

New Zealand Tourism Facing Threats



Tourism, one of New Zealand's biggest income generators, is now facing problems brought about by climate change. Many tourists these days want to be "environmentally-friendly". The problem with New Zealand is that the usual way of traveling here is by plane, which produces huge amounts of carbon emissions, and of course the biggest culprits are long-haul flights from the northern hemisphere.

The Tourism Industry Association has released its draft strategy through to 2015 and it identifies global warming as one of the key issues needing to be addressed. The Tourist Industry Association chief executive Fiona Luhrs claims "It's hard to read from here how intense that's going to be and what impact it is going to have on New Zealand and the tourism industry, but it's certainly going to have an impact." The country needs to adapt to this new trend. As Ms.Luhrs says, "That's going to require a commitment to carbon neutrality and environmentally friendly management of companies, and also the development of more green visitor products."

Nevertheless, tourists' concerns about carbon emissions are not the only worry for tourism businesses. The world's oil reserves are diminishing and this development will inevitably lead to increased fuel cost. Dr Suzanne Becken of Lincoln University claims that dependence on oil for tourism was large and increasing. "Oil scarcity and a lack of alternative fuels for aviation will lead to higher prices and lower demand. Tourism forecasts do not seem to take the challenge of oil availability into account and may be overly optimistic."

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