

## How Ethical is Your Travel?

Tourism Concern has recently criticised the Travel Industry for failing to live up to the goal of Ethical Travel. They believe that very few tour operators actually deal with the fundamental issues of how travel affects a local economy, particularly where the government of that country is either unable or unwilling to create the right conditions for trade.

Tourism Concern consider that Tour Operators should place themselves at the vanguard of creating a better and fairer trading condition. They argue that British Tour Operators are failing to ensure that infrastructures are capable of coping with an increased tourist trade, or that workers are not given sufficient rights. Despite their 'contribution' to the environmental debate, their failures on wider ethical issues fall short of the ethic of Corporate Responsibility.

We have advocated that holidaymakers are not immune from this debate. The Holidaymakers Travel Responsibility (HTR) extends itself from the first moment a consumer considers their travel plans.

Which country should they visit, what is their political and social record, how has the tourist trade impacted on the economy, what are the rights of workers employed to provide services at a hotel, how does the facilities I intend to stay at impact with the local water and power supply, does the airline or cruise line I intend to travel with employ a safe record, do they provide fuel efficient means of transport, does the tour operator I intend to contract with pursue these questions and how do they develop their own trading position, do they provide a fair rate of pay for the service you are going to receive, how can I reduce my carbon footprint?

These are just some of the initial questions today's traveller should ask. In the next few editions we shall explore the answers.

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If you have been affected by any of the issues raised in this article, and would like to receive advices, then please contact HolidayTravelWatch without delay.