

## EXERCISE 8.1

### SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL?

This exercise is concerned with recent developments in terms of the emphasis placed on achieving sustainability in relation to tourist behaviour. List the kinds of tourism activities that you and your peers regularly engage in and the kinds of social, cultural, economic and environmental impacts that those trips might have. Then answer the following questions:

How could each of these impacts be mitigated?

How do you feel about your environmental footprints?

Identify unsustainable tourism practices in your own home region or country.

Why have consumers begun to feel concerned about their own impacts?

What would you do to communicate the ideology of sustainable tourism to a larger proportion of international tourists?

Now read the following advice.

Advice for would-be sustainable tourists:

**Research alternatives** so you can help support environmental conservation, protect cultural heritage and promote cross-cultural understanding and economic development when you travel.

**Be culturally sensitive.** Learn about the places you plan to visit. Respect the values, customs and beliefs of local people. Foster a greater understanding of their culture and their environmental issues. You'll be rewarded with a more enriched experience.

**Make meaningful connections with local people.** Chat with the locals and try to speak their language. Challenge yourself and do like the locals do, just for one day. Discover life from their perspective.

**Give back.** Buy locally produced goods, become a patron of locally owned businesses and don't get too carried away when bargaining. Find a project, health clinic or school to donate to, or volunteer your time. Feel a sense of purpose when you travel.

**Conserve natural resources when travelling.** Avoid products sourced from rare and endangered species, turn off lights and the a/c, think about your waste disposal, and offset your carbon emissions from air and land travel.

Sustainable International Travel (2007) *Sustainable Travel International*.  
[www.sustainabletravel.com](http://www.sustainabletravel.com)

Think of examples of how this advice could be put into practice.

What other advice could you offer to the concerned tourist or traveller?

Is sustainability a realistic goal for the international tourism industry?