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Ecological Footprint of Japanese Tourists in New Zealand

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I. ABSTRACT

Ecological Footprint Analysis (EFA) was employed to assess the ecological sustainability of Japanese tourists in New Zealand. To gather information, survey questionnaires were delivered to the Japanese travellers at Auckland International Airport. Furthermore, an extensive literature review, a pilot study, and participation in a full-day tour were undertaken for more information.

The average daily EF of Japanese travellers in New Zealand was ten times larger than global biocapacity and slightly larger than the bioproductivity of New Zealand. The average daily EF of Japanese travellers was larger than the EF of Japanese residents, which indicated their lifestyle and behaviour was different during their travel and that they consume more resources (in particular for transport, housing and activities). Japanese travellers had larger EFs in every consumption category but transport, housing and services components made their footprints considerably larger than that of New Zealand residents. The transportation sector is the main concern for sustainability as it was the largest source of the EF and 50 times larger than average transport footprint of a New Zealand resident. Energy land, cropland and built-up land were also larger than New Zealand residents' EF.

The size of the overall EF did not indicate clear differentiations among the segments, but different segments seemed to have different impacts. In general, school excursion and educational travellers appeared to be the most ecologically sustainable. The size of EF was also likely to correlate with the age of travellers and the length of stay. Younger Japanese travellers tended to have smaller EF than elderly travellers, especially for transport and overall energy consumption. The length of stay and the size of EF also appeared to have some correlations as the size of EFs had a tendency to become smaller with longer stays.

Japanese travellers are different from many other travellers. They tend to have larger housing footprints as the most popular accommodation types were hotels and farm/home-stay, which were the most energy intensive accommodation types. Japanese travellers were more efficient than others in some points, as many Japanese travellers prefer travelling as a group and use coaches. However, generally Japanese tended to be the very energy intensive travellers.

This study illustrated the lack of ecological sustainability of Japanese

travellers in New Zealand and suggested they could reconsider their travel behaviour to become more ecologically sustainable. Some management practices were suggested to reduce the size of EF with the future predictions about Japanese outbound tourism.

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III. TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. ABSTRACT	ii
--------------------------	-----------

II. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
-----------------------------------	-----------

III. TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
------------------------------------	----------

IV. LIST OF FIGURES.....	xi
---------------------------------	-----------

V. LIST OF TABLES	xiv
--------------------------------	------------

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
---------------------------------------	----------

1.1 Tourism Industry and Ecological Sustainability.....	1
---	---

1.2 Ecological Footprint	7
--------------------------------	---

1.3 Aim and Objectives.....	9
-----------------------------	---

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	10
---	-----------

2.1 Introduction	10
------------------------	----

2.2 Ecological Footprint Analysis	11
---	----

2.2.1 Concept of EFA.....	11
---------------------------	----

2.2.2 Limitations of EFA.....	13
-------------------------------	----

2.2.3 Ecological Footprints of the World	16
--	----

2.2.4 EFA for Tourism Sustainability	19
--	----

2.3 Tourism in New Zealand.....	20
---------------------------------	----

2.3.1 Growth of Tourism.....	20
------------------------------	----

2.3.2 Economic Impacts of Tourism in New Zealand	20
--	----

2.3.3 Social and Cultural Impacts.....	22
2.4 Tourism and Energy Use	26
2.4.1 Transportation Energy Consumption	26
2.4.2 Accommodation Energy Use	28
2.4.3 Energy Consumption in Tourist Activities/attractions	29
2.4.4 Comparisons of Energy Use International and domestic tourists.....	31
2.5 Japanese Outbound Tourism	33
2.5.1 History.....	33
2.5.2 Characteristics of Japanese Travellers	37
2.5.3 Japanese Tourist in New Zealand.....	39
2.5.3.1 Growth of Japanese tourism market in New Zealand	39
2.5.3.2 Segmentation of Japanese tourist in New Zealand	41
2.5.3.3 Economic contribution of Japanese travellers in New Zealand.....	42
2.5.3.4 Seasonality of Japanese arrivals.....	42
2.5.3.5 Special requirements of the Japanese tourists in New Zealand.....	43
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODS	45
3.1 Introduction	45
3.2 Survey	46
3.3 Pilot Study	47
3.4 Japanese Waitomo Full-Day Tour.....	49
3.5 Escorted and Package tour itinerary	49
3.6 Other Literature Sources	51
3.6.1 International Visitor Survey (IVS) and International Visitor Arrival (IVA).....	51
3.6.2 Other Sources.....	52
3.7 Analysis.....	53
3.7.1 Ecological Footprint Analysis (EFA).....	53

