

Project Group: 44 – Sustainable Tourism

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Comment

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Comment:

Sustainable Tourism 101

Our generation is on the lookout to implement a more sustainable lifestyle. This also includes sustainable ways of travel. As a group, we believe that the following definition of sustainable tourism by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council fits best, “tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment, and host communities” (Global Sustainable Tourism Council, 2022). At first, this global issue appeared easy to tackle, however during our discussions we concluded that it in fact is a more complex mission.

At first, we argued that it would be more sustainable to avoid far-distance destinations and remain in the region. However, it is clear that individuals have the desire to discover destinations around the world. Hence, we understand that it is impossible to cut out the far distance traveling but we must aim to minimize it as much as possible.

This links to a discussion we had on transportation methods. Traveling by airplane, especially with heavy luggage, increases the CO₂ emission whereas traveling by train or bus would be more eco-friendly. We acknowledge that nowadays people prefer comfort and fast travel, however, we believe that sustainable travel at a slower pace is worth it and will add to the experience as a whole.

Whether traveling far or regional, we would suggest preparing beforehand by doing appropriate research about the area, culture, and local habits in order to be respectful in every aspect. We would like to emphasize the importance of acting sustainably at the destination. For example, supporting smaller local businesses, using public transportation/going by bike instead of renting a car etc.

At this point in time, we are able to travel to a great extent. More people have access to travel nowadays due to increased mobility over the years. As more people from different classes are able to travel including low-income families who are obliged to select the cheaper traveling method due to financial limitations. Thus, the sustainability of their travels suffers. We are privileged to be educated on the issue of unsustainable tourism. Therefore, we believe that awareness makes a difference, and no one should be deprived of this.

Society influences our perception of what travel destinations are appealing. Hence, we overtravel these regions, creating problems for both the locals and the environment. By spreading out mass tourism and advertising less known destinations we would be able to reduce the problematic situations in popularized tourist locations. However, we face the moral

dilemma of either leaving untouched land in peace or running into the possibility of disrupting the environment and unprepared locals.

All these arguments underline the issue that finding a definite solution is not possible. People tend to disassociate themselves from the issue, acting selfishly because they believe that they as an individual will not make a difference. But we came to the realization that each small step towards sustainable travel is of high importance. To conclude, if we take action now, we will be able to have tourism that takes its environmental, social and economic dimensions into account.

Works Cited

What is Sustainable Tourism? 2022. 12 October 2022. <<https://www.gstcouncil.org/what-is-sustainable-tourism/>>.