introduction of tax concessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review existing taxation regulations for duty concessions and exemptions • Provide specific information to tourism operators, including price and availability of options 	Countries, cooperation with SPREP
5. Assess options and provide voluntary mechanism for carbon offsetting through link to accredited offsetting portal from south-pacific.travel and individual country NTO websites and encourage industry to do the same.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold further discussions with accredited schemes and SPREP to assess potential for regional offsetting program • Design/contract appropriate offsetting scheme • Circulate information to countries and industry to enable further linkages to be created 	south-pacific.travel/Countries/Industry

Strategy One - Communication and Engagement		
Recommendation	Actions	Responsibility
6. Enforce environmental legislation in relation to new developments and existing investments and in particular regulations in relation to pollution, waste management and environmental impact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify policy gaps Coordinate enforcement of environmental legislation 	Country environmental agencies in cooperation with Tourism Ministries
7. Encourage that climate change and sustainable tourism are included in educational curricula and business training schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss opportunities with educational institutions (e.g. USP) Develop relevant student learning material 	south-pacific.travel/ Countries/ Universities and other training institutions/ Industry associations
Strategy Three - Adaptation		
Recommendation	Actions	Responsibility
1. Encourage the 'mainstreaming' of adaptation measures into policies and planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss with relevant Government organisations to take climate change impacts and adaptation into account in policy making (e.g. sea level rise, building design) 	Ministries of Tourism in cooperation with other Government agencies
2. Encourage tourism businesses to take a long-term risk management approach to climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide information to tourism businesses what kind of climate impacts they can expect in the short, medium and long term Assess country specific risks and insurance options 	south-pacific.travel / Countries and Industry associations
3. Gather concrete information on the costs of different adaptation options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake cost benefit analysis of different adaptation options, e.g. for 	Countries and Industry

Strategy One - Communication and Engagement			
Recommendation	Actions		Responsibility
	water conservation or beach stabilisation		
4. Ensure that tourism is adequately included in disaster management plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss disaster management for tourism with the relevant Disaster management office 		Countries and Industry
5. Promote good environmental practice amongst tourism businesses to take pressure of sensitive ecosystems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review current practice and identify unsustainable operations • Review accreditation standards and ensure that levels take account of environmental issues 		south-pacific.travel / Countries and Industry associations

COORDINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

The immediate priority is to implement Strategy One on Communications and Engagement; this will also provide a firm base for the implementation of Strategies Two and Three.

In order for this regional Action Plan to be undertaken a wide range of stakeholders will need to be engaged and committed to the implementation process. This will require commitment in terms of manpower and resources from south-pacific.travel, other regional agencies such as SPREP and SOPAC, country level agencies such as the Ministries of Tourism and Environment and not least the tourism operators themselves.

south-pacific.travel will have to take a leadership role for the region's tourism sector if this Strategic Action Plan is to be implemented; this role will require the coordination of implementation with a wide range of stakeholders. A critical component of this role will be to work with regional and international partners on two fronts: firstly, to communicate the regional position on tourism and climate change and secondly to mobilise resources by developing projects which will allow the strategies and actions to be implemented. However much of the implementation in relation to the SAP will need to be achieved at a country level by both the public and private sectors. Here, mechanisms need to be developed to allow this to happen, so that the tourism sector works in a partnership approach with key agencies at and regional organisations on implementation at a country level. Individual Ministries of Tourism need to take the lead role in coordinating locally.

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Appendix II: Tourism Emissions – Fiji Case Study

Since information on tourism energy use and CO₂ emissions in the different South Pacific nations is not available, Fiji will be used as a case study to illustrate tourism's potential contribution. The actual situation in each country might vary from the Fiji example, depending on the size of tourism and its product mix. For example, lower impact accommodation (e.g. fales in Samoa) is likely to be less energy intensive than luxurious tourist resorts, which offer air conditioning, swimming pools and other amenities. Also, the distance between the actual destinations (i.e. islands and resorts) and the main gateway or arrival (typically the airport on the main island) determines emissions produced as a result from transporting tourists to and from their accommodation. Depending on distance this is done either by air or by sea, both of which are comparatively carbon intensive modes of transport.

