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Media release

Tourism industry becoming more sustainable

New Zealand's \$39 billion tourism industry became slightly more sustainable in 2018 compared to the previous year, according to a Performance Dashboard produced by Tourism Industry Aotearoa. TIA says it is a positive start but there is still a lot to be achieved.

Based on existing data and a survey of tourism businesses carried out for TIA by Angus & Associates, the dashboard measures the industry's first year of performance since the launch of the **Tourism Sustainability Commitment** in November 2017. It tracks progress against the TSC's eight economic, host community, visitor and environmental sustainability goals.

The TSC has the ambitious vision of New Zealand leading the world in sustainable tourism by 2025.

"While it's early days, it's pleasing to see a small 0.1 lift in the industry's overall sustainability rating in 2018 to 8.1, tracking in the right direction to achieve the 2025 goal of 9.4," says TIA Chief Executive Chris Roberts.

"Positively, those businesses which have signed up to the TSC achieved a significantly higher sustainability score than non-TSC businesses, 8.4 compared to 7.9."

Mr Roberts says the annual dashboard is a long-term tracking mechanism and TIA will be looking closely at trends over time.

He notes the 2018 results are mixed across the eight industry sustainability goals.

"On the plus side, we saw a strong improvement in industry revenue in 2018. And when it comes to delivering a fantastic visitor experience, we have already exceeded the 2025 target, with over 95% of international and domestic visitors having their expectations of a New Zealand holiday met or exceeded."

There was one area of significant decline, a 7% decrease in the industry's success in measuring, managing and minimising its environmental footprint, which includes carbon reduction and waste management.

"While there is no obvious reason for this drop in performance, it could be that businesses are now more conscious of what is required to meet this goal than when they were first surveyed in 2017."

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“There is some great work going on in the industry to reduce carbon emissions and minimise waste, however this can be a challenging area for the many small and medium-sized businesses that make up our tourism industry.”

TIA is putting a lot of effort into providing SMEs with tools and resources to help them achieve their sustainability goals, including case studies to highlight how other tourism businesses are taking action.

Mr Roberts says the TSC is continuing to gain traction with tourism businesses and government agencies. Almost 800 businesses have now committed to the TSC.

“We recently saw the Department of Conservation say it will recommend that people undertake activities and tours with companies that have signed up to the TSC.

“Tiaki – Care for New Zealand is another important industry and government sustainability initiative. It is encouraging all visitors to experience Aotearoa in a way that keeps everyone safe, protects our environment, respects our culture and protects the country for future generations.

“TRENZ, New Zealand’s biggest international travel and trade event is on in Rotorua in May. TIA will be clearly identifying the New Zealand tourism businesses and organisations that have signed up to the TSC so the 300 plus international delegates can see who has committed to taking action on sustainability.”

Signing up to the TSC is simple and free and can be done [online](#) on the [TSC website](#). The [Supporters Directory](#) shows which businesses have already signed up.

Download the [2018 Performance Dashboard](#).

ENDS

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KEY FACTS

- Tourism in New Zealand is a \$107 million per day industry. Tourism delivers around \$44 million in foreign exchange to the New Zealand economy each day of the year. Domestic tourism contributes another \$63 million in economic activity every day.
- Tourism is New Zealand's biggest export earner, contributing \$16.2 billion or 20.6% of New Zealand's foreign exchange earnings (year ended March 2018).
- 13.5% of the total number of people employed in New Zealand work directly or indirectly in tourism. That means 365,316 people are working in the visitor economy.
- The [Tourism 2025](#) growth framework has a goal of growing total tourism revenue to \$41 billion a year by 2025.

Visit www.tia.org.nz for more information

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