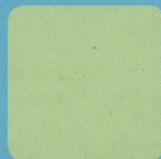
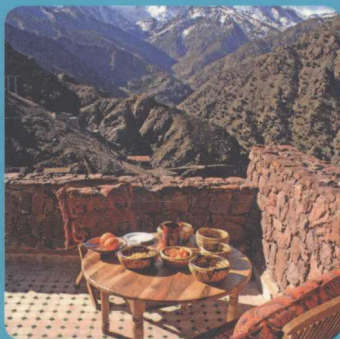


alastair fuad-luke

the eco-travel handbook

the complete sourcebook for business and pleasure



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the **eco-travel** handbook

a complete sourcebook for business and pleasure

with over 800 colour illustrations



 **Thames & Hudson**

Dedication

To my children, Alexander and Francesca, and their children's children; and to the visionaries in the travel and tourism industry who strive for a better future.

Acknowledgments

I would like to extend my gratitude to all the individuals, owners and managers of the eco-destinations featured in the book – for their vision and energy, and for investing time in answering my questionnaire and supplying information, photographs and illustrations.

Special thanks to the following for the provision of photographs: Craig Zendel, Guido Cozzi, Jonas Sandholm, Chumbe Island Coral Park; Edson Endrigo, Cristalino Jungle Lodge; Åsa Frick and Staffan Widstrand, Larsbo Gård; Dick Sweeney and Mike Gebicki, Paperbark Camp; Simon Heyes at Senderos; the Worldmapper project at the University of Sheffield, UK, with the University of Michigan, USA; Paul Fearn, Youth Hostels Association, UK; Nicola McCrae, Scottish Youth Hostels Association, UK; and Bird Island, Can Marti, Cardamom House, Chan Chich Lodge, Kasbah du Toubkal, Ponta dos Ganchos, Posadas Amazonas Lodge Peru, Soneva Fushi & Six Senses Spa, The Second Paradise Retreat, The Summer House, Tongabezi Lodge and Villas Ecotucan.

I express my gratitude to the designers and manufacturers who contributed to the section on eco-products, especially Gregor Arndt and Christian Rokosch, Supernova Design/Waldmeister.

I give sincere thanks to Lucas Dietrich and Cat Glover at Thames & Hudson for their unflagging support and steadfast personal contributions throughout the project. As copy editor, Ingrid Cranfield provided rigorous and energetic attention to my text, for which I'm very grateful; and thanks to Grade Design for a wonderful and colourful layout.

Lastly, I am indebted to Dina, my wife, who helped collate data while providing constant sustenance through the long gestation period for the book.

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Eco-travel

The concept of 'eco-travel' succinctly manages to combine two of the key challenges of the 21st century. The first challenge is deeply embedded in our contemporary way of living, socializing and doing business, which involves considerable amounts of travel. The second challenge is that all human travel inevitably impacts on the totality of our environment and on nature, including human socio-ecosystems. This is the age of hypermobility: human societies resemble more a 'mobilization' than 'civilization'. Everybody and everything (goods, raw materials) is moving in the global economy, at a pace and in a quantity unprecedented in human history.

'Eco-' signifies 'ecological', a way of acting that tries to reduce adverse impacts on all living creatures and ecosystems (including other humans and their socio-economic systems). **Eco-travel** takes into account socio-cultural and economic impacts to encourage **sustainability**. It embraces **eco-tourism**, but also goes beyond it. To accept the concept of eco-travel is to recognize this multi-dimensionality.

There is no 'one fix' solution for eco-travel because 'eco-' recognizes the unique biology, geology, hydrology and *genius loci*, the real local distinctiveness of each place and its peoples. An eco-traveller has a heightened sense of awareness of the potential and real consequences of his or her actions, but actively seeks ways of travelling better by contributing more to the places visited and by treading with a lighter ecological footprint.

How much do we travel today?

The phenomenon of **globalization** has contributed to increased travel for the purposes of business, socializing, leisure and pleasure (Part 1, 'The Idea of Travel', p. 10). The geographical and virtual range of human networks has spread beyond the village or town or city, beyond identifiable cultural or biological regions (**bio-regions**) and national boundaries. This has fundamentally affected how and where we travel to work, socialize and find relaxation or adventure. Of course, not everyone has experienced this radical shift. Indigenous cultures and societies deeply rooted in place, in specific socio-cultural systems or caught in poverty, may still confine their travelling within well-defined boundaries. Just 10%, or 665 million, of the world's 6.6 billion population form the elite club of globetrotters called tourists. Predictions are that by 2050 there will be 1.6 billion tourists. By default, this privileged group of people carries specific responsibilities for our planet's health.