National contribution of tourism in Fiji

It is very difficult to extract tourism or related sub-sectors from national energy statistics or GHG inventories¹⁵. An earlier study by Becken (2004) estimated CO₂ emissions from tourism in Fiji. It was found that CO₂ emissions varied widely for different accommodation businesses. Two factors appeared to have a major influence on energy consumption and CO₂ emissions, namely the type of accommodation (resort, motel/hotel and budget accommodation) and the geographical location (outer islands versus the main island).

On a per-visitor-night basis, motels, hotels and budget accommodation produced fewer emissions than tourist resorts (Table 2). The reasons for this is that most resorts maintain extensive outdoor and indoor areas, including swimming pools, diving centres, bars, restaurants, and other entertainment facilities. Moreover, resorts usually offer air conditioning in common areas as well as tourists' own rooms or apartments. Budget

¹⁵ Conversations with experts in Samoa indicated that the Cook Islands are currently undertaking a sectoral GHG inventory. This could be an opportunity to specifically analyse tourism as one sector. This information would be of great value to other Pacific Island tourism destinations.

accommodation usually operates shared facilities and has ceiling fans rather than air conditioning. Air conditioning is a key source of energy demand (see Table 3).

Table 4 Energy use and CO₂ emissions for different types of accommodation businesses in Fiji

(Source: Becken, 2004)

	Visitor nights per year (average)	Energy use per visitor-night (MJ)	CO ₂ per visitor-night (kg)
Resort	18,799	443.0	28.1
Motel/Hotel	21,679	34.2	1.6
Budget	6,600	61.4	3.7

Tourist accommodation that is located on outer islands tends to be more carbon intensive. The reason for this is that these businesses have to operate more or less self-sufficiently, and therefore have additional energy requirements, for example for treating their sewage and freezing rubbish to avoid decomposition and unpleasant smell. Transport energy use is also high given that not only tourists have to be transported to and from the resort, but also food supplies, energy (diesel and gas), water and other devices required for operating the resort.

Table 5 Electricity use in Vietnamese hotels (Source: Trung and Kumar, 2004)

Electricity consumption	4-star	3-star	2-star	Resort
Air conditioning and ventilation (%)	53	47	46	48
Lighting (%)	26	13	17	23
Water heating (%)	17	27	25	12
Other (lifts, pumps, refrigerators, etc.)	4	13	12	17

The 2004 study estimated that based on a total number of visitor nights spent in hotels in Fiji (2,891,295 as provided in the 2002 International Visitor Survey) the tourist accommodation sector contributed about 6.5% to Fiji's energy demand and CO₂ emissions.

Similarly, CO₂ emissions were estimated for tourist transport in Fiji based on travel information provided in Fiji's IVS. A minimum estimate for tourist transport's energy use in 2002 was 143 TJ, with boat transport contributing the most at 58%. The tourist transport sector emitted about 9,824 tonnes of CO₂ in total. This is equivalent to approximately 1% of Fiji's CO₂ emissions.

In total, this means that the international tourism sector in Fiji contributes about 7.5% of national CO₂ emissions for accommodation and transport. Additional emissions result from restaurants and shops and other businesses that are marginally involved in tourism. Compared with tourism's contribution to GDP, the sector is comparatively carbon-efficient at a national level. Tourism looks less favourable when emissions from international air travel are included (see below).

For comparison, the hotel sector in Samoa contributes about 5.3% to Samoa's electricity demand (data provided by the Electric Power Cooperation). The overall contribution of tourism would be somewhat higher, as some of tourism's electricity use would be accounted for under 'residential' (e.g. fale) and 'commercial' (e.g. attractions, restaurants, souvenir shops). It is recognised that a growing tourism sector will result in an increased demand for energy.

