

Exploring Tourist's Attitude towards Environmentally Friendly Practices

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Abstract : Consumers are constantly reminded of their responsibility towards the environment in a world where words such as global warming, carbon footprint, recycling or 'green' everything has become common language. What was previously considered to be ordinary practices are in many instances frowned upon today and consumers are expected to individually contribute towards a greener mother earth. However unused recycle bins, single travelers in luxury cars, busy airports and vast deforested areas for new developments tell another story. The question arises whether the everyday man in the street really takes the responsibility to balance the three pillars of sustainability: the planet, its people and profit. Undeniably our activities impact on the environment where a healthy economy is needed in a fast paced global environment. The situation is further gloomed in instances where the consumer has paid for inclusive services which directly impacts on the environment. A prime example of this is the tourism industry: accommodation establishments or resorts include clean, daily washed towels and bedding, large bath tubs, inclusive use of electricity and water to name a few. This research evaluates environmentally friendly practices consumers follow at home and also when on holiday. Respondents at Bloemfontein airport, often using tourism products were included in the study. Results reveal that the majority of respondents state that they are concerned about the environment yet when questioned on donation towards endangered species, switching off lights in hotel rooms or using water sparingly a significant difference in results are evident. From the research results it is evident that consumers do not practice what they preach towards a greener environment.

Keywords : green, environment, consumer, tourism, sustainable practices

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