

Tourists leave environmental concerns at home

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There is little evidence to suggest that people consider the environmental costs of their holiday

(Phys.org) —People who have environmentally friendly lifestyles at home often engage in environmentally harmful behaviour when they go on holiday, research shows.

The subjects of a University of Queensland study were aware of tourism's negative [environmental consequences](#), but displayed an attitude-behaviour gap, said PhD student Emil Juvan from UQ Business School, the report's author.

Mr Juvan's paper, *The Attitude – Behaviour Gap in Sustainable Tourism*, aims to lead the tourism industry and other stakeholders in finding new ways to increase the level of environmentally sustainable holiday behaviours.

"This research shows there is little evidence to suggest that people consider the [environmental costs](#) of their holiday, nor do their environmental concerns influence their [holiday](#) choices," Mr Juvan said.

It also revealed some of the most common excuses people gave for ignoring environmental costs, included denial of consequences, responsibility and control.

"These categories present a promising starting point for developing interventions that will prevent tourists from using excuses for not making the right choices," Mr Juvan said.

"An environmentally unsustainable [tourism industry](#) is not only harmful to the environment, but also to its own future as it depletes the very resources tourists come to enjoy."

Mr Juvan's PhD supervisor, Professor Sara Dolnicar, said much of the previous research in sustainable [tourism](#) assumed that people could be "trained and re-educated".

"Emil's work takes a totally different perspective," Professor Dolnicar said.

"It accepts that people tend to find excuses for not doing the right thing.

"This is an extremely important piece of research because it makes the first step towards increasing the level of environmentally friendly behaviour of tourists while at the same time accepting that such

behaviour does not come naturally to people who are investing a lot of time and money to relax and be free of the typical worries they have at home."

Mr Juvan's study has been published in the leading international academic journal *Annals of Tourism Research*.

More information: Emil Juvan, Sara Dolnicar, "The attitude–behaviour gap in sustainable tourism," *Annals of Tourism Research*, Volume 48, September 2014, Pages 76-95, ISSN 0160-7383, [dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2014.05.012](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2014.05.012).

Provided by University of Queensland

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