



# green tourism

in newfoundland and labrador

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## Going Green: Why it Matters in the Tourism Industry

The environment is an important consideration for all business in Newfoundland and Labrador, however, it is of particular concern to the province's tourism industry.

Tourism is big business in our province. Tourism spending within our borders topped \$1 billion in 2011, with over 500,000 non-resident visitors availing of our services and amenities and more than 4 million trips taken by residents from within the province. The industry's goal is to achieve \$1.6 billion in revenues by 2020, and the numbers are trending in the right direction.

How does this relate to the environment? Many tourism operations are directly reliant on the natural environment as an attraction for their business. In fact, the government's marketing strategy – which has been proven to be highly effective in driving travel to the province – strongly emphasizes our unique and beautiful environment. And so the tourism industry has much to lose if that environment were to be damaged.

But how do the individual actions of tourism operators throughout the province impact the environment?

### ➤ TOURISM AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Sometimes, through an operation's activities or even day-to-day business practices, tourism can come at a high environmental cost.

These costs can come in many forms, whether it be pollution, gradual biodiversity degradation, increased waste, habitat encroachment, erosion, etc. Many of these impacts are inadvertent and the operator may not be aware of how serious they are.

Since the environment is critical to the industry as a whole, and serves as an attraction for many individual operators, it is important for the industry to do all it can to keep it healthy.

### ➤ AN IMPACT OVER TIME

The impact of a single tourism operation may not be significant from one season to the next, but it certainly can be in a longer term. Our province's tourism industry will be just as (if not more) important to our economy and our people in twenty years from now, so it is vital that we work to keep the industry as sustainable as possible.

The intensity of that impact may also increase over time. As the industry continues to grow, the increased tourism activity and sheer human traffic will further contribute to environmental degradation.

By acting individually now to address environmental issues, operators can collectively reduce the future negative environmental impact of a growing industry.

## ➤ TRAVELER EXPECTATIONS ARE RISING

You may not know it, but Newfoundland and Labrador is behind much of the rest of Canada in terms of environmental standards enforced when it comes to recycling, composting, renewable energy use, building standards, etc. 85% or more of visitors to our province come from other parts of Canada. In turn, Canada's 'green' practices pale in comparison to the norm in many other areas of the world, including many parts of the United States and Europe.

As a result, expectations of travelers when it comes to day-to-day environmental practices for businesses are beyond those of the average operation in Newfoundland and Labrador. In addition, environmental consciousness is a growing consideration for travelers world-wide, and demands for the most basic green best practices are rising.

This means that tourists are expecting more from your business, and that trend is only going to increase in the years ahead.

## ➤ WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

Environmental impacts, long-term degradation, and the growing environmental awareness of travelers presents a challenge and a threat to the bottom line of tourism operators in Newfoundland and Labrador.

However, it also presents an enormous opportunity: did you know that environmental responsibility can translate in to business growth?

There are many economic benefits "going green".