International air travel to Fiji

Energy use and carbon dioxide emissions for tourists travelling to Fiji were estimated based on the visitor arrivals provided in the IVS (2002) (Becken 2004, based on Becken 2002). It was found that the almost 400,000 tourists in 2002 used about 5,500 TJ of energy for their one-way travel to Fiji, and this resulted in CO₂ emissions of about 384,000 tonnes (Table 4).

The average emissions per tourist flying to Fiji (one-way) are 0.96 tonnes of CO₂. This compares to 1.23 tonnes for the average tourist visiting New Zealand. The reason is that New Zealand receives a much larger proportion of its visitors from far-away countries of origin, such as the United Kingdom. This increases the overall carbon footprint. Most visitors to Pacific islands come from either Australia or New Zealand. The one-way travel distance is about 3000 km. The exceptions to this are French Polynesia and New Caledonia with their high visitor arrival numbers from France. These destinations have thus a higher carbon footprint for international air travel.



Photo 2 Signpost indicating the difference to the key source markets outside the Samoa Tourism Authority Fale in Apia.

The full impact of aviation on the global climate is considerably larger than just CO₂ emissions. A factor of 2.7 (Penner *et al.*, 1999) has been proposed and widely applied to fully account for the greenhouse effect caused by air travel (e.g. water vapour and other emissions). Applying the factor would increase the emissions from international air travel to Fiji to over 1 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalents. On a per person basis, a tourist from the United Kingdom, for example emits about 7 tonnes of CO₂ equivalents, compared with an Australian tourist who emits about 1 tonne for their one-way flight.

Table 6 Visitor arrivals in Fiji, energy use and carbon dioxide emissions in 2002 (Source: Becken, 2004)

Nationality	Tourist arrivals	One-way distance (km)	Total energy use (TJ)	Total CO ₂ emissions (t)
Australia	123,606	3,169	783	54,056
New Zealand	68,293	2,157	295	20,329
United States	58,815	8,886	1,045	72,123
United Kingdom	43,393	19,032	1,652	113,968
Japan	26,382	7,111	375	25,889
Other Pacific	24,051	1,027	49	3,409
Europe	21,654	18,435	798	55,088
Canada	9,802	9,451	185	12,784
Other Areas	21,863	8,659	379	26,125
Total	397,859		5,562	383,771

Appendix III: Green Globe – Pacific Country Members

- 1. Company:** Sonaisali Island Resort, Fiji
Sector: Accommodation
Country: Fiji
ABC: Certified
Standard: Company Standard
Website: www.sonaisali.com
- 2. Company:** Castaway Island Resort
Sector: Accommodation
Country: Fiji
ABC: Benchmarked
Standard: Company Standard
Website: <http://www.castawayfiji.com/>
- 3. Company:** InterContinental Resort and Spa, Moorea
Sector: Accommodation
Country: French Polynesia
ABC: Benchmarked
Standard: Company Standard
Website: www.tahiti.interconti.com
- 4. Company:** Bora Bora Pearl Beach Resort & Spa
Sector: Accommodation
Country: French Polynesia
ABC: Benchmarking
Standard: Company Standard
Website: www.pearlresorts.com
- 5. Company:** Hiva Oa Hanakee Pearl Lodge
Sector: Accommodation
Country: French Polynesia
ABC: Benchmarking
Standard: Company Standard
Website: www.pearlresorts.com
- 6. Company:** Island Hopper Vacations Ltd
Sector: Tour Company (Wholesaler)
Country: Cook Islands
ABC: Benchmarking
Standard: Company Standard
Website:
- 7. Company:** Le Taha'a, Private Island & Spa
Sector: Accommodation
Country: French Polynesia
ABC: Benchmarking
Standard: Company Standard
Website: www.letahaa.com

