The Ecological Footprint of International Tourists in New Zealand

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ABSTRACT

Ecological Footprint Analysis (EFA) is a technique that was first developed by Wackernagel as a Ph.D. thesis in 1994, then further developed in combination with Rees and published (Rees & Wackernagel, 1995). EFA is employed in this study to assess the resource utilisation of international tourists visiting New Zealand. Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world and the ecological sustainability of tourism is becoming more important term for managing tourism. This is becoming increasingly important with tourism identified as particularly as a significant contributor to carbon emissions.

This study uses EFA to assess whether international tourists visiting New Zealand behave in a sustainable manner. Tourists are surveyed and classed into high, mid and low budget tourist types to gain a detailed account of their behaviour with particular reference to food, accommodation, transport, services, activities attractions, goods and waste. The EFA helps to identify areas of a tourist’s trip that have the greatest impact on the environment, thereby identifying ways to improve the sustainability of tourism in New Zealand. It was found that tourists generally consume more whilst on holiday than they do at home and more than New Zealand residents. The results show that international tourists’ behaviour is sustainable and New Zealand has the ecological carrying capacity to allow the number of international tourists to increase without incurring any significant ecological costs to the country.

It was found that there is a positive relationship between ‘high’ income tourists and their ecological footprint and that independent travellers have a larger ecological footprint than the package travellers; however, package travellers have a larger food and housing ecological footprint than independent travellers. The energy footprint was the largest out of the six land types of a tourist’s ecological footprint. Food is the consumption category that is the largest contributor to a tourist’s ecological footprint.
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First of all I want to thank my Mum and Brother Christopher for helping me hand out surveys in Queenstown. I really appreciate the generosity of my Uncle Peter and Aunty Kathryn for allowing me to stay with them during the final months of this research. Lastly, and most importantly, I want to thank my family for the constant encouragement and for always believing in me. This would not have been possible without you supporting me.

-Ad Majoram Dei Gloram-
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<tr>
<td>ANOVA</td>
<td>Analysis of Variance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAM</td>
<td>Commercial Accommodation Monitor</td>
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<td>DTS</td>
<td>Domestic Tourism Study</td>
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<tr>
<td>EECA</td>
<td>Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>EF</td>
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