

Survey Results of Adventure Travel Industry Reveal Understanding of Carbon Offsets Yet Mandate Need for Increased Education, Strategic Planning

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NativeEnergy, an international leader in the carbon offsets industry, conducted a live Webinar in May, titled The Role of Carbon Offsets in Adventure Travel. As an informal survey of 50 members of the Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA) the objective was to gather perceptions of carbon offsets in the adventure travel sector. The results reveal industry perceptions and level of carbon offset comprehension.

Participating in the live Webinar and interactive survey were tour operators, destination marketing organizations, gear manufacturers and a variety of non-profit organizations. Richard Edwards of NativeEnergy co-presented The Role of Carbon Offsets in Adventure Travel, along with Brian Mullis of Sustainable Travel International.

As a veteran online travel expert, Edwards reports that the survey conveys: a desire among tour operators to use carbon offsets in a broader, responsible travel strategy, a belief that the consumer is ready and willing to help share financial responsibility, and the pressing need for more education across all levels.

'Some of the survey results were very revealing,' reports Edwards. Just 51% of all respondents admitted they had a clear understanding of what carbon offsets were and how the voluntary offset market works. Yet when asked if they had a carbon offset program currently in place, an overwhelming 84% said they did not. However, 86% felt that the carbon offsets market could be a positive solution to the climate crisis.

'This feedback clearly shows a positive feeling about carbon offset programs within the adventure travel industry,' concludes Edwards. 'Folks just need to better understand how it works and who is going to pay for it.'

The Webinar, the most well attended that the ATTA has done to date, is available online at www.adventuretravelnews.com. Industry representatives and the public are encouraged to review it in its entirety, as it is available free of charge.

Some of the online survey results:

What is the biggest obstacle for you in implementing a Carbon Offset program?

Haven't had time to investigate thoroughly: 57%

Lack of Credibility: 20%

Other: 23%

Do carbon offsets and your green/sustainable program contribute to a positive ROI for your company?

The jury is still out: 63%

We'll never be able to track it: 13%

Yes: 25%

Coming into this Webinar do you feel you have a clear idea of what carbon offsets are and how the voluntary offset market works?

Yes: 20%

No: 29%

Pretty Clear: 31%

Some idea but I'm missing a few key details: 20%

Do you think it's best to offer a voluntary opt-in program or include Carbon Offsets in your pricing?

Include in pricing: 32%

Voluntary opt-in: 40%

Voluntary opt-out: 28%

Do you currently have a Carbon Offset program in place?

No: 84%

Yes: 16%

Do you think your clients would be willing to pay more for a trip if Carbon Offsets were included in your pricing?

Maybe: 59%

No: 7%

Yes: 33%

Is the carbon offset market a positive part of the solution to climate change or a negative distraction?

Positive part of the solution: 39%

It can be positive if better regulated: 47%

Negative distraction and not a part of the solution: 14%

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