- 8. Company:** Manihi Pearl Beach Resort
Sector: Accommodation
Country: French Polynesia
ABC: Benchmarking
Standard: Company Standard
Website: www.pearlresorts.com
- 9. Company:** Moorea Dolphin Center
Sector: Ecotourism Attraction
Country: French Polynesia
ABC: Benchmarking
Standard: International Ecotourism Standard
Website: www.mooreadolphincenter.com
- 10. Company:** Moorea Pearl Resort & Spa
Sector: Accommodation
Country: French Polynesia
ABC: Benchmarking
Standard: Company Standard
Website:
- 11. Company:** Nuka Hiva Keikahanui Pearl Lodge
Sector: Accommodation
Country: French Polynesia
ABC: Benchmarking
Standard: Company Standard
Website: www.pearlresorts.com
- 12. Company:** Raiatea Hawaiki Nui Hotel
Sector: Accommodation
Country: French Polynesia
ABC: Benchmarking
Standard: Company Standard
Website: www.pearlresorts.com
- 13. Company:** Tikehau Pearl Beach Resort
Sector: Accommodation
Country: French Polynesia
ABC: Benchmarking
Standard: Company Standard
Website: www.pearlresorts.com
- 14. Company:** Turtle Island
Sector: Accommodation
Country: Fiji
ABC: Benchmarking
Standard: Company Standard
Website: www.turtlefiji.com
- 15. Company:** Likuliku Development
Sector: Design and Construct
Country: Fiji
ABC: Affiliate
Standard: Precinct Planning and Design - Design and Construct Standard
Website:

- 16. Company:** Nakia Resort & Dive, Fiji
Sector: Ecotourism Accomodation
Country: Fiji
ABC: Affiliate
Standard: International Ecotourism Standard
Website: www.nakiafiji.com

Appendix IV: Review of South Pacific Accreditation and Environmental Standard Systems¹⁶

Tonga Minimum Standards Program

Background

Minimum standards were developed in 2001 as a result of an EU Report and WTO request for increased consumer protection due to the large number of tourist complaints that were received. A check-list was developed by the Tonga Visitors Bureau (TVB) and sent out to the industry for comment but there was no feedback from the industry so the process was not put in place.

System

This is a combined system which focuses very much on standards and addressing serious problem areas, keeping checks on operators and having regular contact with the industry. The inspection is a mandatory part of the process of business license renewals. The standards developed for Tonga pay particular attention to hygiene, cleanliness and quality service through training. There are four categories of accommodation; budget, apartment, motel and hotel. The initial scheme had a point system for achieving minimum standards or being accredited, however this is no longer used due to lack of human resources.

Assessment

All accommodation and restaurants are inspected by a group of five assessors; fire, public health and two from TVB. Checks are conducted on an annual basis on which the renewal of business licenses depends. There are 20 areas examined including business operations, environmental considerations, room facilities and bathrooms some with up to 17 different criteria in each area. Previously check lists with a 1-5 point system for each item were used, but this became too slow, with too much paperwork, and the form was difficult to manage with not enough space for comments. The current system has an informal review and check system for problem areas. After the site visit a letter is sent

¹⁶ South Pacific Accommodation Classification Project – Final Report – SPTO 2005

informing the operator of any issues to deal with. Six months after the initial check a follow-up visit is made to check appropriate improvements have been made.

Cook Islands Tourism Accreditation Scheme

Background

This fee-based voluntary accreditation system was set up in 1998. It was developed along the lines of the New Zealand Qualmark System as a joint venture between the Tourism Industry Council and the Cook Islands Tourism Corporation (CITC). The system started by focusing on accommodation but it was then extended to travel, transport, tour and activity operators, retailers and food and beverage providers. Accreditation is now a precondition for inclusion in Cook Islands marketing, grants and other tourism activities.

System

The Cook Islands scheme is a primarily formative-based approach which requires participating businesses to abide by the Cook Islands Tourism Charter and reach identified minimum standards in various facilities and services. There are four categories of accommodation; hotel, hostel, self-catering and guesthouse. Membership of the scheme is renewed on an annual basis subject to an inspection carried out by the CITC. The system was originally linked to a national visitor survey programme which was designed to help businesses upgrade their services by providing continuous up-to-date customer information but has been discontinued due to difficulties in distribution and collection. An appeal system is in place and the committee makes final decisions. An accreditation handbook is provided to all new applicants which details the pre-requirements, process and answers questions on the scheme.

