Blue Horizon: 3 ways tourism is crushing and surfing the waves of the ocean
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What does the big blue mean to you? Is it a seascape destination, a source of income for the 60 million people working in the marine fishing industry, a vital protein source of 151 million tons for human consumption, or a home to millions of species. For everyone the deep blue ocean has a different meaning, but for all of us wherever you are geographically located, the ocean is a source of life.

Vitamin Sea

It is often forgotten that two-thirds of the Earth surface consists of an underwater universe. The ocean is big, resilient and heals the soul, but what happens when the ocean is facing a crisis and cannot revitalize its own growing wound? Scientists are predicting that 90% of the world's coral reefs will die by 2050 and that the ocean's biodiversity is degrading at an alarming pace due to anthropogenic activities.

With a growing global middle class on the rise worldwide and the increasing ease of travel, people have achieved greater mobility in the recent years. According to United Nations World Tourism Organization, the number of international tourism migration worldwide totaled 1.3 billion in 2017 and is predicted to reach 1.8 billion by 2030. The World Travel Tourism Council’s forecasts that the future of travel and tourism will support 400 million jobs and contribute to 25% of global net job creation globally. The infrastructure required to sustain this growth in economic activity has increased pressure on natural resources, biodiversity, as well as on local communities. Tourism can in fact
cause harm, but it can also stimulate sustainable development. When properly planned and managed, sustainable tourism can contribute to improved livelihoods, inclusion, cultural heritage and natural resource protection, and promote international understanding (TWEET-WBG)

Here are three examples of how tourism is crushing and surfing the waves of the oceans:

1. **Tourism Price-Tag**
   Various tourism hotspots struggle to manage the ever-expanding influx of travelers. Urban dwellers in cities like Amsterdam, Venice and Barcelona are raising their concerns and anti-tourist sentiment is growing. Tourism driven gentrification can put pressure on the well-being and livelihood of the local community, pushing real estate prices, making the destination overcrowded, and enhancing shore erosion by tourism activities in coastal areas.

   In 2017, Palau and New Zealand started a bold campaign requesting visitors to be environmental agents by signing an eco-pledge when visiting the countries. This small step is crucial for behavior change of visitors towards respecting the culture, protecting the country’s natural and living resources and preserving the country for future generations. Sustainability awareness is more than ever important as user-generated content and peer-to-peer digital platforms like Instagram, Facebook, Airbnb and TripAdvisor are becoming key influencers of the experience economy, tourism trends and attitudes of globetrotters.

2. **Sun-Blocking Blueprint**
   As the number of beach-goers has been growing, so has the use of sun protection products. Many people are unaware, but 14,000 tons of toxic sunscreen make their way to the underwater world each year. In fact, as many as 82,000 kinds of chemicals from personal care products end up in the oceans. The use of chemical sunscreen, water pollution, coral diseases, rising sea temperatures and ocean acidification, lead to deformations in juvenile corals, bleaching of reefs and prevents corals from growing, reproducing and surviving in the marine.

   In 2018, Hawaii, Mexico and Aruba announced a ban on non-biodegradable sunscreen lotions. Seychelles took a step further and committed to a blue bond to support the financing of ocean and marine-based projects for positive economic, environmental and climate benefits. It is key to have a holistic and innovative approach to the blue economy as the industry is expected to grow twice the rate of the mainstream economy by 2030.
Global awareness of the footprint of (micro)plastic from tourism has gained momentum in 2018. Researchers estimate that an additional 8 million metric tons of plastic ends up in the ocean every year. About 40 percent of all plastic is used in single-use packaging, and mostly straws, coffee cups, water bottles and cigarette butts are littering beaches from tourism activities.

In October 2018, Thailand announced the closing of Maya Beach indefinitely to clean up the unstoppable amount of plastic and drainage that tarnished its coastline. The threat to our oceans requires cross-country and regional collaboration, but most importantly multi-stakeholder global engagement. Strategic partnerships empowering the public and private sector to reduce plastic waste, develop a circular economy and build sustainable and more resilient communities are critical. The alliance between the world’s largest packaging producers, like the New Plastics Economy Global Commitment are key to forging innovative collective action and solutions to reducing pollution to save our oceans.

There are both positives and negatives stemming from the increase of human mobility and tourism, therefore it is crucial to find a balance to encourage tourism for economic growth and stimulating sustainable incentives for the conservation of our oceans. The ocean might seem endless, but we are all on the same boat and need to find mutual solutions to ride the waves together, this is crucial not only for our oceans and marine life, but for human survival.
Source: Mapping Ocean Wealth Explorer | Mapping Ocean Ecosystem Services, 2018

Source: https://oceanconservancy.org/trash-free-seas/take-deep-dive/stemming-the-tide/
WHY TOURISM MATTERS?

1/10 JOBS
US$ 1.6 trillion in exports
10% of world’s GDP
30% of services exports

Tourism is more than you imagine

1 Source: World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC)

Source: © UNWTO Barometer 2018 - World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). June 2018

http://media.unwto.org/content/infographics
Sea Going Green promotes sustainable tourism through sustainable business.

Profitability goes hand in hand with Sustainability.

Is your company ready to #GoGreenForTheBigBlue?

**Environmental Impact Assessment**

The environmental impact assessment is a process that allows us to identify and evaluate the impact and pressures of current operations on the environment and set objectives accordingly.

Through a carbon footprint analysis, we will measure the total amount of greenhouse gases that are emitted at the different stages of your service or product’s life cycle by using the newest assessment methodologies. This includes both a full plastic audit and a material flow analysis. Your plastic waste stream will be analyzed and costly waste problems will be revealed to help you to unlock potentially new revenue streams. During the material flow analysis, we measure everything going in and out of your company. This helps us to identify the main CO2 contributors.

**Responsible Tourism Policy**

We will develop a Green Transition Strategy based on our expertise and the previously collected data. We will then recommend short and long-term solutions that avoid, mitigate or compensate adverse impacts on the environment and best meet your needs in terms of budget, resources, goals, and stakeholder demands.

**Environmental Training & Capacity Development**

We will give your team insights into current market demands and trends as well as how competitors are approaching sustainability. We then provide information about important methodologies and standards.

We then set up an environmental training module to embed a unified vision of sustainability throughout your team. This training will seamlessly integrate sustainability within your teams’ roles and responsibilities by increasing awareness and respect towards the environment.

**Eco Verification & Green Brand Positioning**

We finish our Green Transition Strategy by leading you through the process of receiving the Oceanic Standard verification. Our partner, Oceanic Global, grants this certification to companies which implement specific measures to reduce their environmental footprint.

Furthermore we offer advice on green brand positioning. We help you set up strategies to promote and communicate your sustainable efforts to your marketing channels and social media.

We also facilitate partnerships with other sustainable initiatives by sharing our extensive network with your business.
Plan your free 30 minute call with one of our consultants today.

Book meeting now

Want to know more? Email us at info@seagoinggreen.org