Travel for work

Over the last 25 years, and especially the last decade, people are travelling more often, for longer distances and are spending more time travelling for work. Travel for work has changed markedly with the advent of low-cost airlines and high-speed trains. Daily commuting between countries in Europe, for the purpose of work, is a reality. Despite improvements in public transport efficiency in Europe, even more time is spent travelling by car. The average Briton travels 10,900 kilometres (6,815 miles) per annum, 80% by car, just within the UK, representing an increase of 5% from 1991 to 2001.² Reliance on the car is seen in all facets of life. Many parents in the UK drive their children an average distance of 2.4 kilometres to school, causing congestion, pollution and a higher incidence of asthma for the children who still do walk or cycle.

Travel for leisure and pleasure

The World Tourism Organization notes that the top 15 tourism-spending nations (excluding transport) account for 65.3% of the world market share.³ The top five countries were the USA (13%), Germany (10.6%), the UK (7.8%), Japan (7.2%) and France (4.1%), accounting for 42.7% of all tourism spending. Between 1985 and 1999, international tourist arrivals worldwide doubled from 326 million to 657 million and receipts grew from US\$116 billion to US\$455 billion. Tourism is a mega-business.

In the UK, the upward trend in international tourism expenditure seems to be matched by an increased frequency of flying. In just one decade, 1990–2000, the total distance flown by British travellers doubled from 125 billion kilometres to 260 billion kilometres (78 billion miles to 162 billion miles).⁴ Is this trend sustainable or do we need to search for alternative experiences?

The evolving idea of eco-travel

The idea of eco-travel evolves in the context of the challenge of *sustainable development*. Eco-travel embraces a wide lexicon of terms in contemporary debate, including numerous definitions of and synonyms for *eco-tourism* (Part 4, 'Resources', Glossary, p. 326): Ron Mader discusses *responsible tourism*, *ethical tourism* or *travel*, conscientious tourism, adventure travel, alternative tourism, agro-tourism, civic tourism, geo-tourism, heritage tourism, independent travel, pro-poor tourism, reality tours, sustainable tourism, volunteer tourism (service learning), rural tourism, urban ecotourism; also, more recently, responsible travel, contrarian travel, urban ecotourism and mutually beneficial tourism.⁵ Mowforth and Munt list the many descriptors for new forms of tourism that combine personal, ecological and socio-cultural objectives: Academic, Adventure, Agro-, Alternative, Anthro-, Appropriate, Archaeo-, Contact, Cottage, Culture, Eco-, Ecological, Environmentally friendly, Ethnic, Green, Nature, Risk, Safari, Scientific, Soft, Sustainable, Trekking, Truck, Wilderness and Wildlife.⁶ These terms contrast with the general perception of a budget, mass-tourism holiday and suggest a kind of tourism that is about the individual and the host community or place.

Why travel?

Although travel for work seems to be necessary to earn a living in the global economy, our choices for socializing, leisure and pleasure are more flexible. Ultimately, every traveller must ask, 'why travel?' As Alain de Botton notes: 'We are inundated with advice on where to travel to; we hear little of why and how we should go – though the art of travel seems naturally to sustain a number of questions neither so simple nor so trivial and whose study might in modest ways contribute to an understanding of what the Greek philosophers beautifully term *eudaimonia* or human flourishing.'⁷

The Eco-Travel Handbook seeks to help raise the reader's awareness and enable him or her to make appropriate choices and decisions. The reality of contemporary travel and tourism is set against emerging eco-innovations for everyday, business, tourist, slow and, even, virtual travel (Part 1, 'The idea of travel'). Part 2, 'Eco-destinations', celebrates the owners and managers of 200 accommodation destinations worldwide in 61 countries that welcome and encourage eco-travellers. Objects and artifacts that assist the eco-traveller are also illustrated, ranging from mobility to personal and specialized products (Part 3, 'Eco-products'). Lastly there is a 'Resources' section (Part 4) offering detailed information and tips for the everyday and specialist eco-traveller.

¹ Hypermobility is a term coined by Professor S. Vertovec, Oxford University, to describe the phenomenon induced by low-cost or budget airlines that permits people to travel for leisure, business or new career and lifestyle developments.

² Cited in L. Hickman (2005) *A Good Life*. London: Transworld Publishers, pp. 142, 144.