Assessment

An assessor visits each establishment on an annual basis conducting the assessment using a simple, standardised form. Assessment begins with an interview during which various general criteria are checked. These refer to; licence to operate, membership of

association, and policies in various areas related to business operations. Each area of the hotel is then visited including up to six guest rooms. In each area the listed criteria are given a tick or a cross according to whether the assessor feels the item is up to standard or not. Those criteria marked as key (compulsory) must be in place in order for the establishment to be accredited, those marked as recommended will be compulsory next year. The criteria are a mix of quality and inventory items e.g. appearance and décor, first aid kit, spaciousness, cleanliness, washbasin, shower. Once the assessment has been satisfactorily completed, and fee paid, the property is provided with a sticker with the accreditation logo and an additional sticker with the category and year.

Samoa Star Rating

Background

The idea for a rating or accreditation programme has been considered for some time but it is only in 2003 that the development of this scheme got underway as part of the process of implementing the five year tourism plan. The Scheme was set up based on the AAA Australian model with some industry input. The assessment process was adapted from the Cook islands process.

System

The system is primarily a summative approach based on the presence or absence of particular facilities and amenities. It is a 5 star system with two main categories, hotels and beach fale. Hotels are subdivided into deluxe, standard and budget categories. It is administered by the Samoa Tourism Authority and the Samoa Tourism Authority Board handles complaints, appeals and reviews the work of the inspectors. Rating is mandatory for all accommodation and business license renewals are reliant on obtaining STA rating certificate. In some circumstances, 'geographic allowance' may be made for isolated locations or those where environmental circumstances makes it impossible to offer full services. Implementation of the scheme is due to commence in October 2005, a booklet on the scheme and the criteria used has been published with the assistance of New Zealand's International Aid and Development Agency (NZAid).

Assessment

A five person inspection team including fire and public health and industry inspectors will visit each establishment every year. All inspections take place in October and November and ratings are valid for one year from January. The hotel manager or next in command accompanies the inspector team and appointments are set a week in advance. Points are scored on the basis of the quality of each of the listed criteria 5 for excellent, 4 very good, 3 good, 2 satisfactory, 1 poor, 0 unacceptable. Points are totalled at the end to indicate what star category the accommodation falls into. Those accommodation facilities that score points in the 'marginal area' between star categories may be allocated a half star until the next year's rating when they either go up or down depending on changes made. Managers are provided with a copy of the report before the team leave but the certificate is sent later. In places with different types of rooms, one of each type of room could be sighted and then the average score given. Appeals are handled through the STA Board.

Fiji Hotels Association AAA System

Background

AAA is a private sector organization that has been recognised as the voice of motoring since 1924. It works closely with industry and is well respected. Its star rating system has been in place since the 1950s and consumers are familiar with it. AAA currently assesses 11,000 properties in Australia and the ratings are marketed using the guidebooks.

System

The system awards up to 5 black stars to participating hotels (clean basic, average/moderate, comfortable/well-appointed, excellent and international/superior) and also gives half stars for properties scoring in the 'marginal zone' between two ratings. The number of categories has increased slowly over time according to demand. It started with only hotels in 1957, added caravan parks and self-catering in the 1980s, bed & breakfasts

and guesthouse in 1990s, and over the last five years has added Backpackers, Green resorts and Houseboat accommodation. Criteria are reviewed and improved over time and allocate a particular number of points to each area such as reception, bathrooms, security and other amenities. Each area is then given points for maintenance and cleaning.

Assessment

Inspectors arrange appointments in advance, about every 12-18 months, and during the assessments verify information provided by the hotelier and that already on the database, review guest feedback and conduct an assessment using personal digital assistants to transmit the data to the central database. The assessment rates four main areas; facilities, amenities, maintenance and cleanliness. Points are allocated to each item on a case by case basis e.g. 8 points for 2 or more tennis courts, 3 points for limited gymnasium. Some elements are common to all types of accommodation and others are specific to particular types of accommodation. The total score 250-1000 rating being provided at the end along with a discussion with the hotelier.