3.7.1.1 Ecological Footprint of Main Consumption Categories.....	55
3.7.1.2 Ecological Footprint for Land Type	58
3.7.1.3 Categorization of travellers.....	59
3.7.2 Multivariate Statistical Analysis	61
3.7.3 Ordination plot.....	61
3.7.4 Statistical Analysis	62
3.7.5 Comparisons of Ecological Footprints.....	62
3.8 Limitations of This Research	64
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS.....	65
4.1 Survey	65
4.1.1 Background of Travellers	65
4.1.1.1 Gender and Age group.....	65
4.1.1.2 Occupation	66
4.1.2 Size of Groups	67
4.1.3 Length of Stay.....	67
4.1.4 Purpose of Visit and Travel Style.....	68
4.1.4.1 Purpose of Visit	69
4.1.4.2 Travel Style	71
4.1.5 Travel Destinations	72
4.1.6 Transportation methods.....	74
4.1.7 Shopping behaviour	75
4.1.8 Meals	77
4.1.9 Accommodation.....	78
4.2 Comparison of Survey Results with International Visitor Survey (IVS) and International Visitor Arrival (IVA)	81
4.2.1 General IVS/IVA Results in 2005	81
4.2.2 Comparisons of the Survey with IVS/IVA Results	81
4.2.2.1 Purpose of Visit	81
4.2.2.2 Travel style.....	82
4.2.2.3 Demographics	83

4.2.2.4 Accommodation	84
4.2.2.5 Length of Stay	86
4.2.3 Comparisons of Japanese Travellers with All International Visitors	87
4.2.3.1 Purpose of Visit	87
4.2.3.2 Travel style.....	87
4.2.3.3 Demographics	88
4.2.3.4 Accommodation	88
4.2.3.5 Length of stay	89
4.2.3.6 Activities/attractions.....	91
4.2.3.7 Transport.....	91
4.3 Pilot Study	92
4.3.1 Survey.....	92
4.3.1.1 Background Information.....	92
4.3.1.2 Shopping behaviour.....	94
4.3.2 Transportation	95
4.4 Japanese Waitomo Full-Day Tour.....	97
4.5 Package Tour Itinerary Summary	101
4.6 Analysis	104
4.6.1 Ecological Footprint Analysis (EFA)	104
4.6.1.1 Food.....	105
4.6.1.2 Housing/Accommodation	106
4.6.1.3 Transportation	107
4.6.1.4 Goods.....	107
4.6.1.5 Services.....	107
4.6.1.6 Waste	107
4.6.2 Multivariate Statistical Analysis	108
4.6.3 Ordination.....	110
4.6.4 Statistical Analysis	113
4.6.4.1 EF of Different Segments	113
4.6.4.2 Travel Style and EF	119
4.6.4.3 EF by Gender	123

4.6.4.4 EF by Age Group	124
4.6.4.5 EF by Length of Stay.....	126
4.6.5 General Comparisons of EFs.....	128
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION	130
5.1 Survey	130
5.1.1 Overall Results.....	130
5.1.2 Interesting Opinions from the Survey	131
5.2 Ecological Sustainability of Japanese Tourism	133
5.2.1 Overall Ecological Deficit.....	133
5.2.2 Energy Consumption.....	134
5.2.2.1 Accommodation/housing	134
5.2.2.2 Services/activities.....	135
5.2.3 Transport Footprint	136
5.2.3.1 Built-up land	138
5.2.3.2 International flights	139
5.2.4 Goods	140
5.2.5 Food.....	141
5.2.6 Water	142
5.3 Comparisons of Different Segments.....	143
5.3.1 EF with Purposes of Visit	143
5.3.2 EF with Travel Styles	145
5.3.3 EF with age.....	145
5.3.4 EF with Length of Stay	146
5.4 Comparisons with Japanese Residents' EF	147
5.5 Comparisons with Other Tourists in New Zealand.....	149
5.6 Potential Solutions to Reduce EF	151
5.6.1 Tourism Industry	151
5.6.1.1 Accommodation Providers.....	151

5.6.1.2 Transport Sector	156
5.6.1.3 Food Industry	156
5.6.1.4 Tour Operators and Guide.....	157
5.6.1.5 Media and Other Information Providers.....	157
5.6.1.6 Ecotourism	158
5.6.2 Technological Improvement	159
5.7 Future Tourism	160
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS.....	161
6.1 Conclusion.....	161
6.2 Recommendations.....	164
6.2.1 Management Strategies	164
6.2.2 Further Research Requirements.....	164
VI. References	166
Appendix 1. Survey Questionnaire	177
A1.1 Survey Questionnaire in English	177
A1.2 Questionnaire in Japanese	181
Appendix 2. Travel itinerary for a pilot study tour.	185
Appendix 3. EFA Matrices.....	187
Appendix 4. Escorted Tour Route	190
A4.1 JALPAK.....	190
A4.2 Look JTB.....	191
A4.3 KNT Holiday	192
A4.4 Hankyu Express	193
Appendix 5. Detail of individual EF.....	194