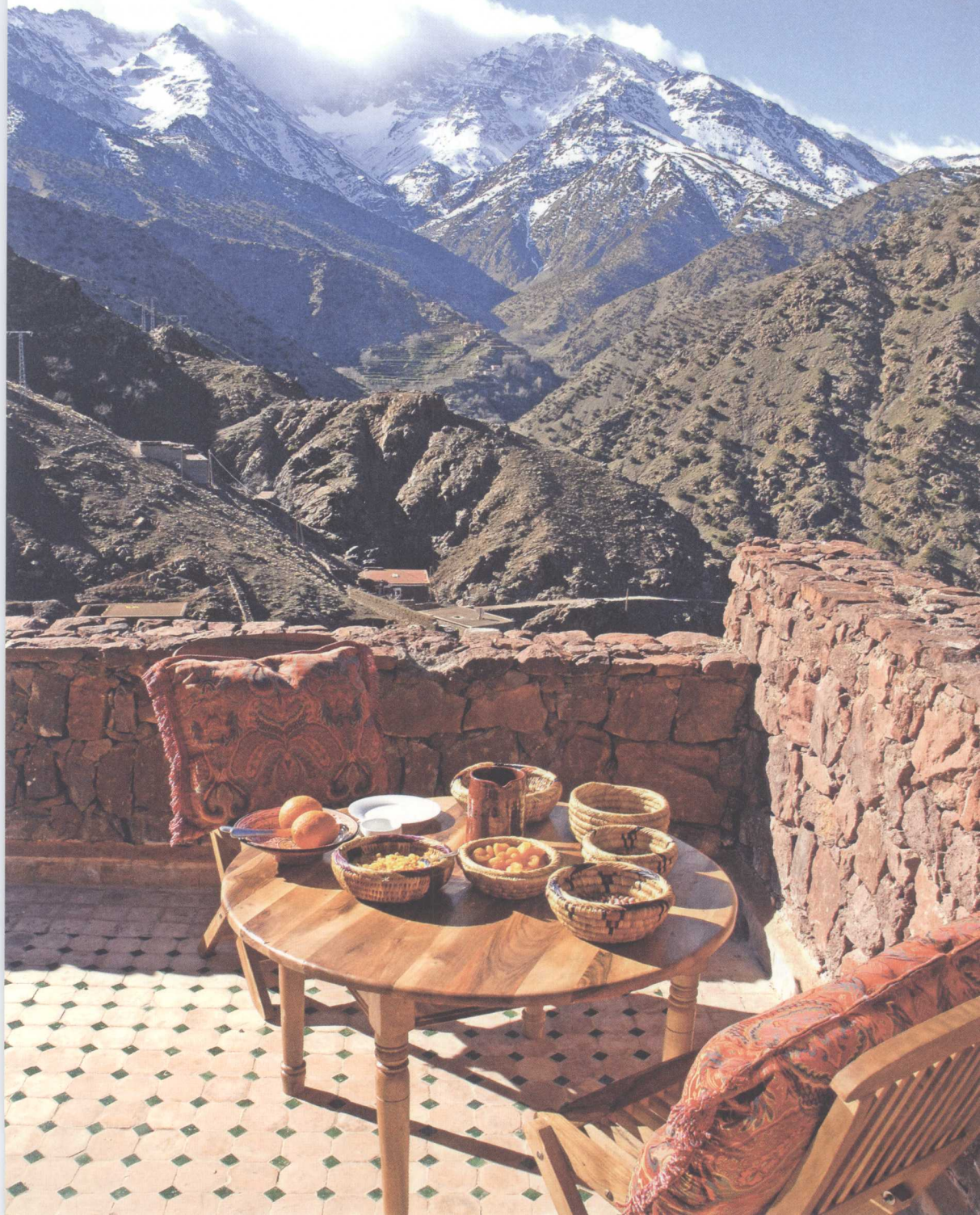
³ World Tourism Organization (2001) Tourism Highlights, cited in M. Mowforth and I. Munt (2003) *Tourism and Sustainability: Development and new tourism in the Third World*. Third edition. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 16–17.

⁴ Cited in L. Hickman (2005) *A Good Life*. London: Transworld Publishers, pp. 142, 144.

⁵ See R. Mader 'Exploring ecotourism', www.planeta.com, accessed 4 January 2007.

⁶ M. Mowforth and I. Munt (2003) *Tourism and Sustainability: Development and new tourism in the Third World*. Third edition. London and New York: Routledge, p. 93.

⁷ A. de Botton (2002) *The Art of Travel*. London: Penguin, p. 9.



PART ONE

The idea of travel

Every day there are billions of people on the move, travelling for work, to meet family and friends, for pleasure or, sadly, to avoid oppressive regimes, famine and war. This book focuses on travel for pleasure and work. How can we contribute to reducing the negative impacts of travel on the environment? How is it possible to maximize the benefits we travellers bring to individuals and to communities of which we are transient members? These questions highlight some of the most challenging issues relating to commuting and tourism, including the use of energy and water resources; the generation of waste and pollution; the destruction of habitats, ecosystems and communities; the exploitation of labour; and the economic role of travel today.

