



Climate Action Plan 2022

This document follows the framework recommended in the Glasgow Declaration, of which ETOA was a launch partner and supporting signatory. As we are a trade association that also offers products and services, this a hybrid plan for our public policy role as well as our commercial activity.

Measurement

We will measure:

- The carbon footprint of our in-person [trade events](#)
- In-person event delegates' travel and purpose*
- Our back-office operations including home working and team travel
- The number of our [member organisations](#) active on topic (for example, by declaring a climate emergency and/or publishing a climate action plan online)

Once measurement mechanics are finalised, we will develop KPIs and a management dashboard to monitor performance, and a template for an annual report. Given their increased use and significance, we will investigate how best to measure the footprint of online events delivered with cloud-based services. We will be transparent about our audit and offsetting activity: see **Benchmarking and Mitigation Strategy** below.

*mode of transport used, and whether or not the event was the only or primary reason for travel

Decarbonisation

Our efficiency and reduction strategies include the following:

- Events
 - Meat-free menus, single use plastics reduction, and use of reusable and recyclable materials.
 - Continual development of online service options.
 - Request and encourage verified carbon footprint measurement from vendors, committing to transparency in reporting if insufficient data is available.
- General operations
 - Reduce office energy footprint, consumables and commuting.
 - Reduce printed materials in favour of enhanced online alternatives.
 - Implement good practice in procurement, facilities use and business travel, including a requirement to use train travel where practical.

Regenerate

ETOA's activity relates to regenerative tourism in the following ways, which we will continue to develop together with our members and partners.

- Destination engagement on tourism's products, operation, value, and impact.
 - Actual and potential conflict and stress arising from tourism.
 - Good practice in stakeholder dialogue and consultation.
 - The respective contribution of domestic and visitor demand to the range and viability of services and amenities: opportunities and threats arising.
 - How tourism can add value, beyond its economic contribution.
 - How tourism's negative impacts can be mitigated.
 - Tourism's role in safeguarding natural and cultural heritage.
 - Product development, diversification, promotion.
 - Visitor flow and capacity management: data, tools, policy, and practice.
 - Taxation: impact of tax policy and revenue on destination and community resilience, and related issues of competition, fairness, and reciprocity.
- Contributing to events and work programmes run by OECD, UNEP, UNWTO and other expert bodies that relate to regenerative tourism.

Collaborate

ETOA does not have in-house scientific expertise on sustainability, so we work with a range of experts on topic. We gratefully acknowledge the support of our climate partner, [TerraVerde Solutions](#), and the members of our climate action advisory group in the development and implementation of this plan.

While recognising and respecting that our members' primary concern is a return to commercially viable operations, which our activities are designed to support, ETOA will devote resources to a strategic and outward-facing role in industry's transition to long-term sustainability. To that end, we will:

- Raise awareness through events and communication: as a launch partner and supporting signatory of the [Glasgow Declaration](#) we will encourage our membership and wider network to sign up, and share its [news and updates](#).
- Support development of low carbon transport, including coach and train travel, and effective mitigation strategies for aviation.
- Continue to develop smart partnerships on policy and practice in sustainability.
- Recognise and encourage good practice and support related initiatives.
- Contribute industry insight and expertise to policy development.
- Provide access to advice and expertise to support climate action.
- Work with destinations, policy makers, operators, and the supply chain to develop mutual benefit arising from carbon reduction and reporting.

Finance

In its support of ETOA declaring a climate emergency in 2020 and its agreement that revenue from commercial activity may be ring-fenced to fund high-quality carbon offsets, ETOA's board agrees financial and management resources for this climate action plan.

Through its participation in public policy forums and discussion with our partners and other stakeholders, ETOA will raise awareness of funding instruments in support of effective climate action. We will continue to argue for the integration of tourism in wider strategic planning, funding, and policy instruments at EU, national, and regional levels.

Background

The European Tourism Association (ETOA) [declared a climate emergency](#) with [Tourism Declares](#) in 2020, joined UNFCCC's '[race to zero](#)', and supported the subsequent [Glasgow Declaration](#). As we engage in both public policy and commercial activity, our climate action plan has three objectives:

- Reduce and mitigate our own organisational carbon footprint
- Reduce and mitigate the footprint of the products and services we sell
- Support tourism's transition to net zero, with primary focus on activity to 2030

We believe both industry and destination appeal and competitiveness will be enhanced through effective climate action. Without it, the space within which tourism can thrive will diminish, and the adverse consequences of climate change will worsen. Done well, tourism should remain a mainstay of the European economy for the foreseeable future.

Our purpose is to influence, and that often requires physical attendance. If we do not accept an invitation, others will. The crisis reinforced the value of online product and services, but the demand for and value of in-person interaction for business and leisure remains high.

ETOA, like any other trade association, works for its members. Many of those have an interest in long-haul tourism which depends on aviation. We run events, some of which require travel to attend. We participate in trade and public policy events. These activities will continue, so we have a duty to maximise their value and minimise any adverse impact.

Benchmarking and mitigation strategy

Our carbon footprint benchmarks are based on pre-pandemic activity when we ran six in-person ETOA trade events in a calendar year (this year, we plan two). Including delegate flights, our 2019 CO₂e footprint was 708 tonnes. Excluding flights, our footprint was 88 tonnes, of which 60 tonnes were attributable to our general operations.

Due to COVID-19, our footprint has diminished. We did not deliver any in-person events from mid-February 2020 until late October 2021. We also reduced our operational footprint: our business travel was next to nil, and in 2021 we gave up one of our permanent offices.

At time of writing, commercial growth is returning. For events, while we intend to become more carbon efficient per delegate, absolute numbers may increase over time if in-person events remain commercially successful, in parallel with an increase in use of online formats.

The crisis has driven change that reduces our carbon intensity. From 2022, the team works largely remotely, and our events programme will be a mix of online and in-person activity. We will seek to offset our residual carbon footprint for in-person events and general operations.

Offsetting, and the market for related product, is problematic, but we consider it a necessary part of our strategy. Given our role in policy and good practice, ETOA will present its offsetting strategy as a transparent exercise to illustrate related difficulty and opportunity.

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