IV. LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 1 Ecological Footprints of 31 nations and the global average in 2001	17
Fig. 2 Ecological Footprints and existing biocapacities of selected nations in 2001...18	
Fig. 3 The short-term arrivals of overseas visitor to New Zealand last 10 years.....20	
Fig. 4 Energy sources to total energy use by accommodation type	29
Fig. 5 Change in the number of outbound tourists from Japan.....33	
Fig. 6 Visitor nights from Japan since 1982 to 2010.....41	
Fig. 7 Visitor nights from Japan by purpose.....42	
Fig. 8 Seasonality of Japanese visitors to New Zealand.....43	
Fig. 9 Frequency distribution of age group and gender.....66	
Fig. 10 Occupations of the Japanese travelers	66
Fig. 11 Frequency distribution of the number of people travelled with	67
Fig. 12 The frequency distribution of length of stay from the survey results.....68	
Fig. 13 Purpose of visit by gender from the survey results	70
Fig. 14 The travel purpose by the age group from the survey	70
Fig. 15 Travel Style by gender from the survey results.....71	
Fig. 16 The age distribution of the Japanese travellers by the travel style from the survey.	72
Fig. 17 Transportation methods by purpose of visit from the survey	74
Fig. 18 Transportation methods by travel style from the survey	75
Fig. 19 Meal/snack consumption behaviour of Japanese travelers from the survey78	
Fig. 20 Accommodation type and guest nights by purpose of stay from the survey ...79	
Fig. 21 Accommodation types and guest nights by travel style from the survey	80
Fig. 22 The comparison of my survey, IVS and IVA for the purpose of visit.82	
Fig. 23 The comparison of the survey and IVS for the travel style.83	
Fig. 24 The comparison of my survey and IVA in age of the Japanese travellers.84	
Fig. 25 The comparison between my survey and IVS for the visitor night at each accommodation type used.	85
Fig. 26 The comparison between my survey and IVS in the number of travellers at each accommodation type.	85
Fig. 27 The comparison of the survey and IVS for the length of stay.....86	
Fig. 28 The comparison of Japanese visitors with all international visitors in New	

Zealand by purpose of visit	87
Fig. 29 The comparison of Japanese visitors with all international visitors in New Zealand by age group	88
Fig. 30 The comparison of Japanese visitors with all international visitors in New Zealand by the number of nights in main accommodation type.....	89
Fig. 31 The comparison of Japanese visitors with all international visitors in New Zealand by the length of stay.....	90
Fig. 32 The occupations of the travellers in the pilot study trip	93
Fig. 33 The household income of the travellers in the pilot study trip.....	93
Fig. 34 The reasons to choose visiting New Zealand in the pilot study trip.....	94
Fig. 35 The amount of money spent for souvenir shopping in the pilot study	95
Fig. 36 The total number of souvenir items purchased during the pilot study trip	95
Fig. 37 A photo of the bus used for Waitomo Caves Tour.....	99
Fig. 38 Morning and afternoon tea / toilet breaks in Huntly.....	99
Fig. 39 Souvenir shop in Roseland BBQ Restaurant in Waitomo	100
Fig. 40 Waitomo Glowworm Caves, in Otorohanga, Waitomo	100
Fig. 41 The average duration of shower from the survey.	107
Fig. 42 Classification of Japanese tourists by purpose of visit.....	109
Fig. 43 Classification of Japanese tourists by travel style	110
Fig. 44 Ordination plot of individual EF of Japanese tourists by purpose of visit	111
Fig. 45 Ordination plot of individual EF of Japanese tourists by travel style	112
Fig. 46 The average daily EF with standard error by purpose of visit.	115
Fig. 47 The average daily EF with standard error for housing category by purpose of visit.....	115
Fig. 48 The average daily EF with standard error for transportation category by purpose of visit.....	116
Fig. 49 The average daily EF with standard error for goods category by purpose of visit.....	117
Fig. 50 The average daily EF of Japanese tourists with standard error for services category by purpose of visit.....	117
Fig. 51 The average daily EF with standard error for energy footprint by purpose of visit.....	118
Fig. 52 The average daily EF with standard error for built-up land by purpose of visit.	119