A world on the move

The real impacts of travel on the environment, societies, cultures and economies are not evenly distributed around the globe. People from the wealthier nations or from pockets of wealth in the poorer nations account for a higher than average number of journeys by car and by air and consequently have a higher environmental impact than others. Some countries are more visited than others.

An edifying book called *The Atlas of the Real World*¹ is of great help in understanding the complexity of travel today. *The Atlas*, which has been created by three of the team behind the Worldmapper² project and gathered from a number of sources including the United Nations, consists of 366 maps each representing 200 territories. The maps are equal-area cartograms, which re-size each territory according to the variable – the quantity of data – being mapped³, and should be compared and interpreted with a ‘baseline’ land-area map.

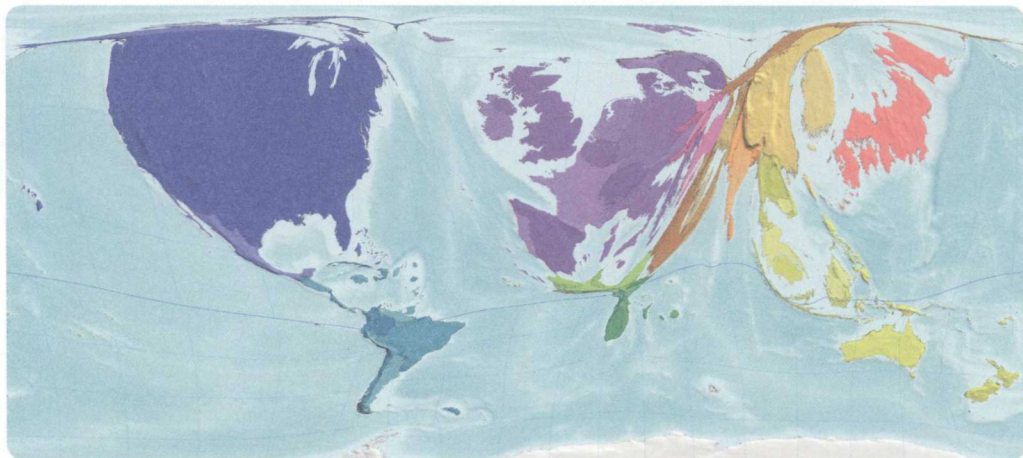
Modes of travel

Air travel

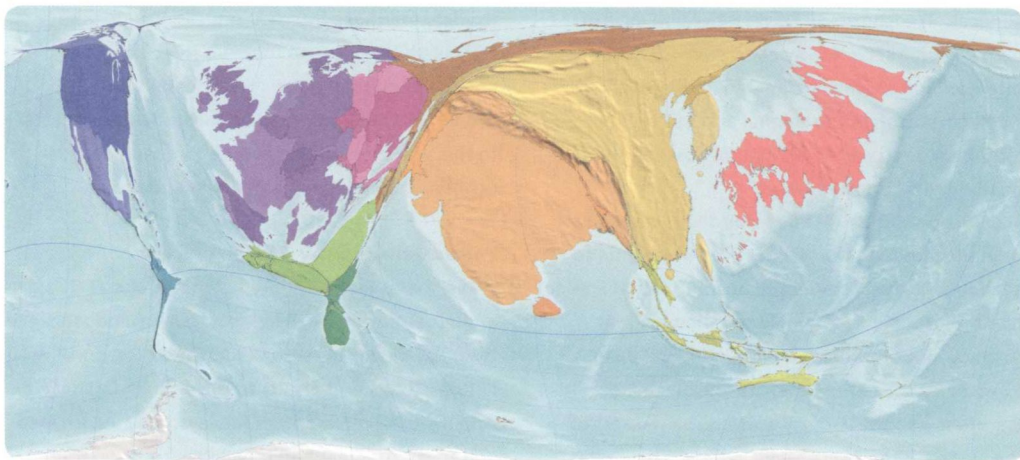
The ‘North’ clearly accounts for significantly more departures, flights and passengers than the ‘South’, the most frequent flyers originating from the USA, western Europe (especially the UK and Germany), Japan and Republic of Korea (South Korea). According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), these countries also tend to have the biggest tourism spend (see pp. 8, 13), although the Worldmapper data does not distinguish between business, tourism and other flights.

