



22 MAY 2017

INTERNATIONAL DAY
FOR BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
Biodiversity and Sustainable Tourism

On 22 May, the United Nations celebrates the [International Day for Biological Diversity](#) . This year's theme is biodiversity and sustainable tourism to coincide with the observance of the [International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development 2017](#)

For years, travelling has been one of the most popular hobbies enjoyed by people around the world. As plane tickets get cheaper, more and more people are country-hopping from one destination to the next. But whilst it can be an exciting activity, travelling can also have a harmful effect on the environment, and these effects are often overlooked.

Take a return flight from London to Paris and you'll be responsible for generating 122 kilograms of carbon dioxide. Considering international tourist arrivals have increased to 1.18 billion in 2016, and are expected to reach 1.8 billion by 2030, we are damaging the environment a lot faster than we think. It is therefore more important than ever for travellers to put the environment first, and support sustainable tourism.



To mark the International Day of Biological Diversity 2017, UNRIC has three ways you could be a sustainable tourist on your next holiday:

Find ways to reduce your water usage. Are you leaving the tap on whilst brushing your teeth? Could your 20 minute shower be cut down to 10 minutes instead? Just remember that a village of 700 in a developing country uses an average of 500 litres of water per month, whilst a luxury hotel room guest uses 1800 litres of water per person per night.

Buy local. Rather than dining at a chain restaurant, why not go to the local restaurant or café that you have walked past? They are likely to use local produce and the menu could surprise you. And when buying souvenirs, try to buy products that are made locally. This way you are supporting local businesses and creating employment opportunities in the long run.

Use public transport. Whilst taking a taxi can be convenient, and hiring a car can be tempting, travelling by car increases our carbon footprint hugely. In fact, the number of cars on the road surpassed 1 billion in 2010. Today it is 1.2 billion and is expected to reach 2 billion by 2035. Using the bus or metro whilst abroad means that you are limiting energy usage and emissions from transportation, in turn reducing your carbon footprint.

Just a few alterations to your travelling habits can make a big difference to the environment. Sowing seeds of change will lead to growth and we'll be able to reap the rewards for generations to come.

For more tips on how you can be a #SustainableTourist click [here](#)

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