

Sustainable Tourism

What has Off Road NZ done about it recently?



RACELINE KARTING



Q&A on Climate Change and Sustainability

Q. What's climate change?

A. Human behaviour contributes to the production of greenhouse gases through activities such as driving cars, farming, burning coal and cutting down trees. As the world's population increases, these activities have also increased, meaning there are more greenhouse gases in our atmosphere and so the world is heating up. The process is often called global warming, but is now more commonly known as climate change as it is bringing more extreme weather events.

Q. What is sustainability then?

A. Sustainability is a broad concept that encompasses financial, social and environmental factors. Financial sustainability takes priority for your business to survive. Social sustainability ensures your business is a responsible community player. Meanwhile, environmental sustainability ensures your business looks after the environment and planet in which it operates and is increasingly being talked about as a tool to reduce climate change impacts.

Q. What does this mean for New Zealand?

A. In order for the economy to be sustainable in the long-term, New Zealand, like the rest of the world, must find solutions to reduce the climate change affects by reducing their greenhouse gas emissions and being more environmentally friendly.

Q. What are some of the solutions?

A. Possible solutions include technologies to reduce emissions, improving the fuel economy of the vehicle fleet and planting more trees. Also important are waste disposal, and minimizing water and energy consumption. Some organizations are also looking at the possibilities of neutralising their emissions by becoming 'carbon neutral'. It's about measuring, managing and mitigating.

Q. Why is sustainability important to the tourism industry in New Zealand?

A. New Zealand's natural environment and scenery is the major draw card for overseas visitors and forms the basis of the "100% pure" marketing positioning. In order to preserve our environment and retain our credibility and market advantage, it is essential that we show leadership in addressing the challenges associated with sustainability.

Community acceptance of and support for tourism will also hinge on our ability to manage effects - regardless of your motivation however, sustainability is not now negotiable for New Zealand's tourism industry.

Q. What is the tourism industry doing to be more sustainable?

A. We already have a good story to tell. No less than one third of New Zealand's land is in the public conservation estate and the many tourism operators who earn a living from this land are by necessity responsible guardians of the environment.

We're also doing lots of small things that all add up. This includes active participation in various certification programmes with an environmental focus, such as Green Globe, Qualmark and Quality Tourism Standards. The industry participates in the Sustainable Tourism Charters that promote basic energy saving tips for tourism operators.

A new Eco-Wise Travel Guide has just been developed educating operators and visitors about what they can do to protect the environment, while numerous initiatives are ongoing in areas such as recycling and waste by campgrounds, and water preservation and solar power by accommodation providers.

Q. At a practical level, what sort of things can a business do to be more sustainable?

A. There are lot of common-sense things that individuals can do to help the cause, these include:

- Switching off appliances when not in use – this includes your computer at night.
- Double-siding your documents and buying paper that is non-bleached.
- Recycle whenever you can to reduce sending rubbish to the landfill – this includes not only paper, but also glass and plastic containers and the composting of food.
- Buying energy efficient appliances.
- Buying greener cleaning products
- Insulating buildings, using solar power and other energy saving measures.



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What has Off Road NZ done about it recently?

We are continually caring for and maintaining our land. This includes the implementation of an ongoing native replanting programme.



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Waste oil is disposed of in the correct manner, then collected for recycling at the nearest recycling centre.

As part of our continued safety and maintenance programme, all vehicles are regularly tuned and safety inspected. We use the smallest, most fuel efficient vehicles available.



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We recycle the used tyres from the vehicles to create safety walls for the Sprint Car track.



We use energy saving light bulbs in public and staff facilities throughout the complex.



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We separate our waste and recycle in the appropriate bins and encourage our guests to do the same.



By emailing quotes and invoices we have reduced the usage of paper, envelopes and stamps.



We extended the utilities shed to include a fully covered in drying room for our wet weather gear. This utilises solar heat and minimises the need to use a tumble dryer.



Our new water treatment plant is more environmentally friendly than normal septic tanks.



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This storm water tank roughly collects 17,500 litres per month of water from the roof of our new work shop. The water will be used to wash vehicles as this is our highest water consumption within the site.



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The current headquarters building has reached the end of its useful life cycle. Furthermore, it is located around 1 km from the operational driving area. This means that each trip wastes 2km per vehicle to transfer clients to the operational area. This equates to 6,000km a year which in turns translates to around 465 litres of fuel a year. By building the new headquarters right next to the operational area we expect to reduce carbon emissions by 1.11 tonnes a year.



Our new modern headquarters has been constructed in a way that will incorporate a number of sustainable building design elements including above standard insulation, design and positioning of the building to take advantage of the passive heat and light, double glazing, heat pumps and solar panels.

Enjoy it, DON'T destroy it!!!