Travel by rail

Railways are a popular form of transport in Europe, North Africa, India, China, South Korea and Japan. Rail networks are well developed in Europe, India and Japan, but underdeveloped in the southern hemisphere apart from Australia and New Zealand. Although North America has a good rail network, travellers generally prefer flying to rail travel.



1. Cartogram showing the total number of flights taken in 2000 by passengers on aircraft registered in each territory. Total number of air passengers worldwide in 2000 was 1.6 billion (thousand million).



2. Cartogram showing the total number of rail passenger kilometres taken in each territory in 2003. In that year, the world total distance was 2.2 trillion (million million) kilometres.

Between 2004 and 2007 air passenger numbers worldwide increased 8% per year. The UK's Office for National Statistics has reported that trips abroad from the UK trebled from 1981 to 2005 to 66.4 million, air travel accounting for 81% of the trips. Most sources predict that global air travel will continue to increase, possibly even trebling by 2030. The aviation industry claims it is responsible for just 1.6–2% of global CO₂, but in certain countries it is much higher than this; in Britain the figure is 6%.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPPC) says the real impact of aviation is 2.7 times that of CO₂ output alone, because other **greenhouse gases** are injected into the upper atmosphere.

The 170 members of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) oppose inclusion of aviation in the European emissions-trading scheme. Kerosene (aeroplane fuel) is currently not taxed in a similar way to petrol on the forecourt. To reduce CO₂ emissions and to comply with the 1992 Kyoto Protocol, flying habits in the North will have to change.

Travel on the road network by car, moped and motorcycle

Car usage is highest in North America, Europe (especially the UK, Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Austria), South Korea and Japan. Recently Malaysia and some of the other ASEAN nations have joined this group. Moped and motorcycle travel is very high in most of Asia (especially India, China, South Korea, Japan and South East Asia) and also in Europe. Europe, India and Japan have the most extensive road networks.

Tourism

Tourism movements and economics

According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization, international tourist arrivals grew on average 6.5% per year from 1950 (25 million) to 2005 (806 million).⁴ Tourism, worth US\$525 billion, accounts for 6% of global exports of goods and

services. Transport and travel represent 52% of global export services. By 2020 over 1.6 billion international arrivals are anticipated annually, 1.2 billion being intra-regional and 378 million long-haul. So travel, in all its forms, is big business and is expanding.

Europe is the most popular destination and origin for tourists worldwide. Everyone wants to see Europe, the Mediterranean countries of France, Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece being a real magnet for both European and non-European tourists. At the same time, Europeans, especially Germans and the British, want to see the rest of the world. In the Asia-Pacific region, Thailand is popular and Malaysia becoming surprisingly so. Malaysians are frequent tourists too, as are the Japanese and South Koreans. So it is incumbent primarily on the Europeans and Asians, the real globetrotters, to change their habits.

Who is making the money from tourism?

The countries bordering the Pacific and South East Asia (Australia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam) and the Far East (China and Hong Kong) are making the most money from tourism. Many nations aren't making net profits from tourism, especially in the southern hemisphere and throughout Africa (South Africa excepted), but neither are they experiencing an exodus of currency that is being spent on tourism in other countries.

A country may suffer tourism net losses when its nationals travel extensively and inject large sums of money into other countries' tourist industries. In Europe this includes the British, Germans, Belgians, Dutch and Scandinavians. Elsewhere, citizens from the Middle Eastern states (especially Kuwait and UAE), South Korea and Japan are frequent outbound

tourists. All these frequent travellers carry a huge responsibility because they can forge positive change by choosing eco-travel destinations and modes of travel with lower environmental impacts. In this way they can contribute to genuine socio-economic benefits in the recipient country.

The tourism industry – friend or foe?

Trans-national and national corporations (TNCs and NCs) dominate the global tourism industry, from the big hotel chains (such as Accor, Forte, Hilton Hotels and Hyatt) to the airlines (including American Airlines, British Airways, KLM, Lufthansa and Japan Airlines) and travel agencies and tour operators (for instance, BA Holidays, Saga, Swire Group and Thomson). These companies exert huge power and control over the investment of capital, generation of revenue for their shareholders and orders for their suppliers. In the 1990s, 55–77% of gross tourism revenues in developing countries was actually lost to imports, that is, for every US dollar spent, only 23–45 cents were being spent in the host country.⁵ What might appear to be a buoyant tourist industry in a destination might not be contributing significantly to the local economy. Every tourist thus needs to look more closely at where his or her hard-earned cash is actually ending up.

Key sustainability issues for travellers

Several key inter-related *sustainability* issues are colliding to pose huge questions to all travellers: *climate change*, *peak oil*, world population growth and poverty, the death of languages and culture and the destruction of ecosystems, plant- and animal life.