Fig. 53 The average daily EF with standard error by travel style	120
Fig. 54 The average daily EF with standard error for housing category by travel style	121
Fig. 55 The average daily EF with standard error for goods category by travel style	121
Fig. 56 The average daily EF with standard error for fossil energy land by travel style	122
Fig. 57 The average daily EF with standard error for built-up land by travel style...	122
Fig. 58 Average EFs with standard error for male and female Japanese travellers....	123
Fig. 59 Average transportation EFs with standard error for male and female travellers.	124
Fig. 60 The individual EFs of Japanese tourists by age group	125
Fig. 61 The individual transportation footprints by age group	125
Fig. 62 The individual energy footprints by age group	126
Fig. 63 The individual EFs by length of stay for travellers who stayed less than 30 days	127
Fig. 64 The individual housing footprints by length of stay for travellers who stayed less than 30 days	127
Fig. 65 The individual energy footprints of Japanese tourists by length of stay	128
Fig. 66 Photo of a leaflet in bathroom.....	154

V. LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Annual EF of New Zealand, Japan, and the world average in 2001	18
Table 2 EF distributions of New Zealand, Japan, and the world average	18
Table 3 Tourism contribution to New Zealand economy	22
Table 4 Social effects of tourism.....	24
Table 5 Positive and negative effects from the cross-cultural tourist-host contact.....	25
Table 6 Energy consumption for different transportation in New Zealand	27
Table 7 The average fuel consumption per 100 km	27
Table 8 The energy intensity of each accommodation type.....	28
Table 9 Energy intensity for tourist attractions/activities	30
Table 10 Energy use by domestic and international tourists.....	32
Table 11 Energy use of an average domestic and international tourist	32
Table 12 Information on resource consumption estimated and other things noted during the trip.....	48
Table 13 Tour companies (wholesalers and retailers) and their website addresses.....	50
Table 14 References/bibliographies for data applied for calculation of EF.....	52
Table 15 Definitions for each travel styles.	60
Table 16 The purpose of visit and travel style from the survey	69
Table 17 Average and median for length of stay by travel purpose from the survey ...	70
Table 18 Average and median for length of stay by travel style from the survey	72
Table 19 The total number and percentage of visit by the destinations	73
Table 20 The number of souvenir items purchased from the survey	76
Table 21 Shopping behaviour by purpose of visit from the survey	77
Table 22 The average length of stay by purposes of visit from IVS and my survey ...	86
Table 23 The average length of stay by origin (from key markets)	90
Table 24 Comparison of energy intensive activities undertaken by Japanese visitors and all international visitors.....	91
Table 25 Details of buses used during the pilot study	96
Table 26 Scenic Tour: Waitomo Express Full-Day Tour (for Japanese) Itinerary.....	98
Table 27 Details of the bus used in the tour.	98
Table 28 One example of escorted tour itinerary for 8 days tour (from Jalpak).....	102
Table 29 One example of the meal plan - Hankyu Express 8 days escorted trip.....	103

Table 30 Summary statistics for EFA and the length of stay.	104
Table 31 Ecological Footprint of an average Japanese traveller per trip.....	105
Table 32 Ecological Footprint distributions for an average Japanese traveller	105
Table 33 The correlation coefficients for axis 1 and 2 of the ordination plots	112
Table 34 Average EF by purpose of visit and travel style.	113
Table 35 T-test results (P - values) for each purpose of visit	115
Table 36 T-test results (P - values) for housing category by each purpose of visit	116
Table 37 T-test results (P - values) for transportation category by each purpose of visit	116
Table 38 T-test results (P - values) for goods category by each purpose of visit	117
Table 39 T-test results (P - values) for services category by each purpose of visit	118
Table 40 T-test results (P - values) for energy footprint by each purpose of visit	118
Table 41 T-test results (P - values) for built-up land by each purpose of visit.....	119
Table 42 T-test results (P - values) for housing category by travel style.....	121
Table 43 T-test results (P - values) for goods category by travel style	122
Table 44 T-test results (P - values) for built-up land by travel style	123
Table 45 Daily EF of resident in New Zealand, Japan, and the world compared with the Japanese travellers in New Zealand.....	129
Table 46 Daily EF of New Zealand resident and Japanese travellers in New Zealand by consumption category.....	129
Table 47 Travel choice within the transport and accommodation sub-sectors that characterise international tourists in New Zealand	138
Table 48 A checklist of energy-efficiency options developed by Environmental Hotels of Auckland and South Pacific Tourism Organisation	155
Table 49 Percentage of energy saved if the products were recycled.....	155